Congressional Delegation Led by US Congresswoman Deborah Dingell Visits Rhombus Dearborn Facility

A US Congressional delegation led by US Congresswoman Deborah Dingell visited the Rhombus Dearborn facility last week on August 19th. This facility, which is in Congresswoman Dingell’s district, produces Rhombus’s market-leading, made-in-the-USA DC fast chargers. The facility also houses Rhombus production engineering and test capabilities, and employs roughly fifty (50) personnel. The delegation also included Michigan Public Service Commissioner Tremaine Phillips, Assistant Wayne County Executive Khalil Rahal, and Dearborn City Councilwoman Erin Byrnes. Joining Rhombus in coordinating this visit was Executive Director Jane McCurry of Clean Fuels Michigan, and Director of Government Affairs Alex Hutkin representing the Electrification Coalition and Secure America’s Future Energy (SAFE). These organizations are focused on accelerating the electrification of the US transportation sector.

The facility builds not only Rhombus-branded unidirectional and bidirectional DC fast chargers, but also chargers for a number of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of medium- and heavy-duty (M/HD) electric vehicles, solution providers, charging network operators, and distributors. Rhombus has shipped over 1000 units from this facility over the past several years, and expects the facility to ramp significantly under the Biden Administration’s push to electrify school buses and public transit vehicles.

The visit started out with a tour of the facility by the delegation, which was then followed by a press conference. Speakers at the press conference included Joseph Gottlieb (Rhombus Chief Technology Officer), Congresswoman Dingell, Jane McCurry (Executive Director, Clean Fuels Michigan), Ben Prochazka (Executive Director of the Electrification Coalition), and several other elected officials who were present. “Rhombus is proud to provide solid, high-quality American jobs to our employees in both our Dearborn and San Diego locations,” said Mr. Gottlieb. Congresswoman Dingell echoed this sentiment by stating, “The investment in vehicle electrification represented here not only helps to create US jobs, but also increases our country’s high-technology competitiveness and ultimately our national security.”

Rhombus, Clean Fuels Michigan, and the Electrification Coalition released a press statement at the completion of the event; its contents can be read here on the Rhombus website.
Nuvve and Blue Bird Bus Announce New “Vehicle As A Service” Model Through New Leasing Entity

Nuvve Holding (Nasdaq: NVVE) and Blue Bird Bus (Nasdaq: BLBD) have announced a new program that enables school districts and school bus providers to participate in a “Vehicle-As-A-Service” (VaaS) offering for their electric school buses, bidirectional DC fast chargers, and energy management software. Levo Mobility, a joint venture of Nuvve Holding, Stonepeak Partners, and Evolve Transportation Infrastructure, was developed to provide school bus fleet operators a simple, turn-key method to quickly electrify their fleets without the significant upfront costs normally associated with electric vehicles.

The VaaS financing facility is available for school buses with bidirectional vehicle-to-grid (V2G) and unidirectional charging capabilities. “We are always looking at innovative ways to reduce our customers’ cost of ownership for their school buses,” said Blue Bird CEO Phil Horlock. “By incorporating the cost of charging infrastructure and the benefits from lower operating costs and V2G revenue into the lease price, the total value of zero-emission Blue Bird school buses becomes very attractive.” Nuvve is a partner of Rhombus Energy Solutions, and utilizes Rhombus unidirectional and bidirectional DC fast chargers in its solutions.

Rhombus Energy Solutions to Showcase New Products at Advanced Clean Technology Expo Next Week in Long Beach, Calif.

Rhombus Energy Solutions will be showcasing a new product in Booth 1807 next week at the Advanced Clean Technologies (ACT) Expo. The ACT Expo, which focuses on green advanced technologies for commercial transportation systems, is a perennial home for new product announcements and demonstrations of clean transportation technologies, including vehicles and vehicles support equipment such as chargers for electric vehicles (EVs). Rhombus will be meeting at the ACT Expo with existing and prospective customers to demonstrate the new product and explain its value to M/HD EV fleet operators. If you wish to meet with Rhombus, please let us know at news@rhombusenergy.com.
Electricity and Water DO Mix If You Are Talking About Tugboats

A lot of articles have been written about the advantages of electric drivetrains in trucks, where their instant torque significantly improves acceleration and towing capabilities. Another class of vehicles that need significant towing power are tugboats, which often have to move ships that are 10X their length. Crowley Maritime Corporation is building such a boat for the Port of San Diego. The eWolf is an 82-foot long all-electric tugboat that will be operational by mid-2023. The eWolf boasts a 70-ton bollard pull capability, significantly greater than the 45-50 ton capacity of most commercial tugboats.

Crowley, which is a full-service marine contractor, is building the eWolf at Master Boat Builders shipyard in Coden, Alabama. The boat was designed by Jensen Maritime, a naval architecture and marine engineering group recently acquired by Crowley Engineering Services (itself a subsidiary of Crowley Maritime). Besides its towing capacity, one of the attractions of the eWolf is the pollution reduction that it achieves – the boat it is replacing consumes more than 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel per year, and generates 178 tons of nitrogen oxide, 2.5 tons of diesel particulate matter, and 3100 tons of carbon dioxide per year.


We have all read the headlines about the dangers when high-capacity batteries, particularly lithium-based batteries, are damaged or short-circuited. Remember the bans on bringing lithium batteries on flights as checked luggage? So are battery electric vehicles (BEVs) more susceptible to car fires than internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles? In spite of the headlines that have been generated when a BEV catches fire (there were three Tesla vehicle fires in 2013, and the recall of 51,000 Chevy Bolt EVs due to fires from defective battery modules, BEV fires are far less likely to occur than the “car-b-ques” of ICE vehicles (remember, one of these types of vehicles has the word “combustion” in its name, and carries gallons of highly-flammable fuel in it).

Tesla’s 2020 Impact Report looks across nine years of data (from 2012 to 2020), and concludes that ICE vehicles catch fire at a rate that is more than 10X that of Tesla BEVs. To put it in perspective, 2019 saw nearly 190,000 vehicle fires in the US. For ICE vehicles, there is one vehicle fire per 19 million miles driven, while Teslas saw one vehicle fire for every 205 million miles driven. And while the report did not look at the correlation of vehicle age or accidents as factors increasing the likelihood of vehicle fires, both of these factors affect both
BEVs and ICE vehicles. Overall, it would appear that you are probably more likely to get struck by lightning than have your car catch fire, regardless of its type of fuel.

Quick Notes from the Electric Vehicle (EV) / Energy Storage Ecosystem

- Proterra and LG Energy Solutions sign long-term battery cell supply agreement
- Electric utility EDF launches V2G offering for Nissan fleet customers in the UK
- NextEra adds 1,840 MW renewables and storage to more than 15 GW backlog in Q2
- Green Mountain Power buys two electric utility trucks from LION Electric
- Milton fraud charges deal another blow to electric truck maker Nicola’s reputation
- Five companies produce almost all EV battery cells for the US market
- Will the game-changing Tesla Semi really go into production this year?

About Rhombus Energy Solutions

Rhombus develops and manufactures next-generation bi-directional electric vehicle charging infrastructure, high-efficiency power conversion systems and energy management system (EMS) software for vehicle-to-grid (V2G) capable electric vehicle fleet charging, energy storage and microgrid applications. The high reliability of our solutions is the result of decades of experience developing high-power systems for a variety of applications and deployment scenarios, including UL-1741-SA system-to-grid solutions. For more information, please visit www.rhombusenergy.com.