



More new hardware! In July I bought a 2007 Chevrolet Avalanche LT. Chassis features include 4-wheel-disc ABS, Stabilitrac/Traction Control, and OnStar. The cellular number for this truck is 404.295.7653. There is no messaging service available at that number, but the hands-free operation and higher power make it a better method of talking by telephone while I'm driving. This is my most expensive business tool to date.



During a recent ordeal in which it was necessary to perform some serious surgery on a GMC Yukon to access the data in the SDM, I became aware that I needed more tools than I had. I have added some 18-volt portable DeWalt tools to my collection: a reciprocating saw, a vacuum cleaner, and a metal

cutting circular saw. This Yukon had been struck at the left front corner and along the front of the left side, doing serious damage to the electrical system. The damage was such that the data could not be downloaded from the SDM through the Diagnostic Link Connector. The left front section of the cab flooring was crumpled, preventing the

driver's seat from being moved enough to allow it to be removed. The seat was positioned at or near its rearwardmost location, with the SDM under the front of the seat. The body damages prevented access to the SDM from the front side, and it could not be reached from the back side. It was necessary to cut through and remove the bottom of the driver's seat to reach the SDM, which process was complicated by the fact that it was an 8-way power seat with a controller, motors, and linkages to cut/pry/bend/disconnect. It was a four-hour ordeal, which would have been even longer except for the capable and kind help from a business competitor who had been retained by the owner's attorney. The vacuum is a wet-dry model—have you ever tried to work in a car full of glass shards? Or standing water? The usefulness of the two saws is obvious. I chose the 18-volt models because of the availability of all the tools I wanted able to be powered by the same battery sources.



Another new piece of hardware is a new notebook computer. I had been using a Pentium III machine with a whopping 128 megabytes of RAM ever since I began doing Vetronix CDR downloads. The operating system of this machine was Windows 98; current software requirements are such that the machine was only good for the CDR downloads and email, and it was slow for those. The new

notebook/laptop machine has a 3.2 GHz Pentium 4 processor with a 2 MB L2 cache, 2 gigabytes of DDR2/533 RAM, two 100 GB, 7200-rpm