

For Release: Thursday, Sept. 29, 2011, 9 a.m. EDT

## **GM Introduces Industry's First Front Center Air Bag**

*New safety feature designed to help protect driver, front passenger in side impact crashes*

**DETROIT** – General Motors will introduce the industry's first front center air bag, an inflatable restraint designed to help protect drivers and front passengers in far-side impact crashes where the affected occupant is on the opposite, non-struck side of the vehicle.

The front center air bag will be introduced on the [Buick Enclave](#), [GMC Acadia](#), and [Chevrolet Traverse](#) midsize crossovers in the 2013 model year. This new safety feature will be standard on Acadia and Traverse with power seats and all Enclaves.

The front center air bag deploys from the right side of the driver's seat and positions itself between the front row seats near the center of the vehicle. This tethered, tubular air bag is designed to provide restraint during passenger-side crashes when the driver is the only front occupant, and also acts as an energy absorbing cushion between driver and front passenger in both driver- and passenger-side crashes. The air bag also is expected to provide benefit in rollovers.

GM analysis of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System database, found that far-side impact crashes, which the front center airbag primarily addresses, accounted for 11 percent of the belted front occupant fatalities in non-rollover impacts between 2004 and 2009 involving 1999 model year or newer vehicles. These far-side fatalities, where the occupant is on the non-struck side of the vehicle, also represent 29 percent of all the belted front occupant fatalities in side impacts.

"The front center air bag is not required by federal regulation, and no other air bag in passenger vehicles today offers the type of restraint and cushioning this air bag is designed to provide for front occupants," said Scott Thomas, senior staff engineer in GM's advanced restraint systems.

The front center air bag is expected to add to the vehicles' record of third-party crash test performance. The 2012 model year editions of these midsize crossovers have received five-star Overall and Side Crash safety ratings from NHTSA's New Car Assessment Program, and 2011 Top Safety Picks from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

"The front center airbag has real potential to save lives in side crashes," said Adrian Lund, president of the insurance Institute for Highway Safety. "GM and Takata are to be commended for taking the lead in this important area."

GM and technology supplier [Takata](#) developed the front center air bag over the course of three years, testing many design iterations to achieve packaging, cushioning, and restraint for a variety of crashes and occupant positions. Numerous elements of the air bag's jointly patented cushion design address the restraint's unique performance characteristics while considering a range of occupant sizes.

“While no restraint technology can address all body regions or all potential injuries, the front center air bag is designed to work with the other air bags and safety belts in the vehicles to collectively deliver an even more comprehensive occupant restraint system,” said Gay Kent, GM executive director of Vehicle Safety and Crashworthiness. “This technology is a further demonstration of GM’s above-and-beyond commitment to provide continuous occupant protection before, during and after a crash.”

General Motors (NYSE:GM, TSX: GMM), one of the world’s largest automakers, traces its roots back to 1908. With its global headquarters in Detroit, GM employs 208,000 people in every major region of the world and does business in more than 120 countries. GM and its strategic partners produce cars and trucks in 30 countries, and sell and service these vehicles through the following brands: Baojun, Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, GMC, Daewoo, Holden, Isuzu, Jiefang, Opel, Vauxhall, and Wuling. The global Chevrolet brand celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. GM’s largest national market is China, followed by the United States, Brazil, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, and Italy. GM’s OnStar subsidiary is the industry leader in vehicle safety, security and information services. More information on the new General Motors can be found at [www.gm.com](http://www.gm.com).

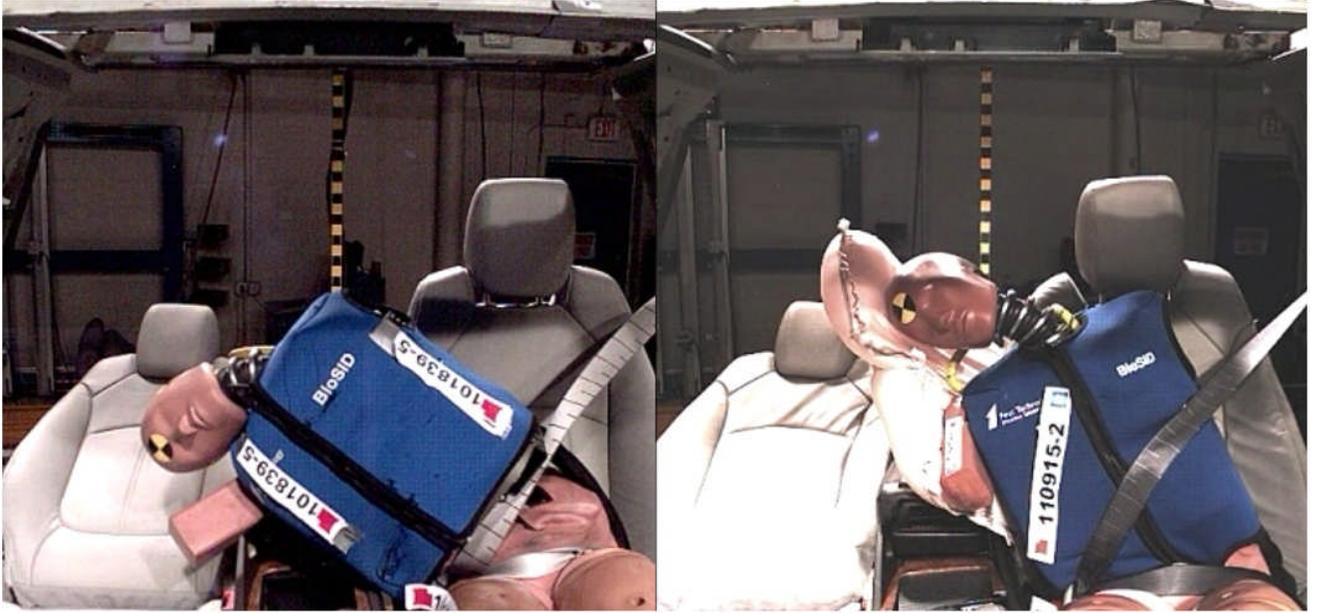
###

**CONTACTS:**

Sharon Basel  
GM Safety Communications  
313-378-6647  
[sharon.basel@gm.com](mailto:sharon.basel@gm.com)

Terry Rhadigan  
GM Product Development Communications  
313-658-6801  
[terry.rhadigan@gm.com](mailto:terry.rhadigan@gm.com)





Far-side Crash Protection for a Driver



Far-side Crash Protection for a Passenger