



U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

Date Received

Od. or _____
rt. dt. _____
od. rt. _____
up. hr. _____

Reference No.

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Apt. No.

City

State

Zip

Daytime Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES ☐ NO
In the absence of an authorized agent, NHTSA WILL NOT provide information or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 05/17/03

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Vehicle Identification No. (VIN.) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side)

Make

Model

Year

2T1BR32E03C021854

TOYOTA

COROLLA
LE

2003

Purchased Date

Dealer's Name

CRYSTAL AUTO MALL

Engine Size

(CID/CCL)

1.8L

☐ Turbo☐ Diesel☒ Gas☐ Fuel Injection

04/26/02

Dealer's City

GREEN BROOK

State

NJ

Zip Code

08812

No. Cylinders

4

☒ New ☐ UsedManufacture Date
(on driver's door or pillar)

Transmission Type

☐ Manual☒ Automatic

Restraint System

☒ Driverside Air Bag☐ Motorbelt☒ Passengerside Air Bag☐ 2-Point Belt☒ 3-Point Belt

Cruise Control

☒ Yes☐ No

Drivetrain

☒ Front☐ Rear☐ 4-Wheel

Vehicle Type

☒ Car☐ Van☐ Minivan☐ Other☐ Sport Utility☐ Truck☐ Motorcycle

Body Style

☐ 2-Door☒ 4-Door☐ Stationwagon☐ Pick Up Truck☐ Other

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Part Name(s) DRIVER'S FRONT
LEFT SEAT SAFETY BELT

Location

☐ Left☒ Front☐ Right☐ Rear

Failed Part(s)

☒ Original☐ Replacement

Handicap Adaptive Equip

☐ Yes☒ No

TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Brand

N/A

Tire Name

N/A

Complete Tire Size

N/A

DOT No.

N/A

No. of Failures

Date(s) of Failure(s)

SINCE PURCHASED DATE 04/26/02

Mileage at Failure(s)

Vehicle Speed at Failure(s)

Failed Part(s)

Available?

☐ Yes☒ No

NHTSA Previously

Contacted?

☐ Yes☒ No

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies). Attach photos if available.)

Crash

☐ Yes ☒ No

Fire

☐ Yes ☒ No

Number of Persons Injured

NONE

Number of Fatalities

NONE

Reported to Manufacturer

☒ Yes ☐ No

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).

THE DRIVER SEAT BELT IN MY 2003 TOYOTA COROLLA LE PURCHASED IN APRIL 2002 IS LOCKING ME UP IN MY DRIVER SEAT AT EVERY, EVEN VERY LIGHT DECELERATION OF THE CAR. I HAVE TO STOP MY CAR BEFORE THE INTERSECTION RELEASE THE LOCKED SEAT BELT AND FOLLOW SLOWLY TO THE INTERSECTION LINE NOW BEING ABLE TO MOVE IN MY SEAT AND OBSERVE THE INTERSECTION SITUATION. IF INSTEAD OF OBSERVING THE TRAFFIC I HAVE TO WORK WITH RELEASING MY SEAT BELT THE SITUATION IMPAIRS THE SAFETY OF MY DRIVING.

Continue on back.

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Mail postage free or fax to 202-366-7882

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Somerville, N.J. [REDACTED]
Tel. [REDACTED]

TOYOTA CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE CENTER
TOYOTA MOTOR SALES, U.S.A., INC.
P.O. Box 2991
TORRANCE, CA 90509-4331

January 24, 2003.

Re: Notification of Toyota CAC, as above, about defective seat belt in my Toyota Corolla 2003 and seeking remedies under the Lemon Law according to Toyota requirements in Toyota "Owner's Warranty Rights Notification" book.

1. Description of claimed car:

Make – Toyota Corolla 2003
Vehicle ID – 2T1BR32E03C021854
Selling dealer – Crystal Toyota 220 RTE 22West, Green Brook NJ 08812
Purchase date – April 24, 2002

2. Description of the defective feature:

The driver's seat belt is locked up when even very light brakes are applied making for driver difficulties to observe correctly traffic at every intersection making the driving unsafe. Driving this car, the belts are locking me at the back of my seat, so I have to go to full stop 2 FT before intersection, release the belts, and continue driving the car to the street line at very low speed. This is very dangerous because the driver is more concern about resetting belts, than to observe traffic.

3. Description of driver's position in the car:

As "Toyota strongly recommends" in Toyota Corolla 2003 Owner's Manual page 40, my position in driver sit is: "as far back as possible from the steering wheel while still maintaining control of the vehicle".

4. Actions I have taken to resolve the seat belt malfunction.

At June 24, 02 – the car was tested in Crystal Toyota Service who agree with my complain and the new set belt was ordered by Crystal Service.

At July 03, 02 – I was informed that the belt arrived and I had another appointment. After an hour waiting I was tolled "the set belt color is wrong and Crystal have to order another belt.

At July 17, 02 - I was informed that the right belt arrived and I had another appointment. This time the Crystal Service Manager Robert Swiatek did a test drive with me and agrees that the belt is too sensitive for locking itself. He advises me to call first to Toyota Customer Assistance Center to discuss the problem. I agree to call to Toyota.

At July 17, 02 16:00 - I called to Toyota Customer Assistance Center 1-800-331-4331 Mr. Rob. I explained the problem and he gave me case number #2002-07-17-10-50 and asked me to wait 2 to 3 month for solving the problem.

At July 19, 02 - I call to Robert Swiatek, giving him a Toyota case and asking to help me. He never did anything.

At August 08, 02 - Debbie from Crystal asked me if I want still to replace the belt. I did another appointment in Crystal Service for next day.

At August 09, 02 - when I came to Crystal Service the Manager Robert Swiatek refuse to make any work with my car and refuse any help in this matter in the future. He said "this is Toyota problem not Crystal so he cannot help me".

At September 29, 02 - having no response from my telephone 07/17/02 to Toyota I called to Toyota 1-800-331-4331 again. Ms Janis gave me another case number #2002-0930-0536 and promise that Toyota will contact me within 3 days.

At October 02, 02 - Mr. Mike Williams from Toyota Regional Office called me making another appointment in Toyota Route 1 in Rahway NJ to test my car.

At October 25, 02 - Mr. Mike Williams from Toyota Regional Office after we did a test drive with my car, he said, that the driver's belt is extremely sensitive but Toyota do not have another type of belt, and he cannot help me in this matter. I can only go to arbitration and return the car.

At December 11, 02 - was a arbitration hearing in Crystal Auto Mall 220 RTE. 22 West, Green Brook, NJ

At December 17, 02 - NCDS sent me an arbitration decision denied my request and close the case.

At December 28, 02 - I informed NCDS about not accepting their decision attaching the explanation letter.

At January 14, 03 - I have sent a complain to Somerset County Division Of Consumer Affairs in New Jersey to seek remedies under the Lemon Law.

5. Action, or remedy I believe would resolve my problem:

The situation with locking driver's belt makes my Toyota Corolla 2003 for me very unsafe. The only concern of the driver at every intersection should be to observe the traffic, not to release his seat belt first. There is obvious, that Toyota for designing this belt locking mechanism used too low deceleration factor (miles/hour/sec). I tested dozen of American cars for this feature, and in none of them the belts were locked at normal driving, until at emergency I applied full brakes.

I see the only possible two solutions:

1. - The Toyota factory fix my belt to higher deceleration factor,

Or

2. - I have to return the car for full credit of my all costs.



(Owner of Toyota Corolla 2003)

Attached documents:

1. Car purchase document 04/26/02
2. Crystal Auto Mall work order 06/24/02
3. NCDS Customer Claim Form 11/09/02
4. Toyota Motor Sales Response Form 11/15/02
5. NCDS Decision 12/13/02
6. Not acceptance NCDS decision 12/28/02
7. J.Arndt explanation of not acceptance 12/28/02
8. NCDS response to item 7, 01/09/03