

VACCO Industries is proud to provide a high performance cold gas propulsion system for NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory Mars Cube One (MarCO), which will first ever, deep space use of miniature, modular "CubeSat" spacecraft design. If successful, the twin cube-sats, nicknamed "Wall-E" and "Eva", will fly separately towards Mars and potentially pass the planet, about 2,175 miles away, just as InSight is landing on the surface of the planet.

If all goes well, on Nov. 26, 2018, "Wall-E" and "Eva" should be flying past Mars during the critical minutes when InSight enters the Martian atmosphere, descends toward the surface and touches down.

MarCO's propulsion system uses compressed R236FA gas, a common propellant in fire extinguishers. Each MarCO has eight thrusters that can release this cold-gas propellant in different directions from a single, shared tank.

We have just received word that each of the MarCO units have been successfully deployed and the propulsion systems have been initially fired and ensured that everything is working properly!

