

NY to NY TSA

CL-10212792-8186

[Redacted]

2007 DEC 19 AM 9:47

Houston, TX [Redacted]

[Redacted]

September 11, 2007

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Ref Invoice #: CTCS276888

Dear Gentlepersons,

I am filing a complaint against Team Chevrolet in Pasadena, CA for faulty break repairs. I am sending you my correspondence with Team Chevrolet, their repair invoice and the invoice for remedial work done by Rudolph Chevrolet in El Paso, TX.

Sincerely yours

[Redacted signature]

12/19/07



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[REDACTED]

Houston, TX [REDACTED]

August 20, 2007

Dear [REDACTED],

This letter is in reference to the facsimile you sent me August 13, 2007.

I have read your letter and I understand your concerns. Let me start by saying how happy I am to hear that [REDACTED] arrived home safely. I feel it's important to take a minute and talk about the technician who performed the work on your vehicle. His name is Craig Florez and he is a General Motors certified Brake, Steering, and Suspension specialist. He is also ASE certified in these areas as well. ASE certification is recognized world wide and is in addition to the 18 years of General Motors hands on experience and technical training he has completed. In short, Craig was the right technician to repair your vehicle.

I did talk to Craig at length regarding your vehicle. He stated that the brake inspection revealed evenly worn brake pads (side to side) on the front and rear, but that the rear brake pads were worn down to replacement stages or 10% of available brake life. The front brake pads still had 30% remaining and appeared to be in good overall condition. We recommended a rear brake service which consists of replacing the rear brake pads and resurfacing the rear rotors. Once your approval was obtained, we completed the service as outlined above. The rear brake calipers had no signs of leakage and proved to be in good working order as determined by both visual inspection of old brake pads and the ease in which the rear brake caliper pistons returned to there most inboard position for the installation of the new brake pads. He stated that there was nothing out of the ordinary with regard to the brakes and that the service went as planned. When finished he road tested the vehicle and found the brakes to be operating to factory specifications.

It has always been our policy to recommend and perform the proper diagnosis and repairs under any and all circumstances. And, I truly feel that the work we performed was done correctly and that the vehicle left here in "safe and good" working order. While no one can predict a mechanical failure, it is possible that the master cylinder you had replaced at Rudolph Chevrolet could have partially failed shortly after [REDACTED] got on the road. You stated that when [REDACTED] had his tires replaced at Dick's Tire Service in Banning, California that he was advised of the rear brakes "binding" and that they "needed repair." Yet, [REDACTED]



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refused to have the problem repaired or at minimum diagnosed? Had you or [REDACTED] called us at that time, I could have sent a tow truck and had the vehicle brought back to our facility for inspection. Instead [REDACTED] continued on his trip resulting in further damage of the rear brakes.

Because of the above aforementioned we feel that we are not at fault. Please feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chris Williams
Director of Fixed Operations
Team Automotive Group
(626) 449-3333 ext. 255

[REDACTED]
Houston, TX [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

August 8, 2007

Mr. Chris Williams
Team Chevrolet Hummer Hyundai
3003 E. Colorado Blvd.
Pasadena, California 91107-3869

Ref Invoice #: CTCS276888

Dear Mr. William,

This letter concerns the repair performed by Team Chevrolet on July 25, 2007.

Background

My son, [REDACTED], attends Caltech and has used a 1998 Chevy Blazer for the last two years. He is spending the summer in Pasadena doing research on plasma physics to contain nuclear fusion reactions.

He and I agreed to exchange the Blazer for a restored 66 Mustang for his last year at Caltech. He restored the Mustang in high school and I have kept the car in Houston for the last three years. In July, he and I emailed each other about how to swap cars. We went from me driving the Mustang to Pasadena to him driving the Blazer to Houston to each of us driving to El Paso for the car swap. We agreed to swap on July 26.

Preparation for the trip

I told him to take the car to Team Chevy, tell them you are driving back to Houston and check everything so the car would make the trip. The Blazer is a great automobile. In 110,000 miles, the only major repair was a replaced air conditioning compressor (under warranty). He got the car from Team on July 25 and returned to Caltech.

The first 700 miles

On July 26, [REDACTED] left Pasadena for El Paso. He said the Blazer was sluggish from 50 to 70 miles per hour but once he got to 70 it drove OK. Fifty miles east of Ontario on I-10 the right-rear tire blew out. The blowout tore through the bumper panel of the Blazer. He called AAA as a precaution, mainly if he needed towing, which he did not. AAA arrived while he was replacing the tire, and help him to finish up, and pointed him to a place where he could get a replacement tire. He called me and I advised if he replaced one tire to replace all four.

The Blazer had a set of Michelin XW4 with a 65,000 mile warranty purchased in 2002. I calculate the tires had around 55,000 miles on them.

[REDACTED] drove the car to Dick's Tire Service in Banning, California. I talked to Martin Fuller, who said the tires were worn to the cross bars with signs of dry rot. He replaced the four tires. He said the rear wheels were "binding" and advised [REDACTED] the rear brakes needed repair. Sean refused any repairs since Team Chevrolet had just repaired the brakes.

█ made it to Deming, New Mexico and stopped at a rest stop around 3:00 AM. The next day, Sunday, I met him in Las Cruces, New Mexico to swap cars.

The last 50 miles

I knew, in the first mile, something was wrong with the Blazer. My wife's brother is stationed at Ft. Bliss in El Paso and she has an apartment in El Paso to take care of his children when he is deployed. I drove the 50 miles to her apartment. The rear brakes engaged enough that you could take your foot off the accelerator and coast to a stop light without putting your foot on the brake. The brake light and ABS light went on the last few miles and the brake pedal went to the floor when I pulled into the apartment parking lot: not a feeling of confidence. The next morning I drove the Blazer to Rudolph Chevrolet.

What Rudolph found

I am attaching Rudolph's Invoice # 450041. Rudolph gave me all the parts they removed from the Blazer. You should read their report on the invoice.

Why the concern over this repair

In March 1988, my nephew, █, and two friends were killed in a Chevy Blazer on I-10 at mile marker 825. They were returning from Houston to Beaumont (about 90 miles). They were seniors in high school. They played football and were on the track team. Their team won the state championship that year and the three boys had scholarships to Stanford, Princeton and Texas A&M. There was nothing wrong with the Blazer. The three boys were at a track meet all day and we believe the driver fell asleep, leaving the interstate and hitting a culvert.

What Team should do

You should reimburse me for the repairs to the rear brakes. I do not expect reimbursement for the master cylinder replacement, which I consider normal wear and tear.

What I am doing

My brother, █, is a lawyer in Houston with a radio talk show. He advised me to do what he advises most of his callers to do this situation:

- Send this letter to Team Chevrolet
- Copy to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Closing

My companies are ISO9001 certified and we spend a great amount of time and money on quality control. We have full-time quality-control personnel. You need to take a hard look at your quality control. I believe you allowed this vehicle to leave your dealership in an unsafe condition.

Sincerely yours
█

Attachments: Team Chevrolet, Pasadena, California and Rudolph Chevrolet, El Paso, Texas
cc: █ U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXAMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).