



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 DEC -4 AM 8:40
01-NOV-2006

Repository

Reference No.
10172390

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED]
City MISSION VIEJO State CA Zip Code [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED]

E-mail Address [REDACTED]

Evening 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 an Signature of Owner [REDACTED] WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Date 11/19/2006

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side
3C4FY48B74T [REDACTED] Make CHRYSLER Model PT CRUISER Model Year 2004
Date Purchased 24-FEB-05 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number RIVERSIDE HONDA Engine: No. Cylinders 4 CYLINDER Fuel Type: Gas
Original Owner Dealer's City RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA State CA Zip Code [REDACTED]
Transmission Type AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes Cruise Control Powertrain 2.4L, 150 HP. Vehicle Component Code 036000 SERVICE BRAKES, HYDRAULIC:ANTILOCK Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 30-OCT-2005 Failure Mileage 37723 Failure Speed 35 BRAKE HOSE ON FRONT LEFT SIDE, SEE ATTACHED LETTER DESCRIBING PROBLEM.

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: DOTM19ABC036) Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location: [REDACTED]
The 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 [REDACTED] Number of Deaths [REDACTED] 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 WHILE DRIVING 35 MPH WITH THE BRAKE PEDAL DEPRESSED THE VEHICLE WOULD NOT STOP. IT WAS DRIVEN OFF THE ROAD AND THE EMERGENCY BRAKE WAS USED TO STOP THE VEHICLE. IT WAS SLOWLY DRIVEN TO AN INDEPENDENT BRAKE SHOP WHO DETERMINED A HOSE RUPTURED AND THE HOSE WAS REPLACED. THE DEALER WAS ALERTED. THERE WAS A NHTSA RECALL, # 04V481000, REGARDING THE SERVICE BRAKES; HYDRAULIC; ANTILOCK. THE VIN WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE RECALL.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-502) 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.

Mission Viejo,
California CA

Customer Service,
DaimlerChrysler,
P.O. Box 4639,
Oak Ridge, TN 37831.

Re: Issue With Brake Hose On 2004 PT Cruiser

(Vehicle ID# 3C4FY48B74T)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Further to my conversation with one of your agents in your customer service group, I am writing to formally complain about a problem that I experienced with the brakes on my 2004 PT Cruiser.

On October 30th 2006 at around noon, I was driving to an appointment in Lake Forest, California. The road had somewhat of an incline downwards and I was driving at normal speed of around 35 miles per hour. As I approached the traffic lights at the corner of Rockfield and Lake Forest, I braked to slow down but noticed to my horror that the brakes did not work - the brake pedal went all the way to the bottom of its range and smoke appeared on the front left side of the vehicle. I used the handbrakes in order to slow down and stop the vehicle.

I pulled over and noticed what looked like brake fluid leaking out of the front left side. The other tires appeared to be fine. Luckily there was a MIDAS brake center about 400 to 500 yards away from the incident so I slowly drove the car to the center. I did not have my cell phone and being in panic, did not think to find the nearest Chrysler dealer to have the problem inspected.

The MIDAS technician diagnosed the problem to a small perforation in the hose or tube that connects to the master cylinders on the front left side. It kind of looked like the hose was burnt as if it was touching a part nearby (see attached photographs of the faulty hose). The brake pads were fine and so was the master cylinder. I normally have the brakes checked every 3000 - 5000 miles when I take the vehicle for an oil change so that part was not a surprise. I had the hose replaced and the brake system flushed (see attached bill), asked the MIDAS technician for the faulty part and followed up via phone with customer service at Chrysler the following day.

The Daimler customer representative was not familiar with this problem and suggested that I talk to the local Chrysler the dealer. The service person at the dealer (Mark Espinoza at the Foothill Ranch Chrysler Jeep/Dodge) checked for recall information on the car but nothing came up. He mentioned that though it was unfortunate this happened, I really should have taken the car to the dealer in the first place and there was not much he could do since the problem had already been resolved. He suggested that I could bring the car at my expense and the technicians could look at the brakes but most probably they may not be able to see anything since the problem had already been fixed.

The following day, I did a search on the Web and realized that the problem I had experienced was similar to a recall on the 2005 Model PT Cruiser. This recall, (NHTSA# 04V481000) describes a problem where there is inadequate clearance between the LEFT FRONT BRAKE and the transaxle housing, the consequence of which can lead to a perforation in the brake hose. I followed up with the Chrysler customer service recall center but she mentioned that the recall was specific to the 2005 PT Cruiser and there was not much she could do - pretty shameful especially since the issue is with a part that is the life and heart of the safety system in any car. Subsequently, I filed a report with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to help broaden this issue.

