

42-VOLT SYSTEMS: Engineers Say They're Getting Close

At the 42-Volt Automotive Systems Conference held last week in Cleveland, engineers predicted that by 2010 as many as half of all new vehicles sold will be equipped with 42-volt electrical systems. A decade later, they forecast, all vehicles will have 42-volt systems.

According to Electronic Engineering Times, engineers attending last week's conference did not debate at all whether 42-volt systems will ever be adapted. The only question is when and where. This is a turnaround from conferences held as recently as two years ago when many automotive engineers questioned the need for a new system or if, in fact, a new one was needed, was 42-volt the way to go. Those questions are now asked and answered.

Most engineers believe that emissions regs will push the adoption of 42-volt systems because they can allow automakers to significantly reduce engine size in vehicles, thereby reducing hydrocarbon emissions.

At the conference several automakers said they already have or will soon introduce cars with 42-volt systems. Toyota described the development of its new Crown Mild hybrid equipped with a 42-volt/14-volt electrical system and Ford Motor reported that it is working on a 42-volt/14-volt Mondeo. DaimlerChrysler announced that it has plans to use a 42-volt system on an upcoming Mercedes S-Class.