



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

April 21, 2008



NVS-216 aae
Ref. # 10221708

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your e-mail concerning your model year (MY) 2005 Chevrolet Equinox vehicle. Your e-mail was received by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation on March 18, 2008.

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. However, we cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

NHTSA does not have the induction speed information necessary for sensors to deploy airbags. We recommend you contact your manufacturer directly to receive that type of information. In general, each manufacturer designs its vehicles so the air bags will deploy if the severity of a crash exceeds a certain threshold. However, there is no Federal requirement establishing a particular threshold. Most manufacturers design the vehicles so the air bags will deploy if the severity of a crash is in the range of an 8 to 14 mph crash into a fixed solid barrier. This severity is about the same as a crash into another vehicle of equivalent weight at 16 to 28 mph. In lower speed crashes, where the air bag does not deploy, occupant protection is provided by the design of the interior surfaces in the vehicle, as well as by the safety belts provided at each seating position.


A number of factors, other than crash severity, can affect whether an air bag will deploy in a given crash; e.g., the angle of impact, the speed of the other vehicle, and the amount of force absorbed by the other vehicle or object that is impacted. Only an expert in crash reconstruction can provide an educated opinion as to whether the air bag in a vehicle should have deployed in a specific crash.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment in the future, you can complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at



<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq>. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald B. Fields". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "R".

Ronald B. Fields, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement