

# Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

## 2010 Mercedes E350 4Matic

BY KATHLEEN LINDER

The Mercedes 2010 E350 is elegant from the first impressions and carries it into the interior of the vehicle. It has a fresh crispness about it with a classic touch. From the first drive it had me in a WOW factor, this is a vehicle that will lure new buyers in.

The E350 is powered by a 268 horsepower 3.5-liter V6 with 258 pound-feet of torque. The torque peak is flat from 2,400-5,000 rpm and feels surprisingly stout in the mid-range. The engine is paired with a standard seven-speed automatic transmission. A switch on the center console allows the driver to select between comfort and sport modes. In comfort mode, the throttle and shift response is slowed down for smoother launches, while sport makes everything more aggressive. The sport mode also tightens up the dampers to keep the body a bit more level when cornering. The E350 was equipped with the 4Matic full-time automatic all-wheel-drive system.

The E350 uses a speed sensitive hydraulic power steering system actually provides very good levels of feedback about the cornering forces while negotiating a curve. Unlike many cars equipped with steering wheel mounted paddle shifters those in the E350 actually yield very quick response from the transmission making them actually useful. The Steering caught me off guard at first because it was so responsive that I felt I had to adjust a little to it. The handling of the E350 is very well-known for producing rigid and stiff chassis, the new E-Class is no exception. The chassis is



Tested Vehicle Information: 3.5 Liter 24-Valve Aluminum V6 engine; 7-speed Driver Adaptive Automatic Transmission with Steering Wheel Shift Paddles; 17 city mpg, 24 highway mpg; MSRP \$51,100 Test Vehicle Price \$62,735.

so solid and stiff, that it is completely free of anything called flex and rattles.

Among the new features available on the 2010 Mercedes-Benz E-Class are adaptive high-beam headlights, which include a camera designed to recognize oncoming traffic and adjusts lamp intensity between low and high beams. Also new for the E-Class are a night-vision system and Mercedes' active multi-contour seats with massage function. Other options available on most models include a navigation system, rearview camera, elec-

tronic trunk closer, keyless access and engine start, and adaptive cruise control. The sedan's optional Sport Package include specific wheels and trim. Similar features are available on the coupe as part of its Appearance Package. Some of the safety features include ABS, traction control, antiskid system, curtain-side airbags, front-side airbags, rear-side airbags, hip-protecting side airbags, and a driver-knee airbag and Mercedes' driver-adjustable air suspension.

This all-new E350 is both gorgeous and sophisticated, offering

such state of the art technology. It driver massage unit needs a little adjustment because it is so light to touch you might just miss it. It pro-

vides a balanced blend of performance, handling dynamics and interior comfort; without losing any of Mercedes-Benz classic style.

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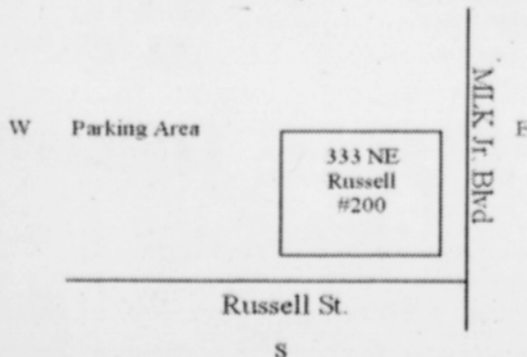
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