



U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire To Report Vehicle Safety Defects

2009 FEB 11 PM 1:08

PH-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236)

INTERNET:www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

16-JAN-2009

Repository

Reference No. 10255343

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

HINCKLEY

State

OH

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO

In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer. Signature of Owner Date 1/27/09

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

1N4AL11D22

Make

NISSAN

Model

ALTIMA

Model Year

2002

Date Purchased

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine: No: Cylinders

Fuel Type:

Original Owner

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

Antilock Brakes

Cruise Control

Powertrain

Multiple Failure:

Incident Date(s)

12-JUN-2008

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Vehicle Component Code: 061000 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING: ENGINE

Failure Mileage

Failure Speed

0

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM9ABC036)

Original Equipment Prior Repair

Failure Location:

Tire Component Code

Tire Failure Type:

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

0

Number of Deaths

0

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).

TL*THE CONTACT OWNS A 2002 NISSAN ALTIMA. THE CONTACT STATED THAT HER VEHICLE WAS REPAIRED ACCORDING TO NHTSA CAMPAIGN ID NUMBER 03V084000 (ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING: EXHAUST SYSTEM: MANIFOLD/HEADER/MUFFLER/TAIL PIPE). SEVERAL MONTHS LATER, SHE NOTICED THAT HER VEHICLE BEGAN CONSUMING AN ABNORMAL AMOUNT OF OIL AND THE ENGINE WARNING INDICATOR WAS ILLUMINATED ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL. THE DEALER STATED THAT THE CATALYTIC CONVERTER WOULD NEED TO BE REPLACED AT THE COST OF \$900. THE VEHICLE HAS NOT BEEN REPAIRED AND THE MANUFACTURER DID NOT ASSIST. THE FAILURE MILEAGE WAS UNKNOWN AND THE CURRENT MILEAGE WAS 85,000.

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 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.

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies)

The Catalytic Converter was placed too close to the exhaust causing these problems. Nissan knows there is a problem and will not owe up to their mistake on the 2002/2003 Altima.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, D.C. 20077-9382

Official Business Penalty for Private Use \$300



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**US Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation, NVS-210
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, D.C. 20077-9382**



Think your vehicle has a safety defect?

If so:

Use the enclosed form to file a report.

or visit:

www.safercar.gov

or call:

Vehicle Safety Hotline

888-327-4236

NHTSA
www.nhtsa.gov

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ)
U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Recall Campaign 03V084000 has 1 Related Investigation(s)

NHTSA Action Number: PE02078

Vehicle Make / Model:

Model Year(s):

NISSAN / ALTIMA

2002

Manufacturer:

NISSAN NORTH AMERICA, INC.

Component:

ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING:EXHAUST SYSTEM

Date Investigation Opened:

October 18, 2002

Date Investigation Closed:

March 25, 2003

Summary:

THE OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION (ODI) OPENED THIS INVESTIGATION ON OCTOBER 18, 2002 BASED ON THREE REPORTS INDICATING THAT THE ENGINE COMPARTMENT IN MODEL YEAR (MY) 2002 NISSAN ALTIMA VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH THE 2.5 LITER ENGINE CAUGHT ON FIRE WITHOUT ANY WARNING TO THE DRIVER WHILE THE VEHICLE WAS DRIVEN AT HIGHWAY SPEEDS. ONE NON-BURN RELATED INJURY WAS REPORTED AS A RESULT OF THE COMPLAINANT EXITING THE VEHICLE IN HASTE AFTER IT HAD CAUGHT ON FIRE. NISSAN DISCOVERED THAT ONE OF THE HANGER PINS WHICH HOLDS EXHAUST PIPE IN PLACE MAY CATCH DEBRIS FROM THE ROAD. IF THE DEBRIS WERE TO COME IN CONTACT WITH THE MAIN CATALYST, A FIRE COULD RESULT. THIS CONDITION IS ALSO PRESENT IN MY 2003 NISSAN ALTIMA VEHICLES BUILT THRU FEBRUARY 18, 2003. NISSAN ALSO STATED IN ITS DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT THAT ON MY 2002 ALTIMAS AND SENTRAS (EQUIPPED WITH THE 2.5-LITER ENGINE) THAT CERTAIN OPERATING CONDITIONS MAY CAUSE THE PRE-CATALYST TO OVERHEAT, WHICH WOULD CAUSE CATALYST SUBSTRATE PARTICLES TO FLOW INTO THE ENGINE. THESE PARTICLES CAN SCORE THE

