

Study Shows More Consumers Turning to Diesels

Diesel-powered vehicles are gaining popularity among consumers at a rapid pace. There could be many reasons for this surge in diesel sales, but soaring gas prices are the primary factor. While gas hybrids are gaining popularity among consumers, they generally lack the power that drivers are looking for.

Diesel-powered vehicles offer more torque than gas vehicles, providing excellent towing capabilities and great passing power at highway speeds. Diesels are 30 percent more fuel-efficient than comparable gas-powered vehicles and emit 25 percent less carbon dioxide.

In Europe, 43 percent of vehicles sold are diesels, and 67 percent of company cars are also diesels, up from 49 percent two years ago. In the U.S., light-duty diesels also represent a growing market. According to the Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA), demand for engine parts alone is expected to reach \$375 million by 2007. Recent developments in diesel technology have allowed manufacturers to provide diesel-powered vehicles that outpace their predecessors on all counts. Dodge recently demonstrated this with its Dakota turbo-diesel Sidewinder pickup that achieved a top speed of 222 mph. The Sidewinder also averages 21.24 miles per gallon. J.D. Power and Associates predicts that diesels will account for 15 percent of vehicles on the road by 2014, up from their current share of 3.9 percent. SEMA members predict similar growth for diesels, projecting a market share of 10.23 percent in 2009 and 15.22 percent by 2014. These numbers mean that sales of diesel-specific products and accessories should increase at a similar pace.