



HOT TOPIC

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MYTHBUSTERS PUTS M2 106 HYBRID TO THE TEST



The MythBusters crew gets about 10 to 12 miles per gallon in their M2 106.

To hear Donald Best tell it, the 2010 Freightliner Trucks M2 106 Hybrid that MythBusters took delivery of a year ago has earned approval from the entire MythBusters team. Best is the shop general and mechanical engineer for Beyond Television Productions, which produces MythBusters episodes for the Discovery Channel. The program uncovers the truth behind popular myths and legends, rating each as “busted,” “plausible” or “confirmed.”

The hybrid dry van M2 106, upfitted by Supreme Corporation to meet MythBuster’s demanding requirements, is essentially a mobile shop. Best explains. “We use the truck on shoots to transport tools, saws, etc., essentially the equivalent of about a third of our entire shop.” The interior is fitted with rolling shelves, and steel aluminum boxes on the sides provide additional storage.

The EPA 2010-compliant diesel-powered M2 106 hybrid is equipped with fuel-efficient selective catalytic reduction emission technology and an Eaton parallel hybrid electric drive unit. An on-board APC battery inverter charger provides power for tools when the truck isn’t running

and gets plenty of use from the MythBusters team. A Maxon flat plate gate folds against the back of the box truck (keeping all of those tools safe), and can be adjusted for height and tilt angle. For additional security, the lift gate can be turned off, ensuring that no one can get into the truck without first getting into the cab.

“The adjustable gate is a godsend for loading and unloading,” says Best, “and the truck’s automatic transmission means that more members of the production crew can drive it.” The truck also can be lowered to drive under reduced height doors, a feature Best calls “very cool.”

The San Francisco-based production crew does some of its testing in the California desert, so long, hot rides of four to 12 hours are not uncommon. The M2’s air conditioning is greatly appreciated, as is the M2’s legendary cab comfort. The cab features two air suspension captain’s chairs, and a small low-set window in the cab’s passenger side door makes it easy for the driver to safely maneuver the truck. “It’s a dream ride,” Best says, admitting that for a long time he didn’t let anyone else drive the M2.



MythBusters crew with their hardworking M2 106 Hybrid.

“The fact that the truck is a hybrid is a real bonus,” says Best. “In city traffic, the truck idles down, using its electronic motor for much better fuel efficiency. With this truck, we are seeing about 10 to 12 miles per gallon.”

“We’re working hard at being green. Even though we destroy a lot for the show, we reuse as much as possible.”

The M2 106’s reputation as a versatile truck with great maneuverability, reliability, efficiency and driver comfort gets a resounding “confirmed” when it comes to doing the job for MythBusters.



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