



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 1387

Date Received

2004 FEB 24 AM 10:01

07-JAN-2004

Repository ☐

Reference No.

10053519

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

CHESTER

State VA

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 authorized signature, please print your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 2/11/04

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

1G4HP52F

Make

BUICK

Model

LESABRE

Model Year

1997

Date Purchased

1996

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

BROWN BUICK 804-779-7283

Engine:

No. Cylinders

6

Fuel Type:

Reg.

Original Owner

☒

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

AUTOMATIC

☒ Antilock Brakes

☒ Cruise Control

Powertrain

Vehicle Component Code

121200 EXTERIOR LIGHTING:HEADLIGHTS:SWITCH

Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

JAN. 4-04

Failure Mileage

55000

Failure Speed

65

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM15ABC036)

☐ 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), crash(es), and injury(ies).)

Crash

☐ Yes

☒ No

Fra

☐ Yes

☒ No

Number of Persons Injured

0

Number of Deaths

0

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).

HEADLIGHTS WENT OFF WITHOUT WARNING WHILE DRIVING AT 65 MPH. CONSUMER HAD TO PUT THERE HAZARD LIGHTS ON, AND USE THE LIGHT OF THE MOTORIST IN THE FRONT OF HIM TO SEE. IN AN ATTEMPT TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM THE DEALERSHIP REPLACED THE HEADLIGHT SWITCH AND OTHER COMPONENTS. HOWEVER, DEALERSHIP WAS NOT SURE THAT THIS WOULD CORRECT THE PROBLEM. *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), and Injury(ies)

SEE ENCLOSED LETTER

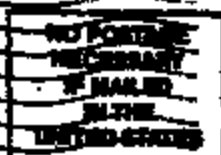
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U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY MAIL, HWY, TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation, NVS-216
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590



**VEHICLE
OWNER'S
QUESTIONNAIRE**

JT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE

TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS
COMPLETE THIS FORM
ON

DASH2DOT

and dial toll free at

1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
(DASH) & DOT



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration
<http://www.safercar.gov>

[REDACTED]
Chester, Va. [REDACTED]
Jan. 9, 2004

Buick Motor Division
Customer Relations Center
902 E. Hamilton Avenue
Flint, MI 48550

Vehicle Identification #: 1G4HP52K6V [REDACTED]

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is a copy of the work order for repairs to 1997 Buick LeSabre along with a copy of the check for payment. The amount of the bill having relevance to this letter for work on the faulty headlights is \$353.85.

On the evening of Sunday Jan. 4, 2004 I was traveling north on interstate 95 from North Carolina to Virginia with three passengers in the car. It was after the sun had set and it was very dark. Without warning, my headlights went out and would not come back on. Very luckily, I made it to the next exit and came off to a service station lot where I managed to get the lights back on by juggling the light switch and the automatic gear shift lever. We proceeded again, and in around 30 minutes the same thing occurred. After the same procedure the lights came on again. As I was approaching home, the lights went out again. This time I made it home without lights for the last several miles by following closely behind my son's car leading the way. The next morning, lights now working again, I delivered the car to Brown's Buick in Richmond, Virginia to be repaired.

The very capable and qualified mechanic at Brown's Buick could not locate the problem, and consulted with someone higher up at Buick Motor Co. who analyzes problems. It was suggested that the work shown on the work order be done.

I have reported the condition to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. They also gave me a number to call at Buick Motor Company, 1-800-521-7300, which I called and spoke with Ms. Tysine Tucker. She contacted someone higher up at Buick Motor Company to ask for financial help with the repair bill. She called me back later and reported that financial help was denied because of the mileage on the car.

In addition to the above described unsafe condition in the car, the following condition has existed since the car was new, but I never knew something was wrong until the mechanic told me today that the lights were not supposed to act like that. The condition was: Whenever the lights were on and the gear shift lever was put in the park position, the lights would go off. Also, the ignition had to be on for the lights to come on at all. I

always thought this was strange but once when I asked the mechanic about it I was told the lights were supposed to be that way; he had thought the car had running lights, in which case the lights are suppose to go out when the transmission is in the park position. So, hindsight tells me that the headlights have always been faulty since the car was new.

I cannot possibly conceive how Buick Motor Company could seemingly disregard such a serious safety defect so lightly even though the car is no longer under warranty. The warranty is really not the issue, and neither is the cost of repair, although that is important. I would think Buick Motor Company would be very anxious to remedy the problem regardless of mileage or age on the car as a matter of civil responsibility to their customers' safety. Of less importance is the issue of Buick Motor Company wanting and needing to maintain an acceptable public image. In addition, as I explained to Ms. Tucker, I have bought Buicks since in the 1950's, and am now considering a 2004 Buick Century. I would trade in my 1990 Buick Century. However, after the headlight experience with the 1997 LeSabre, which has only approximately 53,500 miles, buying another Buick at present seems un-wise until satisfactory remedial action is made on this serious safety defect.

Ms. Tucker offered excuses such as the car being out of warranty and Brown Buick has not serviced the car regularly. Even though the car has been regularly serviced at other places, the service record is completely irrelevant to the present head light defect.

At any rate, if Buick Motor Company neglects its responsibility in this matter, I feel that it is my duty to inform as many potential victims as possible, by any means available to me including word of mouth and the media.

I hope to receive a letter or telephone call (804-748-7176) from you in the near future letting me know what action Buick Motor Company is taking to alleviate this dangerous situation that existed in my car and perhaps many other Buicks like mine. I truly think it would be unconscionable for Buick Motor Company to let this matter rest un-addressed.

Very truly yours,



Copy: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration