

# Beyond Grand Rapids

## More U.S. products exported

Last year's landmark labor deals and the weak dollar are breathing new life into U.S. auto plants, leading Detroit's automakers to plan sizable exports of U.S.-made vehicles to markets around the world.

General Motors is looking to export U.S.-made vehicles to Europe, as well as to China and Latin American markets such as Brazil. Chrysler and Ford have similar plans.

The new contracts with the United Auto Workers union signed last fall significantly improve the global competitive position of Big Three plants. The weaker dollar, which makes production in the U.S. less expensive, is also helping to turn the economics of domestic production upside down.

Source: The Wall Street Journal, April 8, 2008

## It's all about being green

With U.S. gas prices over \$3 a gallon, up 50% in three years, marketing experts say U.S. buyers want hybrids that not only reduce fuel consumption and emissions but also make a statement about the driver's commitment to the environment.

Toyota's Prius, with a list price of \$21,100 and fuel consumption of 45 miles per gallon, commanded 51% of the U.S. hybrid market in 2007. Honda is planning a more economical hybrid for 2009 that takes aim at the Prius.

Hybrids, which shift between a battery and a combustion engine to boost fuel economy, made up just 3% of U.S. sales in 2007. But growth was 40% from the previous year, and there is plenty of room for that to continue, given that they account for just 0.3% of registered vehicles.

Source: Reuters, April 8, 2008

## Popular car colors

Color has always been important to customers when it comes to picking a new car. And as with fashion, color trends change rapidly. Silver and white are still the top choices, but colors like yellow and even brown are making a comeback. Brown hasn't been seen in the automotive industry since the 1980s. Brown had negative connotations. It was earth, dirt and mud, but since the explosion of coffee (the "Starbucks effect"), brown has returned with a vengeance. It's now more than a third of sales of all Buick Enclaves.

--Source: GM DriveTime, April 7, 2008

## Small cars make big impact

The smallest, cheapest cars are the biggest, brightest spot in the dreary auto market, reflecting continuing buyer flight to fuel economy and lower prices.

Sales of all types of small cars in March were at year-ago levels -- a big success in an industry that sold 12% fewer vehicles overall than in March 2007. The small-car segment was the only one not showing a loss. Within that group, the so-called lower small cars, the smallest and lowest-priced, boomed. Sales were up nearly 27% from last year.

Source: USA Today, April 4, 2008

## Malibu attracting new customers

As General Motors works to strengthen its position in the U.S. car market, the redesigned Chevrolet Malibu is attracting more cross-shopping with Japanese vehicles, appealing to younger buyers and bringing higher transaction prices than the version it replaced.

A year ago, Toyota and Nissan weren't among the brands that buyers of the Malibu mid-sized sedan were most likely to trade in. Now, they are.

J.D. Power data show that from December through February of this year, 4% of 2008 Malibu trade-ins were Toyotas and 3% Nissans, Libby said. The average age of Malibu buyers dropped to 49 from 53 a year earlier. The average transaction price for the 2008 Malibu was \$22,233 in the three months ending Feb. 29. In the year-ago period, the comparable price for the 2007 Malibu was \$17,577.

Source: Automotive News, March 31, 2008

## GM moves to four channels

General Motors announced last week that its U.S. marketing and field operations will be more strongly aligned into four retail channels: Chevrolet; Premium (Cadillac, Hummer, Saab); Buick-Pontiac-GMC; and Saturn. Each channel will be focused on continuing to deliver world-class products for their customer and build value for GM and their respective dealers. GM began focusing on a retail channel approach in 2002 with Buick-Pontiac-GMC.



# AutoKnow



General Motors Core Values: Customer Enthusiasm, Continuous Improvement, Integrity, Teamwork, Innovation, Individual Respect & Responsibility.

## Fixing Leaks Saves Big Money

At Grand Rapids Metal Plant we have been able to reduce our compressor load by about 20% year-to-date compared to the same time period in 2007. This equates to about \$25,000 for leaks repaired and improved shut downs.

GRMP's utility costs are significant. In an average month we spend \$415,000 on electricity, \$12,000 for water, and \$180,000 for natural gas during the winter heating season.

We have been given the task of reducing energy consumption at GRMP in 2008 by 5%. To do this, we need everyone to conserve energy whenever and wherever we can.

If you see a light, fan, or anything else that uses energy on that doesn't need to be, either shut it off or call for an electrician to shut it off. If you see a drinking fountain, sink, or faucet

leaking, use the Leak Tag Program (see below). All sources of energy used should be looked at as an opportunity to save energy.

If you have questions or suggestions on how to help us save General Motors and GRMP energy dollars, please use



the UAW-GM Quality Network Suggestion Program or call **Dan Metcalf** at 2884 or Nextel 129.



## What is the Leak Tag Program?

The purpose of the Leak Tag Program is to conserve energy by identifying and eliminating leaks of air, steam, water and/or oil throughout the plant.

Employees are asked to use the following procedure if they see or hear a leak of air, steam, water or oil:

- Obtain a tag from any drop box in the locations listed on page 2.
- Complete the information, including the date, the type, severity and location of the leak, along with your name.
- Place the white sheet in the slot of any drop box, and hang the green

(continued on page 2)

## Lump Sum Payouts: Things to Think About

Receiving a lump sum payout can be exciting because of the opportunity to spend or invest a large amount of money at one time. But figuring out what to do with a lump sum payout also can be stressful, especially if you aren't comfortable making financial decisions.

Once you fully understand all of your options, you'll be in a better position to make a good financial decision. So try to resist the urge to make a quick decision regarding how you'll use your lump sum payout.

