

Chrysler LLC, the automaker considering a combination with General Motors Corp. to survive, has been forced to kill its only gasoline-electric model because of poor sales of its largest sport-utility vehicle.

The hybrid versions of the Dodge Durango and Chrysler Aspen SUVs, which went on sale this month, are produced at the Newark, Delaware, factory that Chrysler said last week will shut by Dec. 31. The plant also makes gasoline-only versions of those models.

Chrysler's decision leaves it without plans for any new hybrid models for at least a year. No other major automaker is more dependent on pickup trucks, SUVs and minivans, which have lost sales this year because of high gasoline price. Chrysler already is playing catch-up to competitors such as Toyota Motor Corp., which has sold hybrid models for more than a decade.

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