

Freescale Chips On Chevy, GMC Hybrids

General Motor Corp. in partnership with Freescale Semiconductor Corp. will be promoting improved fuel efficiency by using innovative chips. Freescale chips will be used in Chevy and GMC hybrids to pave the way for a green makeover.

According to reports, Freescale chips that control the combustion and electric engines as well as the transmission in the new [Chevy Tahoe](#) and GMC Yukon hybrids have produced a 50 percent increase in mileage over their counterparts. The hybrids are efficient for both city and highway. To note, they can tow a 6,000-pound cabin cruiser. The hybrids are now arriving at Valley Chevy and GMC dealerships.

John Hartley, Internet sales manager at Midway Pontiac GMC in Phoenix, said there is considerable interest in the vehicles. However, the production of the hybrid sport utilities is currently limited.

The increase in fuel efficiency is attributed to the automaker's two-mode hybrid transmission that is operated by Freescale's advanced microcontroller technology.

"The automotive industry is a very significant part of Freescale's business," said Tony Massimini, an analyst with research company Semico Research Corp. "And the hybrid market is becoming very important part of the U.S. car business."

The Austin, Texas-based supplier of microcontrollers found in American cars, is determined to improve the offers of automakers in the industry. And its cutting-edge products are expected to make it happen.

Kevin Klein, vice president of marketing for Freescale's automotive group, said that a current luxury car can contain over 100 chips that control everything from disc brakes to parking-assistance radar. He added that automotive chip sales now amount to about a third of Freescale's \$5.7 billion in annual revenue.

The innovative technology offers two driving modes. Using the first driving mode, the vehicle can operate at low speed and with light loads in three ways: electric power only, engine power only or in any combination of engine and electric power, reported The Arizona Republic. The second mode, meanwhile, is used primarily at highway speeds. This mode provides full eight-cylinder engine power when road conditions require. It can be employed when passing other vehicles, climbing a steep grade or pulling a trailer. Additionally, a refined control unit settles which mode the vehicle should use.

"With the introduction of the world's first full-size hybrid SUVs, GM is pioneering a niche in the automotive market that's in step with today's growing concerns about the environment and global warming," said Paul Grimme, senior vice president and general manager of Freescale's Microcontroller Solutions Group. "We're proud that Freescale technology is helping make these innovative, fuel-efficient SUVs a reality in the market."

About the Author

Anthony Fontanelle is a 35-year-old automotive buff who grew up in the Windy City. He does freelance work for an automotive magazine when he is not busy customizing cars in his shop.

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