



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 100148

Date Received
2006 FEB -9 AM
21-FEB-2006

Repository
Reference No.
10150721

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED]
City SCHUYLER State NY Zip Code [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED] E-mail Address [REDACTED]
Evening Telephone Number SAME

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO
In the absence of an owner, DOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner [REDACTED] Date 2/25/06

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 5J6YH28544L [REDACTED]
Make HONDA Model ELEMENT Model Year 2004
Date Purchased 01-JAN-04 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number SCOVILLE-MENO HONDA 607-433-1251 Engine: No: Cylinders 6 Fuel Type: Gas
Original Owner Dealer's City ONEONTA State NY Zip Code 13820
Transmission Type AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes Cruise Control Powertrain ALL WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code 034520 SERVICE BRAKES, HYDRAULIC:FOUNDATION COMPONENTS Multiple Failure: 2

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 20-FEB-2006 Failure Mileage 32500 Failure Speed 2
MFS T2612 TREADWEAR 340 TRACTION A TEMP. B

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make GOODYEAR HP Tire Model (Name or Number) WRANGLER Tire Size (Example P215/65R15) P215-70 R16 99S
DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036) Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location: TREAD
Tire Component Code DOT 853V 2K7R3503 (MADE IN JAPAN) Tire Failure Type PREMATURE WEAR

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 Fire Yes No Number of Persons Injured Number of Deaths 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).

DT*: THE CONTACT STATED A SCREECHING NOISE WAS HEARD FROM THE REAR BRAKES WHILE DEPRESSING THE BRAKE PEDAL AT SPEEDS OF 2MPH AND ABOVE. THE VEHICLE WAS TAKEN FOR THE ANNUAL STATE INSPECTION WHEN THE INSPECTOR DETERMINED THE BRAKE PADS WERE WORN AND THE ROTORS WERE SCORED. THE VEHICLE WAS TAKEN TO THE LOCAL DEALER FOR INSPECTION. THE REAR BRAKE PAD AND ROTORS WERE REPLACED. HOWEVER, THE DEALER STATED THE TIRES WERE WORN AROUND THE TREAD ALTHOUGH, NO INCIDENTS OR PROBLEMS WERE REPORTED ABOUT THE TIRES PREVIOUSLY. THE MANUFACTURER DETERMINED, THIS WAS NORMAL WEAR AND TEAR ON THE VEHICLE AND THE TIRES NEEDED TO BE REPLACED AS A PART OF REGULAR MAINTENANCE.

NOT AN ANNUAL STATE INSPECTION - (INSPECTION DUE TO NOISE!)
BY LOCAL DEALER

LAST INSPECTION - STATE DEC. 05

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.

February 25 2006

Schuyler Lake N.Y. [REDACTED]

Narrative Description

Six days prior to leaving on a trip from New York to Florida my wife noticed a slight noise in the back of our 2 yr. old 2004 Honda Element. It had 32,500 miles on it since we bought it new. We took it to the Honda dealer in Oneonta N.Y. who repaired it on the spot. The rear ABS rotors were badly worn and scored severely. The pads on the inside were paper thin. The outside pads were near 1/4 inch thick, giving the appearance of safe breaks. I noticed poor response to stop on snow covered inclines. For this reason I was traveling to Oneonta to buy a new 60,000 mile tire on the left front. Recently I had replaced the right front tire due to loss of air from a screw. I didn't want a patched tire on my car so I bought a new 60,000 mile tire for the right front. Now I would have two new tires on the front.

Had we left for Florida with the unsafe breaks I doubt I would have heard any noise other than the noise we are told the ABS makes. Certainly the ABS would fail due to the fact that only the front breaks were working properly.

The tires although worn, and are still legal at 32,500 miles would certainly be worn out at 36,000 miles. This I believe is (planned obsolescence). If I buy a new Element every three years I should not have to buy anything else.

Of course, the brakes as well as the tires were not covered by warranty. This I was first told by the local dealer then by Honda America. An operator from Honda America hung up on me when I insisted I talk to a supervisor. Of course it probably didn't help when I called the car a piece of "junk" It could have been just that some ware along I-95.

We are far from a Honda dealer and with the price of gas it's just not prudent to travel a long distance for service when we have an exceptional mechanic locally. He is one of the best I have seen in my 67 years.

Previously my wife and I had picked out a color of our next Element for Dec.2006. In spite of the road noise and choppy ride we do like the car. We may still buy another Element even though we know the car needs BETTER TIRES and has HIGH MAINTAINCE BRAKES. It cost me \$400 for a rear only brake job and \$200 for two tires.

Honda should issue a RECALL on the REAR BRAKES on the Element and the CRV since they are the same platform. Also, if they are going to put \$45 tires on a \$23,000 car they should at least offer \$100 Michelins as an option.

This car was made in the USA by Americans; however, it was designed by Japan. They don't make mistakes. ----- At least none that they will admit to!

Thank you
[REDACTED]