



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 100145

Date Received

25-JUN-2003

Repository ☐

Reference No.
10024940

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

OCALA

State FL

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening 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 authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date: 6/1/03

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Make

BUICK

Model

PARK AVENUE

Model Year

1999

Date Purchased

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine: 3700

No. Cylinders

Fuel Type:

Original Owner

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

☐ Antilock Brakes

Powertrain

☐ Cruise Control

Vehicle Component Code

063200 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING; EXHAUST SYSTEM; MANIFOLD

Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

23-JUN-2003

Failure Mileage

42000

Failure Speed

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM41SABC036)

☐ Original Equipment
☐ Prior Repair

Failure Location:

Tire Component Code

Tire Failure Type

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make:

Date Manufactured:

Model No./Name:

Seat Type:

Installation System:

Child Seat Component Code:

Failed Part:

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), condition, and injury(ies).)

Crash

☐ Yes ☒ No

Fire

☐ Yes ☒ No

Number of Persons Injured

Number of Deaths

Reported to Police

N

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

Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e., parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

CONSUMER STATES: MANIFOLD FAILED, CAUSING THE ENGINE TO STALL. DEALER NOTIFIED. *AK

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579) This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the 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.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT(S), FAILURE(S), CRASH(ES), INJURY(IES)

2003 JUL 25 AM 8:19

8 July 2003

On 18 or 19 June 2003, my wife left work and noticed her car (99 Buick Park Avenue) was running strangely. It stalled in traffic. She managed to get the car restarted and returned home driving about ten miles. I called the Buick dealership, Bo Williams in Ocala, FL for an appointment (23 June 2003 at 2:30 PM). On the 20 or 21 June, I looked under the hood at the engine because it sounded like the engine intake valves were tapping loudly. I noticed white exhaust from the tail pipe and the engine coolant overflow tank was empty. I purchased 2 gallons of permanent antifreeze and proceeded to refill the coolant overflow and radiator. I replaced one gallon of 50/50 antifreeze solution. There was no apparent antifreeze leaking from engine onto the driveway. The engine intake valve noise remained.

I took the car for the scheduled appointment on 23 June 2003. On the way to the garage (about ten miles), the car began to act sluggish, no power. I also noticed the air conditioning was not working. Within a 1/4 mile from the dealership the car almost stalled at a traffic light in a busy intersection. The service engine soon light came on and the dash was beeping. I made it to the dealership for the appointment. I stated I wanted the cars coolant system pressure checked because it appeared to be loosing coolant, the air conditioning system checked for not cooling and check the engine computer for the service engine soon light. An attendant drove the car around the lot and back into the customer service bay for a short check out. The car stalled at the car check in location and had to be restarted by the garage mechanics. I told the mechanics that the car appeared to be losing antifreeze. The mechanic squeezed the radiator hose and noted the lack of coolant in the hose. The mechanics knew exactly what was wrong because they have been seeing and repairing this particular problem almost on a daily basis.

The engine intake manifolds on the GM 3800 series engine have an latent engineering design defect causing premature gasket failure which causes engine coolant to be sucked into the engine intake manifold and burned in the engine. This depletes the antifreeze coolant in the engine. The mechanics have been replacing these intake manifolds on the 3800 series engines on a regular basis. At times, they could not get enough intake manifolds and they were back ordered. I was fortunate and left the car for repair the next day.

The next day, I called the dealership and stated I wanted the defective intake manifold, which I now have. The repair bill is enclosed. Apparently GM is aware they have a poorly designed intake manifold. However, I was told there is no recall for this problem. Customers like me are paying for repairs to GM's poor design. This design problem appears to be a problem on the 3800 series engines GM uses on other model cars other than just the Buick Park Ave.

As far as the air conditioning not working, this repair was done by Ace Auto Air. Repair bill is enclosed. I requested the damaged refrigerant line and have it.

I am concerned for safety since coolant is being ingested into the engine intake manifold causing stalling, loss of power and loss of engine coolant. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to deduce that lack of engine coolant can cause engine over heating and possible engine fires.

Concerned GM customer

Ocala, FL

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**