



**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: 2004 JUN -4 PM 1:01  
10076023

Ord. or r. dt. od. rt. up. ltr.

Reference No.

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name: [Redacted]  
Street No.: [Redacted] Apt. No.: [Redacted]  
City: KENNDRE State: NY Zip Code: [Redacted]

Daytime Telephone Number: [Redacted]

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?  YES  NO  
In the absence of your response, NHTSA will use your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner: [Redacted] Date: 5/14/04

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Vehicle Identification No. (VIN): 365DA03E43555432 Make: BUICK Model: RENDEZVOUS Year: 2003

Purchased Date: 12-31-03 Dealer's Name: MIKE SMITH BUICK - PONTIAC Dealer's City: LOCKPORT State: NY Zip Code: 14094  
Engine Size (CID/COOL): 3AL No. Cylinders: 6 Turbo Diesel Gas Fuel Injection

Manufacture Date: 11-02 Transmission Type: Automatic Restraint System: Driver's Side Air Bag, Passenger's Side Air Bag, 3-Point Belt Cruise Control: Yes Drivetrain: Front Vehicle Type: Sport Utility Body Style: 4-Door

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Part Name(s): HUBCAPS - FAILURE & LOSS Location: Front Failed Part(s): Original Replacement Handicap Adaptive Equip: No

TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Brand: Complete Tire Size: DOT No.: No. of Failures: Date(s) of Failure(s): Mileage at Failure(s): Vehicle Speed at Failure(s): Failed Part(s) Available? NHTSA Previously Contacted?

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Attach photos if available.)

Crash: No Fire: No Number of Persons Injured: 0 Number of Fatalities: 0 Reported to Manufacturer: Yes

Narrative Description of incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies):  
**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED**

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.

On Dec 31, 2003 we leased a 2003 Buick Rendezvous from:

Mike Smith Buick-Pontiac  
6014 South Transit Rd.  
Lockport, NY 14094

In the 17 months that we have had the vehicle we have lost five hubcaps off the two front wheels. These include the two originals, and three replacements, all installed at dealers. One of the replacements was installed at Mike Smith, and the other two were installed at:

Skill Buick  
363 Delaware Ave.  
Tonawanda, NY 14150

We chose Skill because of it being closer to home. Skill replaced one hubcap at their expense, and charged us for the second. They also told us to contact Buick Customer Service if we were not satisfied with this arrangement. At both dealers we were not able to make them understand that we felt that there was some type of problem causing the loss of the hubcaps. They only seemed to be interested in the cost of the hubcaps. At no time, at either dealer was any type of inspection made to determine if there was a problem with wheels, lug nuts, brakes, or steering.

The hubcaps in question are plastic covers that are held in place with plastic nuts screwed onto extended and externally threaded lug nuts. Since all of the hubcaps have been lost while driving, it is evident that all five of the plastic nuts have failed either singly or all at once in some type of major event. One hubcap was replaced at Skill Buick, by a technician, and did not even make it home, a distance of approximately four miles.

The cost of hubcaps is not the issue. What is causing them to fall off while driving is what has us very concerned. Is it some type of force on the wheel during braking, turning, or high speed driving? This concern does not seem to be shared by anyone at GM-Buick. The service manager at Skill washed his hands of the whole issue, and directed us to contact Buick Customer Service. We contacted:

Buick Div.-General Motors Corp.  
P.O. Box 33136  
Detroit, MI 48232-5136  
Diane Crisp  
1-866-952-4368 Ext. 57925  
Service Request: 1-191135836

After several phone conversations and letters, we received a coupon for a free oil change, and a polite brush-off that said they were no longer going to do anything, and to contact the Better Business Bureau if we weren't satisfied. This last correspondence from them is attached. They were told that we were definitely not satisfied, and that their answer was unacceptable. At no time was there any concern shown to me continually mentioning the possibility of a safety-related problem. The impression we were given was that they felt we only trying to obtain free hubcaps.

Since we have gone through two dealers, the area service manager, and Buick Customer Service, and been given nothing but a free oil change, our concerns seem to be falling on deaf ears. We would like to make it very clear, we are not looking to obtain more free hubcaps. We would like someone to resolve the problem that is causing them to fail and fall off. Currently we are driving the vehicle with no hubcaps on either of the front wheels. We will not feel safe driving this vehicle until the problem has been addressed and resolved. There has to be some type of problem that would cause this, hopefully it will not result in a more catastrophic incident.



**BUICK**

*Customer Assistance Center*

April 6, 2004

[REDACTED]  
Buffalo, NY [REDACTED]

Service Request: [REDACTED]  
Customer Relationship Manager: Diane Crisp

Dear [REDACTED]

We are sorry you continue to be dissatisfied with the decision we made concerning your 2003 Buick Rendezvous. We know you are sincere in the position you have taken, and we trust we have been able to explain our point of view.

In circumstances such as these, General Motors believes that our customers should have the opportunity to deal with unresolved matters in a fast, fair and free dispute resolution process. For that reason, we participate in the Better Business Bureau's BBB AUTO LINE program, an independent dispute resolution process administered by the Council of Better Business Bureaus. BBB AUTO LINE provides mediation and arbitration for eligible warranty-related disputes.

As a GM customer, BBB AUTO LINE is available to you at no cost. In certain circumstances, you may be required to use this program prior to participation in other resolution methods. The BBB AUTO LINE program is discussed in your vehicle's "Warranty and Owner Assistance Information Booklet."

To file your case with BBB AUTO LINE, or get more information about the program, call the BBB at 1-800-955-5100 (Monday through Friday during normal business hours). You may also access the BBB AUTO LINE website at any time (including evenings, weekends and holidays) by visiting <<http://www.dr.bbb.org/goauto>>

Whether you contact them by telephone or Internet, the BBB will provide you with full program details, current eligibility standards of the BBB AUTO LINE program and will assist you with any questions you have.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this matter.

Sincerely,

General Motors Corporation