



The Industry Update

**A membership service of the Northwest Automotive Trades Association
For the weeks of August 25 and September 1, 2008**

U.S. auto makers are expected to report big declines in August domestic sales despite stepped-up incentives - According to research firm J.D. Power & Associates and the Wall Street Journal, the research firm still expects sales in the closing days of the month to improve because of General Motors Corp.'s 100th anniversary sales event, which offers "employee pricing" on most vehicles and cash rebates on selected light trucks. The J.D. Power report, based on sales through Aug. 17, estimates sales for the month will come in at around 1.21 million vehicles or 13.4 million vehicles on a seasonally adjusted annual rate. That is down from the August 2007 seasonally adjusted rate of 16.2 million vehicles, but up 6.3% from July.

"Both cash rebates and APR programs continue to rise from year-ago levels, as auto makers struggle with weakening light-truck sales," said J.D. Power. The average time a vehicle sat on the lot during the first 14 selling days of the month rose 14% from a year ago, it said, "adding pressure to increase incentive programs."

All major manufacturers had year-to-year retail-sales declines through the first 14 days of the month, although Nissan Motor Co.'s decline was modest. "That general pattern is expected to hold through the remainder of the month, with only GM by the end of the month expected to show a significant improvement over its month-to-date performance as its incentive program takes effect," J.D. Power said. Only Nissan is expected to finish the month with higher sales -- up 1.5%. Declines of 24% to 30% are forecast for GM, Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler LLC, while Toyota Motor Corp. is projected to have a 13% decline.

Two leave positions at collision industry organizations – Two high-level employees of national collision industry organizations announced in August that they were moving on. After almost eight years as executive director of the Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS), **Dan Risley** has resigned, accepting a position with Allstate Insurance. SCRS Chairman **Gary Wano**, an Oklahoma shop owner, said Risley (who lives in the Chicago area near Allstate's headquarters) told the board his decision to accept the insurer's offer "would be best for him and his family."

"We will miss him, but the work Dan accomplished leaves us in a great position to move ahead," Wano said. SCRS has begun a search for a new executive director, and is now accepting resumes by email (info@scrs.com).

Also in August, after 18 years with I-CAR (including five as its CEO), **Tom McGee** is leaving the training organization "to pursue other interests," according to an I-CAR press release. **John Edelen**, a retired Allstate executive who replaced McGee as CEO last November, called McGee a "visionary" and "a great

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asset for I-CAR" who "influenced many of the positive developments that I-CAR has been able to achieve over the past decade and a half."

Another deadline not to miss! Are you in the NATA Health Plan? Groups in the plan must return their filled out Group Privilege Agreement (GPA) to the NATA office by Sept. 2, 2008. Questions? Call Cathi Webb, 503 253-9898 or 1 800 730-7282.

The Autobody Roundtable is just around the corner, Sept. 17. Discuss how to use the Ecological Business Certification Program as a route to compliance with the new Oregon Auto Body air regulation.

Auto body companies will soon be subject to a new EPA air pollution regulation and new permitting requirements. An alternative to permitting for these shops is to become EcoBiz certified. Certification not only ensures that a shop will have the necessary information and tools to be in compliance, but promotes practices that save money, increase safety and create business marketing advantages for the body shop.

Wednesday, September 17, 2008, 8 – 10 a.m.

A light breakfast will be served

Kadel's Corporate Headquarters, 9350 SW Tigard Street
Tigard, OR 97223

RSVP to Debra Taevs, Pacific NW Pollution Prevention Resource Center (PPRC), dtaevs@pprc.org or (503) 336-1256

October 2008 is Fall Car Care Month – What are you doing to promote Car Care Month to your customers? NATA has the latest, updated Car Care Guide produced by the Car Care Council. This reference guide for motorists has been newly updated with two new sections on fuel economy and environmental awareness. The successful "Be Car Care Aware" consumer education campaign has shown motorists' interest in vehicle maintenance information and advice. The 56-page guide covers nine major service occasions and 12 component groups of the vehicle, plus service interval recommendations, a maintenance log, and more! Call the NATA office to get your Car Care Guides to be ready for Car Care Month. The first five are free, then each additional is 50 cents.

THE CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Wednesday, September 17 – Do HR issues have you baffled and confused?

NATA presents **Carrie Eisenbrandt**, Beecher Carlson, with over 20 years of experience in Human Resources! From HR basics to regulatory compliance to customer service, she enjoys helping others improve their knowledge base and management abilities through managing people.

LOCATION: **NACM Classroom, Ste. 201**

7931 NE Halsey St., Portland OR 97213

Call to register, 503 253-9898, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Members \$25 Non Members \$30

Have questions? Want more information? We are here for you!

Northwest Automotive Trades Association
7931 NE Halsey St. Ste. 212, Portland, OR 97213
503 253-9898 | Toll Free 1 800 730-7282