

SpaceX launches, lands recycled rocket

October 12 2017

SpaceX on Wednesday launched a rocket that had already flown to space and landed it successfully on an ocean platform, as part of its ongoing effort to recycle costly rocket components.

On a clear autumn evening at 6:53 pm (2253 GMT), the tall, white Falcon 9 rocket blasted off from Cape Canaveral, Florida carrying the Echostar 105/SES-11 satellite.

"Couldn't be more perfect weather for a launch," said a commentator on SpaceX's live webcast.

The satellite aims to provide television coverage and communications capabilities to North America, Hawaii, Mexico and the Caribbean.

It is a "dual-mission" satellite for the US-based operator EchoStar and Luxembourg-based operator SES.

About 10 minutes after launch, the tall portion of the rocket, known as the first stage, returned to Earth for a controlled, upright landing on a dronship called "Of Course I Still Love You," stationed in the Atlantic.

The Falcon 9 rocket "is currently standing on the deck," said the SpaceX commentator, as video images showed the smoking rocket securely parked on the platform.

"Yet another successful landing of a Falcon 9 first stage," he added.

"This is our 18th successful landing."

The Falcon 9's first stage which launched Wednesday had previously flown on a cargo mission to the International Space Station in February.

SpaceX flew a recycled rocket component for the first time in March of this year.

Wednesday's launch was its "third successful mission with a flight-proven orbital class rocket," SpaceX said on Twitter.

The effort is part of CEO Elon Musk's broader vision of making spaceflight more affordable and enabling easier, more economical [rocket](#) travel, both from city to city on Earth and eventually to deep space.

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Citation: SpaceX launches, lands recycled rocket (2017, October 12) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-10-spacex-recycled-rocket.html>

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