CYLINDER WALLS WHICH RESULTS IN INCREASE OIL CONSUMPTION. IF THE ENGINE OIL LEVEL IS LOW, ENGINE NOISE AND DAMAGE CAN OCCUR WHICH COULD RESULT IN A FIRE. THE RECALL INCLUDES 268,000 MY 2002-2003 ALTIMAS AND 2002 SENTRAS EQUIPPED WITH THE 2.5-LITER ENGINE. TO CORRECT THE CONDITION NISSAN WILL REMOVE THE PROTRUDING PORTION OF THE EXHAUST PIN ON THE ALTIMAS. NISSAN IS DEVELOPING A CORRECTIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS THE PRE-CATALYST. IN ADDITION TO THE CORRECTIVE ACTION, NISSAN WILL INSTALL HEAT SHIELDS ON THE PRE-CATALYST AND THE SURROUNDING EXHAUST TUBING. NISSAN WILL BEGIN OWNER NOTIFICATION IN MAY OF 2003.

Transport Canada Recall Number 2003060. Units affected: 30589.

2002-2003: On certain vehicles equipped with the 2.5 liter engine, the exhaust pipe hanger pin may catch debris from the road which could be ignited by contact with the main catalyst. Correction: Dealer will remove the protruding portion of the exhaust pipe hanger pin. Also, certain operating conditions may cause the pre-catalyst to overheat and damage the catalyst substrate. If substrate particles enter the combustion chamber, they may score the cylinder walls, resulting in increased oil consumption. If the engine oil level is not checked on a periodic basis, engine damage may occur which could result in fire. Correction: Dealer will reprogram the engine control unit to prevent the possibility of the pre-catalyst overheating. If the conversion efficiency of the pre-catalyst has deteriorated, then the catalyst will be replaced. The original pre-catalyst will then be inspected for evidence of damage to the catalyst substrate. If damage is present, the vehicle engine will be replaced.

NissanAltimaEngineProblems.com

[Presione aquí para leer nuestro sitio en español.](#)

[Presione aquí para informarse si usted tiene un caso.](#)

Understanding the Problem

Do you own a 2003-2008 Nissan Altima with engine problems? These may include stalling, lack of power, hesitation, shaking, rough running or excessive engine oil consumption (have to add oil all the time).

The Nissan factory has identified some vehicles that may experience excessive oil consumption, failing catalytic converters, failed Mass Air Flow Sensors, electrical connector problems, and in some cases the engines may require major mechanical repairs, or complete engine replacement! On these cars the factory usually replaces the engine after an "oil consumption test" is performed, and the results come back that the vehicle's oil consumption is out of factory oil usage specifications.

You may have a vehicle that also experiences problems with the illumination of the "CHECK ENGINE" light (which typically indicates an engine mis-fire condition). This can be caused by excessive build-up of motor oil on the spark plug electrode. The "CHECK ENGINE" light may be simply an indicator of the oil consumption problem, or other problems such as emissions system, fuel injection system, or ignition system.

Typical normal oil consumption for these V-6 series engines is a quart of oil in 1,200-5,000 miles. Usage of a quart or more in 1,000 miles or less indicates internal engine issues, requiring repairs or engine replacement.

California's Largest Statewide Lemon Law Firm

You may have a "lemon" Altima. We can help!

Our law firm is currently collecting data statewide on the performance, durability and effectiveness of the engine replacements done on these vehicles, the oil consumption issues on Altimas that have not yet had their engine's replaced, but are experiencing the excessive oil consumption issue, as well as "CHECK ENGINE" light and other driveability issues.

We would like to stress that this is not an issue that affects every Nissan Altima owner. This is, however, an issue that is affecting some owners of these 4-cylinder and 6-cylinder Altimas, much to their frustration.

