



New fuel-contamination test facility available at Southwest Research Institute®

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San Antonio – November 27, 2002 – Southwest Research Institute (SwRI®) has completed a 5,000-square-foot laboratory dedicated to fuel contamination research and testing. The new facility provides greater flexibility in the number and type of fuel systems and components that can be tested, improving scheduling for client testing.

“We are offering improved, more efficient research and test facilities with this expansion,” said Dr. Xiaojian Tao, manager of the Contamination Research Section in SwRI’s Engine and Vehicle Research Division. “We saw a need to offer more flexibility for client testing to help them get their products to the market more rapidly. With this state-of-the-art test facility, we can more quickly test client products.”

The new facility consists of more than 4,200 square feet of laboratory space, containing 12 automated test cells. Of these cells, nine are dedicated to gasoline testing, two to diesel testing, and one to hybrid fuel cell testing. Because of the potentially explosive mixtures involved in the testing, each test cell is designed with significant cross ventilation to eliminate accumulation of combustible fuel vapor. Additionally, each test cell has large relief vents that open to the outside when the overpressure exceeds two pounds per square inch.

“Contamination significantly affects the performance and durability of fuel, air, and lubricant components and systems, especially with respect to automotive safety, vehicle performance, and warranty issues,” explained Gary Stecklein, director of SwRI’s Vehicle Research Department. “This new facility enables the Institute to expand our services to all our clients, including automotive and original equipment manufacturers and the military.”

Tao added, “Industry requires more detailed quantitative analyses to ensure that products meet their projected life. The dedicated test cells enable us to test a wide range of variables, including temperature, pressure, fuel flow, and fuel/vapor cycles. We can also vary the amount and types of contaminants introduced into the systems under test.”

Using an automated fluid heating and cooling system, test temperatures can be varied from 40 to 170° F. In addition to contamination testing, shock, vibration, and noise evaluations will also be provided in this facility in the near future.

The SwRI Engine and Vehicle Research Division has achieved certification to ISO 9001 and 9002, ensuring compliance with stringent quality control procedures in design, development, and testing.

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SwRI is an independent, nonprofit, applied research and development organization based in San Antonio, Texas, with more than 2,700 employees and an annual research volume of more than \$319 million.



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