



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

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

DEC 14 2006

NVS-216 aac
Ref. # 10174309

[REDACTED]
Norman, OK [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your correspondence dated October 30, 2006, concerning Bridgestone/Firestone tires. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) received your correspondence on November 7, 2006. We regret any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

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.

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 or products to the manufacturer. 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. While NHTSA does not have the resources to intervene in individual disputes, it does monitor this data and may address situations where appropriate. Additionally, our statute does not require manufacturers to reimburse owners for costs associated with a safety recall (e.g., lost wages while the vehicle is being repaired, car rentals, damage caused by the defect, etc.). Nor does the statute authorize the Federal government to reimburse



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vehicle owners for any costs associated with safety recalls or assist vehicle owners in obtaining reimbursements for costs associated with a safety defect. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Oklahoma Office of the Attorney General regarding your reimbursement problem and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alberto A. Jimenez".

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

Enclosure