

New GM Silverado Engineered for Better Serviceability During Collision Repair

by **Stacey Phillips**, Assistant Editor

When General Motors initiated the re-design of the Chevy Silverado 1500 full-size pickup truck several years ago, an important aspect of the project was to incorporate features to reduce the time, cost and complexity during the collision repair process.

“When we design trucks, we don’t only consider what features our consumers demand from a full size-truck,” said **Mark Szlachta**, Advanced Service Design Engineer for General Motors. “We also approach the process

that one of his primary goals as a service engineer was to look at the project from a body repair perspective.

“I’m looking at the vehicle from the perspective not how it’s going to look when it’s done, or how it’s going to be built, but how it will fare in the event of a crash. How we are going to take it apart, how we’re going to put it together and try to make sure that at the very least we don’t lose any serviceability,” said Szlachta, who has a background in collision repair. “In fact, our job is to always improve serviceability.”

Szlachta said a full-size pickup

Tom Wilkinson, communications manager for Chevy Trucks, said, “The other thing that continually evolves are safety standards and crash testing, such as new roof crush standards and new offset front impact standards. We have

Wilkinson if there were any plans to change the Silverado’s body components to aluminum during this mid-cycle update, he said there are no plans to do so. “We already use aluminum hoods on full-size and mid-size trucks,” said Wilkinson.

“Given the ongoing wave of new, refreshed and redesigned vehicles being introduced each year, it’s more important than ever that automakers focus on design for affordable reparability,” said **John Van Alstyne**, President and CEO of I-CAR, the Inter-Industry Conference on Auto Collision Repair. “Understanding and



The 2015 Chevrolet Silverado truck

adapting to the issues and opportunities associated with advanced materials and technologies is not only a key consideration in the early stages of the design and engineering process, but the impact on repair must also be considered up-front to ensure complete, safe and quality, and affordable repairs throughout a vehicle’s total lifecycle.”

The new Silverado is constructed using significant amounts of high-strength steel, particularly in the frame and cab structure. He said this makes the truck stronger and more rigid for improved safety, ride and vibration control, and helps reduce mass for improved fuel economy.

When *Autobody News* asked

to do a lot of re-engineering to make sure that you’re doing well in those tests.”

When *Autobody News* asked

6 WAYS CHEVROLET SILVERADO CUTS COLLISION REPAIR COMPLEXITY

- FRONT FRAME RAIL SECTION**
Depending on the collision, a damaged front section may be cut away, allowing a new, fully-assembled section to be welded in place.
- STRUCTURAL FRONT FENDERS**
Unbolting the front fender also unbolts the supporting structure, eliminating the need to drill out welds when replacing the inner structure.
- BOND-ON BODY PANEL PROCEDURES**
Technician uses ultra-strong structural adhesive to bond non-structural body panels onto vehicle. This helps avoid possible corrosion issues later.
- PRE-PREPARED ROOF PANELS**
Replacement panels are essentially plug-and-play thanks to pre-drilled mounting holes for antennae, lamps, and other equipment.
- ONE-PIECE BODY SIDE OUTERS**
A complete, assembled structure allows technicians to reduce the number of weld seams used in repair, which helps prevent corrosion.
- FLEXIBLE BED REPAIR OPTIONS**
Depending on damage, outer fender or bed side assembly can be replaced instead of replacing entire pickup box.

Engineers incorporated several features into the new Chevrolet Silverado’s body structure in order to help reduce the time, complexity, and cost involved with body repair

with our technician hat on, ensuring we engineer a truck that is straightforward and cost-effective to repair.”

When *Autobody News* asked Szlachta the various requirements that went in to redesigning the truck, he said

truck is typically re-engineered every five to seven years. “The reason why we change is because technology changes,” he said. These new technologies help make the truck quieter, stronger, lighter and more fuel efficient.

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