I consider myself to be pretty lucky that I had the clear mind to use the handbrakes to stop the vehicle else this could have been a fatal accident since the car was moving downhill. My hope is that people with a similar vehicle do not have to go through this and that there are no fatalities due to this! I therefore have the following requests:

1. That you look into the problem with some seriousness other than with the rigidity I heard from the customer service representative that this problem is only seen on the 2005 models and not in the earlier models. I have enclosed pictures of the faulty hose that was replaced and have kept the part incase you need to physically inspect it.
2. If you are convinced that this problem could never have occurred in the 2004 models, then provide me with data on the brake hose that is being replaced in the 2005 models and any pertinent data to convince me of the same.
3. If you feel that the brake hose on my car could have been faulty, then just reimburse me with the cost that I have incurred in getting the problem resolved (copy of receipts attached).

Inaction or a standard "letter of regret or apology" will only result in me following up with any alternate sources available to me to force you to take this matter seriously. I am hoping in the very least that you are able to provide me with data to convince me that this problem was related to general wear and tear and NOT a faulty design.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information. I may be reached at [REDACTED] on most weekdays. Thank you and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

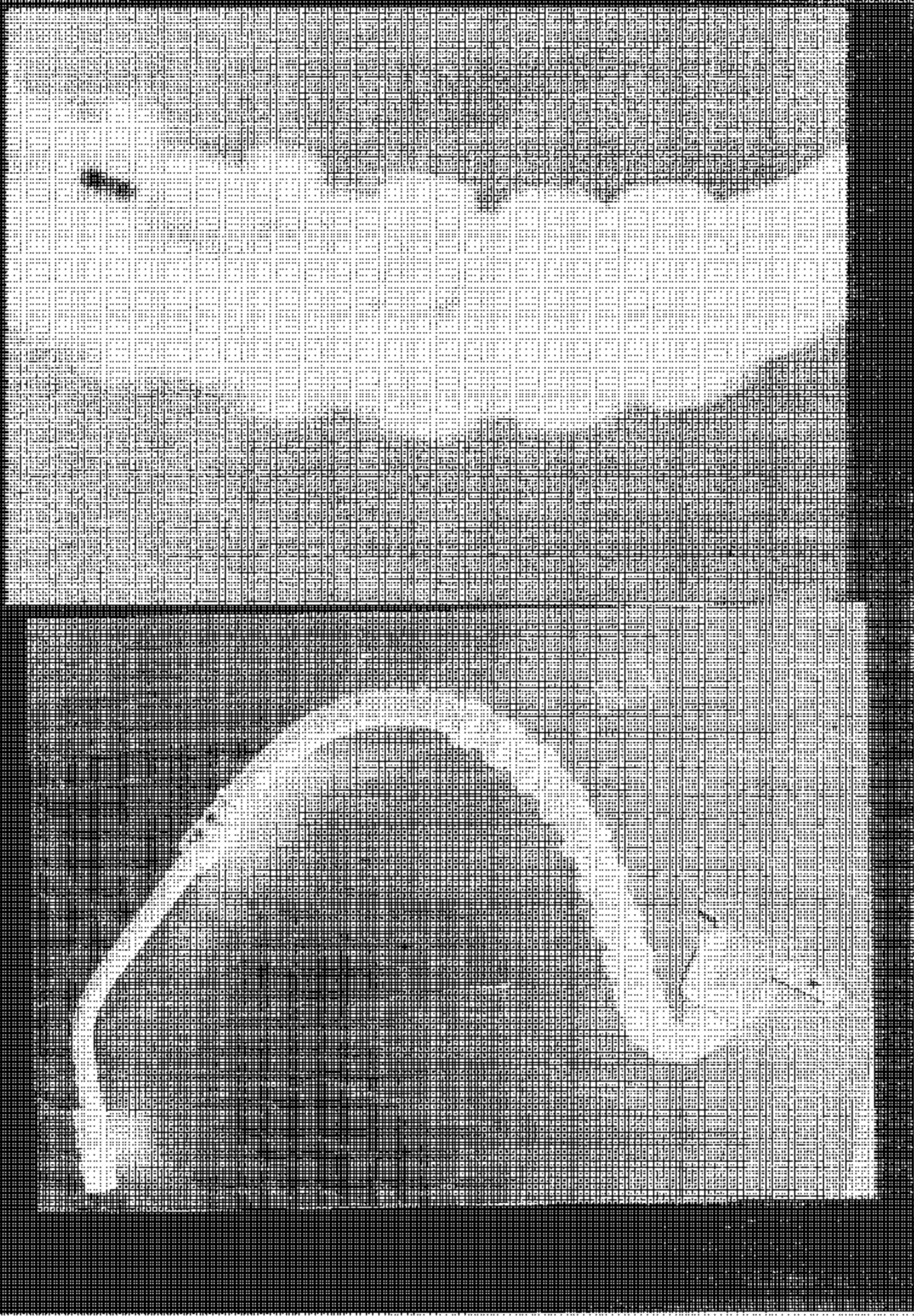
[REDACTED]

Attachments:

Recall report from the NHTSA

2 photographs of the faulty hose.

Copy of invoice for repairs.



**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).**