



## UPS tests delivery vans that use 40% less gas

By Wendy Koch, USA TODAY

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United Parcel Service put its brown delivery van on a strict diet and as a result, developed a new and improved version that gets 40% more miles per gallon. It began testing five of its prototype rigs last month on rural, suburban and urban roads in five U.S. areas.

The company cut the van's weight 10% or 1,000 pounds by replacing the aluminum sheet body panels with rugged, lightweight ABS plastic and then using a smaller, lighter engine. UPS created the CV-23 prototype in partnership with Isuzu, which provided the four-cylinder diesel engine, and Indiana-based Utilimaster, which did the composite body makeover.



"It may not be the most exciting technology that you read about, but for a traditional vehicle, we found a big opportunity to give us a big difference for a conventional fleet, without changing our existing fuel infrastructure," Dale Spencer, UPS' director of automotive engineering, told GreenBiz.com.

If the prototype holds up during the test period that ends in December, Spencer said the lightweight van could eventually replace a third of the UPS delivery fleet, which includes 70,000-plus vehicles worldwide. UPS executives said the up-front costs are affordable and the plastic bod panels are easier to maintain and replace if dinged.

UPS plans to use traditional fuel for the new van, now deployed in the test areas of Lincoln, Neb.; Albany, N.Y.; Tucson, Ariz; Flint, Mich; and Roswell, Ga. It's also testing other vehicles that run on natural gas, hydrogen fuel cells, batteries and a mix of gas and electric.