



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  
(1-888-327-4238)  
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 252

Date Received

08-DEC-2004

Repository

Reference No.  
10103188

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name: [REDACTED]  
Address: [REDACTED]  
City: FAIRFAX State: VA Zip Code: [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to contact the manufacturer of your vehicle?  
In the absence of your signature, provide your name or address to the vehicle's manufacturer.  
Signature of Owner: [REDACTED] Date: 12/19/04

YES

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number: Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side  
3GN0K260750 [REDACTED] Make: CHEVROLET Model: SUBURBAN Model Year: 2005  
Date Purchased: [REDACTED] Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: [REDACTED] Engine: [REDACTED] Fuel Type: Gas  
Original Owner: [REDACTED] Dealer's City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]  
Transmission Type: AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes:  Cruise Control:  Powertrain: REAR WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code: 136000 VISIBILITY:REARVIEW MIRRORS/DEVICES  
Multiple Failure: 2

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

Incident Date(s): 08-DEC-2004 Failure Mileage: [REDACTED] Failure Speed: 65

**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: DOTM1A9ABC038): [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: 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).

DRIVER'S SIDE AND PASSENGER'S SIDE MIRRORS FAILED. THE OBJECTS APPEARED FAR AWAY THAN NORMAL. THIS CAUSED POOR VISIBILITY. VEHICLE HAD A TOW MIRROR PACKAGE. CONSUMER TOOK VEHICLE TO THE DEALER FOR INSPECTION, AND MECHANIC DETERMINED THAT THIS WAS A DESIGN FLAW FROM THE MANUFACTURER. MECHANIC INFORMED CONSUMER THAT THE MIRROR COULD BE REPLACED, BUT THE DRIVER HAD TO PAY FOR THEM. \*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.

Fairfax, VA  
Tel [REDACTED]

Wednesday, December 15, 2004

Alberto Jimenez  
US Department of Transportation - NHTSA  
400 7th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: 135000 Visibility:Rearview Mirrors

Dear Mr. Jimenez:

The narrative description as recorded on the attached VOQ form is inaccurate. Following is a more complete and accurate description of the problem:

I have owned, and been towing with, a Chevrolet Suburban since 1989. I am now on my third one. In November of 2004 I purchase a new 2005 Chevrolet 3/4 ton Suburban that had the optional "Extendable Towing Mirrors" installed by GM. I believe that GM calls this the DPF Mirror O/S Option. I immediately noticed that I had a very limited rear view down the passenger side and to the right of the vehicle that made lane changing and merging to the right very difficult and dangerous. I discovered that the passenger side rear view mirror was flat and not convex as most other passenger side mirrors are.

With a helper and a tape measure, I compared the passenger side rear field of view of the new truck with my old 1996 Suburban that has the standard convex mirror on the passenger side. I discovered that, with the convex mirror on my old truck, measuring 50' behind the truck and looking through my passenger side mirror, I had a 28' wide view, or 2+ lanes of traffic to the right and rear of the truck. In the new 2005 Suburban with the "Towing Mirrors", my field of view was limited to only 6' wide or only 1/2 lane of traffic at 50' behind the truck. The flat surfaced "Towing Mirror" allows only 21% of the field of view that the standard convex mirrors provide. It does not seem right that a manufacturer would put a flat rearview mirror on the passenger side of any vehicle, much less a truck that is designed for towing, when the standard convex mirror gives you 4 1/2 times the viewing area. My dealership indicated that GM does not offer a convex mirror to replace the flat one on the "Towing Mirror" option. Their excuse may be that the "Towing Mirrors" extend out from the truck, however, the width of the field of view does not change even when the mirrors are extended. The big problem is that these inadequate mirrors are being placed on high priced luxury trucks and SUVs. I would guess that the majority of the purchasers and drivers of these vehicles are not your experienced truck driver types and while they think it's "cool" that their mirrors extend with the push of a button, they are oblivious to the HUGE blind spots these mirrors produce.

Lane changing at high speeds is dangerous enough when you CAN see the traffic to the right of you. Please look into this potentially dangerous situation. I feel that these mirrors should be recalled immediately and replaced with convex mirrors. Why put a mirror with an inferior rearview on a tow vehicle of all things? And sell it as an upgrade for towing? It seems that someone at GM has made a big mistake here. In order to have a safer vehicle for my family, and myself, I have had the dealership, Pohanka Chevrolet in Chantilly, VA where I purchased the vehicle, replace the optional "Towing Mirrors" with the standard and much safer convex mirror. As requested, the invoice for the work is also attached. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to help solve this problem and thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

Cc: Gary L. Cowger - President, GM North America  
Robert C. Lange - Executive Director of Vehicle Safety

Enclosures: VOQ  
Repair Invoice

**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).**