

Human Biology Breathes New Life into Chrysler Group CNG Commitment

- Patent-pending technology mimics human lungs to benefit CNG-tank capacity, formability
- Technology development supported by grant from Michigan Economic Development Council's Technology Innovation Challenge
- Chrysler Group builds the industry's only mass-production CNG-powered pickup, a Ram 2500

November 12, 2013, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Chrysler Group is looking inward – to the human body – for inspiration to design the next generation of fuel tanks powering compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicles.

“Within the human lung are countless individual sacks called alveoli,” says Enrico Pisino, Chrysler Group's Senior Manager-Innovation. “These sacks combine to comprise the lung's total air capacity. We are using this same approach to improve the packaging of CNG tanks.”

Chrysler Group's work is supported in part by a \$50,000 grant from the Michigan Economic Development Council's Technology Innovation Challenge, which matches companies with Michigan-based strategic partners to accelerate advanced-technology initiatives.

While CNG has a per-gallon-equivalent cost-advantage of approximately \$1 compared with gasoline, its energy density is less by volume. As a result, CNG-powered vehicles require larger fuel tanks to deliver range that is comparable to that of gas- or diesel-powered vehicles.

Current CNG tank designs also are limited to cylindrical shapes to accommodate the pressure at which the gaseous fuel is stored.

Chrysler Group's patent-pending technology addresses both issues by expanding tank capacity and enabling designs that conform to the vehicle, as do other fuel tanks. The result is a no-compromise solution that preserves space intended for passengers and/or cargo.

Chrysler Group already has a CNG vehicle on the market. The Ram 2500 Compressed Natural Gas truck is the industry's only factory-built CNG-powered pickup, rolling off the same assembly line as conventionally powered vehicles

Available for retail and fleet sale, the Ram 2500 Compressed Natural Gas truck features a 5.7-liter HEMI® V-8 engine that burns CNG. When that fuel is depleted, it automatically and seamlessly switches to gasoline.

On a single fill-up, the truck can travel 255 miles on CNG and a total of 745 miles when equipped with an available 35-gallon reserve gas tank.

Chrysler Group has a long history with CNG. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the company produced dedicated CNG-powered full-size vans, minivans and pickup trucks.

Chrysler Group's strategic partner, Fiat S.p.A, is a world leader in CNG-powered vehicle production.

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