



Ford is expanding its EcoBoost engines for its cars and trucks with a new 2.0-litre four-cylinder in the 2012 Edge and 2012 Explorer (XLT model shown) that feature the power of a V6.

Ford gives the 2012 Edge and Explorer an EcoBoost

By **JIM ROBINSON**
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ROMEO, Mi.: If you don't think the automakers are doing enough for the environment, read on.

While almost every manufacturer is starting to roll out electrified vehicles, the fact remains the internal combustion engine will be here for years to come.

But major advances are being made and one comes from Ford with its EcoBoost technology.

By integrating independent variable valve timing, piston cooling jets, direct fuel injection, more efficient turbocharging and lessening friction in internal mass Ford is now significantly increasing EcoBoost production.

In effect, an EcoBoost V6 has the power and torque of the V8 and the new 2.0-litre inline four-cylinder, the focus of this story, has the power of a V6 along with four-cylinder fuel economy.

This engine will start appearing in the 2012 Ford Explorer and 2012 Edge coming this fall.

With 240 hp and 270 lb/ft of torque, it has 30 more horsepower and 15 lb/ft of torque more than the 4.0-

litre V6 found in the 2010 Explorer.

That's right, more ponies and torque from an engine half the size.

Ford recently had a group of Canadian autowriters out to its sprawling proving grounds in Romeo, Michigan, to try out the new power plant in the 2012 Edge and Explorer.

The 2.0-litre appears almost tiny especially when sitting in an engine bay designed for a big V6.

Other than the engine, both models are identical to the current 2011 Edge and Explorer except a 3.5-litre V6 is now standard replacing the old 4.0-litre.

The 2.0-litre will be a \$1,000 option and only available on front-wheel-drive (FWD) versions. All-wheel-drive (AWD) models offer strictly the 3.5-litre.

A six-speed automatic is the only transmission available.

We had a very busy day in Romeo with other activities such as comparing the Focus to the Honda Civic for ride and handling and the Focus against the Hyundai Elantra for fuel economy not to mention a chance to wail away in a 444 hp Boss Mustang.

I did the Focus briefly and didn't go for the Mustang as I wanted as much seat time in the Edge and

Explorer as possible.

I haven't driven many Fords lately and, in fact, I believe this was the first time I've driven an Edge.

The exercise was primarily on public roads but also a road course on the proving grounds with a lot of elevation changes and very tight corners.

First up was an Explorer, the mid-range XLT model, with 18-inch aluminum wheels and the transmission with Selectshift sequential manual mode. Four-wheel discs with ABS, and Ford's stability control called AdvanceTrac with included Roll Stability Control (RSC) are standard on the Edge and Explorer.

Very well fitted out inside, the Explorer lived up to its 'same power as a V6' billing from launch. Responsive to gas pedal inputs, the six-speed and the 270 lb/ft of torque made merging onto the Interstate swift and clean.

Later on the proving ground test track, I did notice a gap between the four lower and two upper gears when left in Drive. This was partly due to the steep grade leading down to a sweeping corner where I didn't brake but carried as much speed as I dared through before tromping the pedal to head back up-

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