



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

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

FEB 23 2005

NVS-216 JCC
Ref. # 10092648

Antigo, WI

Dear

Thank you for your correspondence dated August 11, 2004, requesting additional reimbursement from General Motors Corporation for costs you incurred to repair your 1998 Pontiac Bonneville vehicle prior to receiving a recall notification letter. Your correspondence was received on September 13, 2004. Due to limited resources we were not able to respond to you in a more timely manner. We regret any inconvenience our delay may have caused you.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to help us determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect or recall inadequacy is warranted.

On June 13, 2002, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened a safety defect investigation (PE02-050) into reports alleging engine compartment fires in certain 1996 through 2000 GM vehicles. On October 22, 2002, ODI upgraded that investigation to an engineering analysis (EA02-030) and expanded the scope of the investigation to include certain 1996 through 2002 GM vehicles. An engineering analysis is a more detailed and complete technical analysis of the character and scope of an alleged defect.



DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE
888-DASH-2-DOT
888-327-4238

On November 12, 2003, GM notified NHTSA that it would conduct a safety recall (NHTSA Campaign No. 03V-473) to remedy a defect found to exist in the fuel pressure regulators installed in certain 1998 and 1999 Buick Park Avenue vehicles. Then, on February 16, 2004, GM notified NHTSA that it would conduct a safety recall (NHTSA Campaign No. 04V-090) to remedy a defect found to exist in the fuel pressure regulators installed in certain 1998 and 1999 Buick LeSabre, Oldsmobile 88, and Pontiac Bonneville vehicles.

Subsequent to receiving notification that GM would conduct two safety recall campaigns to remedy defects associated with the fuel pressure regulators in certain 1998 and 1999 GM vehicles, ODI closed EA02-030 on March 9, 2004, without the determination that a safety-related defect exists within the vehicles excluded from GM's safety recall campaigns. ODI will continue to monitor reports associated with the engine system, fuel system, and reports alleging engine compartment fires in the GM vehicles subject to EA02-030 and take future action as appropriate. For your information, we have enclosed copies of the closing resumes for PE02-050 and EA02-030 and the safety recall summaries for 03V-473 and 04V-090.

Federal regulations require a manufacturer conducting a safety recall of motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment to reimburse owners who have paid to obtain a remedy for the problem within a reasonable time, which in many instances is one year, prior to the manufacturer's notification. Certain restrictions apply, including the need to submit certain documents to the manufacturer. However, our authorizing statute does not require manufacturers to reimburse owners for any additional costs associated with a safety recall (e.g., costs associated with repairing components that are not subject to the safety recall, lost wages while the vehicle is being repaired, car rentals, etc.). Owners should follow the instructions in the recall notification letter to file a claim. Owners who feel that their claim was wrongfully denied should pursue the matter with the manufacturer. Owners may also report any dispute to NHTSA by contacting the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Auto Safety Hotline (Hotline) or by filing a complaint via the agency's Internet Web site. While NHTSA does not have the resources to intervene in individual disputes, it does monitor this data and may address situations where appropriate.

You can contact our toll-free DOT Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236). One of our representatives may be able to assist you on matters concerning motor vehicle and motor vehicle equipment safety recalls or to report an alleged safety problem. You can also request safety information. If our telephones are busy, or you call during non-working hours, you can leave your name, telephone number, and a brief subject on our recording system. A DOT Hotline representative will return your call.

Additionally, we have an Internet Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> that you may want to visit. An electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) is also available on this Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq>. This form is for vehicle owners to report safety related problems about their motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment, e.g., child safety seats, jacks, tires, brake fluid, etc. The reports submitted are transferred to our database and are used to identify safety-related defect trends that require our attention. If you do not have access to the Internet, please use the enclosed VOQ to inform this agency of any future motor vehicle or

motor vehicle equipment safety problems you may experience. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc., can be obtained at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems>.

If further assistance is needed, please contact Mr. Michael J. Jordan, Safety Defects Program Assistant, Correspondence Research Division, Office of Defects Investigation, at (202) 493-0576.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alberto A. Jimenez", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. Below the signature, the word "for" is written in a smaller, cursive script.

Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement

Enclosures