According to the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission, before you decide what to do with your lump sum payment, consider these points:

- **What is my current financial situation?** A lump sum payout may give you the chance to buy a home, live a comfortable retirement, save for a child's education, or reach another investment goal. Make your own list of investment goals and then think about which goals are most important to you and your loved ones.
- **Do I need the help of a financial advisor?** If you're busy with children or other responsibilities, or you don't feel comfortable making important financial decisions on your own, then you may need professional advice. Financial professionals offer a variety of services and it pays to comparison shop to find the advisor

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Contact Gary Evey (616-246-3132) or Rick O'Rourke (616-246-3124 - UAW). Fax 616-246-3150.  
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## Leak Tag Program

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- sheet on or near the leak. Please place the tag as close to the leak as is safely possible.
- The Site Utility Manager **Dan Metcalf** or the Onsite Energy Engineer **Justin Lancaster** will then catalog the leak and forward the information you have provided to the appropriate maintenance group for repair.

The Leak Tag Program consists of Identification Tags and Leak Tag Drop Boxes, located in the following sites:

- On the east wall of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway at the entrance to the 36<sup>th</sup> Street overpass.
- At the top of the escalator to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway, on the west wall.
- At the west end of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor office hallway across from the entrance to the executive garage, on the east wall.
- In the Pattern Shop at the north end of the Metal Assembly aisle, to the left of the double doors going to the office area.
- At the north entrance to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Center Office Complex. This entrance is located across the Press aisle from column O-29.
- At the north end of the Press aisle on the west wall near column O-5.5.
- On the west wall of the break area located next to Team Area Number 6, at column Y-38.
- On the west wall of the break area located across the Press aisle near column Q-50.

## From the Child Care Office . . .

### Dove Family Film Festival now through May 15

The Dove Foundation picks eight recently released movies that have received the Dove Family Approved Seal and offers free movie passes to children ages 12 and under. Moms, dads and older siblings pay a reduced admission fee, typically around \$2.50. Festivals are in the spring and fall. Check it out at <http://www.dove.org/festivals.asp?ArticleID=30>. Tickets are also at the Child Care Office and in the wall pockets near the cafeteria.

### 2008 Summer Guides are available!!!

This guide list lots of summer fun and summer enrichment for children, youth and families. Pick one up today!

## Safety Corner

From a strictly measurement perspective, we cannot have more than **21** additional recordable injuries between now and the end of 2008 if we want to meet our Recordable Injury Rate stretch goal of 2.20.



### Hand and Portable Power Tools

Before using hand tools, employees are required to visually inspect the tool. Defective tools must be removed from service immediately to avoid injury. I encourage everyone to check the power tools in their area to ensure that they are in good working order. Make sure that all guarding is in place and that the cords are not damaged or frayed. Also, check all pneumatic tools to ensure that the manufacturer's rated speed (RPM) is clearly marked on the tool. If it is not, please take this tool out of service.

-- Nick Kassanos, assistant plant manager

### Know Safety, No Accidents

	2007	Through 4/8/08
First-aid Injuries	454	121
Recordable Injuries	65	14
Lost Work Days	6	0
Near Misses Reported	232	123

## Lump Sum Payout

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who is right for you. Keep in mind that you can also consult with Fidelity.

- **Be aware of scams.** Your lump sum payout may make you a target for scams, especially since reports of coming payments have been in the news. You should be wary if someone approaches you, instead of the other way around, to discuss what to do with your money.

# Around Grand Rapids

## Proper Disposal of Needles and Other Sharp Items

Employees who give themselves prescribed injections in the plant are reminded to make sure they place their used needles in any one of several sharps containers located in the plant.

In addition to Plant Medical, these containers can be found in the following locations:

- north men's and women's locker rooms
- restrooms on the second floor above the lobby
- south women's locker room
- TDO's north women's restroom
- TDO's main floor men's restroom



Scalpels, blades, and syringes are also called sharps and may be discarded into these containers.

Using these containers helps ensure the health and safety of you and your coworkers.

## UAW-GM QN Suggestion Corner

	04/08/08-04/11/08	YTD
*Awards Paid:	16	308
\$ Paid Out:	\$ 27,880.28	\$143,680.22
Savings to GM:	\$ 83,401.59	\$739,389.70

### Intangible Safety Award Paid Last Week:

- In late February, two crane service electricians were completing a PM on the overhead crane at W-line (13-bay). When the employees went to use the shared platform (service catwalk) to 12- and 13-bay, the crane was gone, which left the end of the service catwalk wide open, exposing them to an approximate 32-to-36-foot fall. The employees reported this as a near-miss incident and suggested placing a safety gate on any such platforms.

\*Tangible and intangible awards

## No AutoKnow

There will be no *AutoKnow* next week, April 30.

## What Will Your Answer Be?

Our external calibration begins on May 12. Here are some frequently asked questions from the GMS calibrators, and how you can answer them:

### Question: Why do we follow standardized work?

*Answer:* "It helps us train new team members and helps in problem solving. Standardized work also helps the team improve safety and quality issues."

### Question: How do we check the part for defects?

*Answer:* "My standardized work shows me how to look for defects. Let me show you the Job Element Sheets (JES's)."

### Question: What are you checking for, and if a defect is found, is it ok to ship?

*Answer:* What to check for is on my product quality standards (PQS). It shows what is ok to ship.

**Grand Rapids Metal Center**

Quality Network

**Reminder**

**GM-GMS Calibration**

**begins**

**May 12, 2008**

**Are you and your team prepared?**

**13 more days!**