



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 100147

Date Received: 11-02-04 2:27  
18-NOV-2003

Repository   
Reference No.  
10048114

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name: [Redacted]  
Address: [Redacted]  
City: STONE MOUNTAIN State: GA Zip Code: [Redacted]

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: [Redacted] Date: 1/10/04

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 1G4HP52K8T [Redacted]  
Make: BUICK Model: LESABRE Model Year: 1996  
Date Purchased: May 2000 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: Jay Automotive 706-324-1234  
Original Owner:  Dealer's City: Columbus State: GA Zip Code: 6  
Transmission Type: automatic  Antilock Brakes  Cruise Control  
Powertrain: [Redacted] Vehicle Component Code: 083200 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING; EXHAUST SYSTEM; MANIFOLD  
Multiple Failure: 1

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Incident Date(s): 02-NOV-2003 - 13-AUG-2003 Failure Mileage: 106000 - 113,000 Failure Speed: 25 Intake manifold (plenum)

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE**

Tire Make: [Redacted] Tire Model (Name or Number): [Redacted] Tire Size (Example P215/65R15): [Redacted]  
DOT No. (Example: DOTM18ABC036): [Redacted]  Original Equipment  Prior Repair Failure Location: [Redacted]  
Tire Component Code: [Redacted] Tire Failure Type: [Redacted]

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE**

Make: [Redacted] Date Manufactured: [Redacted] Model No./Name: [Redacted]  
Seat Type: [Redacted] Installation System: [Redacted]  
Child Seat Component Code: [Redacted] Failed Part: [Redacted]

**APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION**

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

Crash:  Yes  No Fire:  Yes  No  
Number of Persons Injured: [Redacted] Number of Deaths: [Redacted] 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 TOOK VEHICLE TO DEALER FOR INSPECTION, AND MECHANIC NOTICED THAT THE PLASTIC INTAKE MANIFOLD CRACKED, CAUSING FLUID TO LEAK ONTO THE ENGINE. \*AK

See attached narrative and repair invoices

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.

Owner: [REDACTED]

Vehicle: Buick LeSabre 1996

VIN: 1G4HP52K6T [REDACTED]

I experienced a problem with my '96 Buick LeSabre on the evening of August 13, 2003. I had driven 15 miles home from work. After allowing the car to sit for an hour in the driveway, I started out again, but only made it about 3 miles before the car failed and stranded me by the side of the road. Symptoms of failure were the engine just seemed to cut out, forcing me to coast to a stop. I returned to the car two hours later to see if it would start and it did. By this time it was dark, so I drove carefully home, watching my gauges. A mile down the road, the engine light came on and suddenly all power ceased, no motor, no lights, no power steering, nothing ...and I was coasting in the dark in traffic. I was scared to death, but was able to maneuver the car to the side of the road, where it remained until I could get it towed the next day to my mechanic.

Initially, the mechanic identified the problem as a bad battery that had fried the battery cables and I picked up my car the next day. However, I had the same type of car failure with the car as I drove out of his lot, less than a mile down the road. So, I had the car towed back for further inspection.

This time, after examining the problem, my mechanic told me that the intake manifold or "plenum" had cracked and allowed radiator fluid to back up into the engine, causing the engine to seize. This had apparently also been the cause of the electrical system high heat that burned the battery cables. The service I received included the jwork detailed on the attached bills. The engine needed to be totally cleaned out. Wires had burned and needed replacement, and the plenum itself had to be replaced. And the thermostate and radiator cap were replaced. Total cost of this repair, listed on two bills) was \$ 1298.52.

**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).**