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DaimlerChrysler Expands Concept Plug-in Hybrid Program

- Next-generation plug-in hybrid concept will be built on the all-new 2007 Dodge Sprinter platform
- DaimlerChrysler is the only automaker to test plug-in hybrid technology in the United States with customers
- Lithium-ion battery research will accelerate future hybrid development
- Dodge Sprinter Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) can drive up to 20 miles on electric-only power
- Industry first: PHEV combined with diesel for maximum fuel efficiency
- B-roll available: [President Bush Meets with U.S. Automakers; Gets Hands-on Experience with Dodge Sprinter Plug-in Hybrid](#)

March 26, 2007, Auburn Hills, Mich. - In a display of commitment to the development of hybrid powertrain architecture and advanced batteries, DaimlerChrysler is expanding its concept plug-in hybrid program to include the all-new 2007 Dodge Sprinter.

Up to 20 Dodge Sprinter Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV) will be placed in the United States between now and the first quarter of 2008 as part of a test-fleet program. Four of the vehicles, built on the previous-generation Dodge Sprinter, already are in operation with customers. DaimlerChrysler is the only auto manufacturer currently evaluating a variety of plug-in hybrid powertrain (diesel and gas) configurations in real-world, customer-operation service within the United States.

Battery development is one of the keys to the success of hybrid and fuel-cell transportation. Lithium-ion holds the greatest promise for battery technology. A number of the Dodge Sprinter PHEVs will be equipped with lithium-ion batteries that are about half the weight and have much greater storage capacities when compared with nickel-metal hydride batteries. The vehicles will yield technical information through real-world driving conditions about lifetime, performance and cost of batteries.

"For plug-in hybrid technology to move forward, a dramatic leap in battery technology is necessary," said Mark Chernoby, Vice President – Advance Vehicle Engineering, Chrysler Group. "The energy storage systems in the Dodge Sprinter PHEV concept fleet will provide valuable field experience on the possibilities with lithium-ion battery technology."

Plug-in technology lends itself to commercial applications where the vehicle returns to base after each shift to be plugged into the power grid. In short stop-and-go routes, the vehicle will use very little fuel.

The Dodge Sprinter PHEV has the ability to drive up to 20 miles on electric-only power. It accomplishes this with a switch on the dashboard giving the operator the ability to manually switch between modes as needed, or automatically by the vehicle control system. Two different combustion engines are being offered in the Dodge Sprinter PHEV: diesel or gasoline. The diesel version will yield the highest fuel economy benefit and is the first fleet test of a diesel plug-in hybrid system.

Plug-in hybrid technology is part of DaimlerChrysler's advanced propulsion technology umbrella that also includes exceptionally efficient gasoline engines, advanced diesel technology, ethanol flex-fuel and zero-emission fuel cell vehicles.

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