

Bumper to Bumper...Toyota Indiana Keeps 'Em Comin'

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PRINCETON, Ind. – Toyota Indiana and its 4,700 team members hit a new high today.

Today, a Blizzard Pearl Highlander Hybrid drove off the final assembly line and team members realized their accomplishment – *4 million* vehicles produced.

According to the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, 3,981,626 passenger vehicles are registered in the state. This means Toyota Indiana has produced more vehicles than are registered in its home state. But all of these Toyotas don't stay in Indiana; they just start here.

Company History

"We broke ground here almost 19 years ago to produce Toyota's first full-size pickup truck, the Tundra," said Norm Bafunno, Toyota Indiana president. "Since then, change has been constant. We added the Sequoia full-size SUV and Sienna minivan, shifted our Tundra production to San Antonio, Texas, and brought in the Highlander and Highlander Hybrid midsize SUVs. 4 million vehicles may seem staggering, but our team rose to the occasion every time an opportunity presented itself."

Toyota Indiana has become a significant exporter. Last year, it exported more than 42,000 vehicles to more than 20 countries.

Team members take pride in being a part of the global marketplace, Bafunno said. This seemed evident today, as team members carried many of the export countries' flags with the words "thank you" in each country's native language.

Expansion

Construction is set to begin this month to expand Toyota Indiana's current footprint of 4 million square feet. The additional space will allow for up to 30,000 more Highlanders to be produced annually.

This latest expansion comes in response to the Highlander's strong demand. Highlander sales ended 2014 up 14.5 percent over 2013 and posted a best-ever January this year with more than 11,000 units sold.

Teamwork

Richard Skelton, West Assembly team member, remembers some of the first vehicles that came off the final assembly line. "It seems like the years have flown by," Skelton said. "We've been through tough times, such as the economic downturn in 2008. But great teams always bounce back, and here we are building our 4 millionth vehicle."

That teamwork is present not only inside the manufacturing plant at Toyota, but also in the community and with area suppliers.

"The community has shown incredible support since day one," Bafunno said. "This 4 millionth vehicle is only possible because of the great team effort of our team members, suppliers and citizens of this wonderful community we all call home."