



The Mack LR Electric, Mack Trucks' first fully electric vehicle, is being manufactured in the Lehigh Valley. (photo courtesy Mack Trucks)

Mack Trucks Manufacturing Fully Electric Refuse Truck in the Lehigh Valley

By Colin McEvoy

Mack Trucks is manufacturing its first fully electric vehicle, a zero-emissions refuse truck called the Mack LR Electric. And they're being made right here in the Lehigh Valley.

Pre-production vehicles of the revolutionary new model are already underway at the company's Lower Macungie Township facility, Lehigh Valley Operations (LVO), the same place where all heavy-duty Mack trucks built for North America are assembled.

"Mack's leadership in the refuse segment goes back more than a century, and we're pleased to build on that heritage today by announcing the commercialization of the LR Electric model," said Martin Weissburg, President of Mack Trucks, in a press release. "This clean, quiet and powerful truck demonstrates the very best of Mack innovation and our people, and I couldn't be more proud to announce our plans to build it."

Equipped with a fully electric integrated Mack drivetrain, the Mack LR Electric will serve both commercial and municipal customers. The vehicle was first introduced as a prototype in 2018, and Mack announced plans in September 2020 to commercialize the LR Electric in 2021.

Although Mack built some hybrid trucks in the 2000s and tested electric technology in other vehicles, the technology was very expensive at the time. Since then, battery technology has advanced significantly and costs have come down, making a commercial vehicle more viable.

The LR Electric features Mack's fully integrated electric powertrain with twin electric motors and four NMC lithium-ion batteries providing vehicle propulsion, as well as power for all onboard accessories. The batteries utilize level 3 DC charging at up to a 150 kW rate.

"The LR Electric is paving the way toward widespread acceptance of zero-emissions refuse trucks," Weissburg said in a past press release. "As we begin delivering them to customers in the coming year, we remain committed to ensuring these trucks are built to meet the unique needs of the refuse industry."

Barracough said electric vehicles are perfect for waste and sanitation companies because the companies tend to be very environmentally-friendly, and because the refuse application particularly lends itself to electrification.

The two electric motors from the LR Electric have a combined output of 448 continuous horsepower. The powertrain delivers 4,051 lb.-ft. of torque available from zero RPM, which is fed through a two-speed Mack Powershift transmission to the rear axles.

It also operates quietly, which allows the LR Electric to meet the needs of customers working in an urban setting who are seeking to cut noise pollution and operate quietly at night, according to the company.



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