We invite all California consumers who have had 3 or more visits to a Nissan dealership for excessive oil consumption or other engine problems on their Altima (that is under the 60,000 mile factory powertrain warranty) to call us on

our toll-free information line at **1-800-647-8127** . You may be a candidate for a buyback (repurchase), new replacement vehicle, or a substantial cash settlement payment for your Altima vehicle. Call us today for a free case evaluation and what your rights are under the lemon law statute.

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[Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence](#)

[Options](#) ▾

dorme01

Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 01-22-2008



Message 1 of 16
Viewed 6427 times

I own a 2002 Nissan Altima (purchased at Autoway Nissan, Clearwater, FL in 2002) and have experienced the same mechanical failure as many who have posted to this and many other sites. With 100,300 miles on the vehicle we have just learned the catalytic converter has disintegrated and metal parts are now throughout the engine. As a result we are required to have a new engine installed or walk away from a 5 year old car that, other than this defect, is in excellent condition. Upon speaking to Autoway Nissan we were informed since the car has exceeded the 8 years or 80,000 mile warranty on the catalytic converter Nissan would not cover the cost of repairs.

Upon conducting a keyword search 'Nissan catalytic converter' it was enlightening and concerning to read many accounts of the same mechanical failure. I conducted a high level search and I am sure there are many more consumers with similiar mechincal failure. What can we do as consumers to have our rights protected? It is apparent Nissan has a defective part on at least 2002 / 2003 Altima. Any advise us on how to we as consumers can get Nissan to take ownership of a failed device.

01-22-2008 10:38 PM

[Reply](#)

[Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence](#)

[Options](#) ▾

CJinSD

Trusted Contributor
Posts: 77
Registered: 01-19-2008



Message 2 of 16
Viewed 6403 times

Yikes! Apparently this is as common as 2.5 liter nissans that have reached 90,000 miles. The 'pre-cat' in the exhaust manifold is the problem. Seems so foreseeable. You'd think that even Nissan would consider the contingency, but they didn't. I worked as a service writer for an all-brands shop, and as near as I can tell Nissan doesn't want their cars to last too long. Even their full sized pickups and SUVs made Consumer Reports list of vehicles least likely to last 200,000 miles.

01-24-2008 01:21 PM

 Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

deceptacon
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 01-29-2008



Message 3 of 16
Viewed 6347 times

i just had to take my 2.5 2003 altima in today, because yesterday it wouldn't start and the check engine light was on it was also my catalytic converter, and i was told it'd be \$950 to replace !!

01-29-2008 09:12 AM

 Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

fat-tony
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 01-29-2008



Message 4 of 16
Viewed 6322 times

Hi

I have just purchased 2002 Altima , having same problem follow this link <http://www.canadiandriver.com/articles/cc/02-06altima.htm> Transport Canada has a recall # 2003060 listed near the bottom of the article that the above link will bring you to, the recall says Nissan will come good for the engine if due to catalytic failure. You must have something similar down there in USA recalls ??? you just have to find it. Refer your Nissan dealer to transport Canada recall.. wish me luck I am off to see my local dealer tomorrow. my car still runs but has had no heat when the car was at idle, and now burns oil . The dealer told me the check engine light was on due to a faulty front catalytic converter. I love nissans, have owned several including Infiniti G20. But this Altima has definite issues.

01-29-2008 07:18 PM

 Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

Clittlefield1
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 03-31-2008



Message 5 of 16
Viewed 5515 times

It is disturbing to find out that there are so many problems with the Nissan. Now, I have the same problem. I just found out that the engine in my 2003 Nissan Altima needs to be replaced due to the catalytic converter. I did not know about the recalls until my car broke down, then I researched recalls on the Nissan on the internet. The Nissan dealership told me the repairs now needed on my car due to engine failure adds up to \$5,100 and I'm still paying on the car. I'm at 89,000 miles and my extended warranty ended at 75,000 miles. Most forums that I have read stated the Nissan Corporation won't do anything to help. Is this true? Do you have information on who I can contact for further assistance?

03-31-2008 12:26 AM

 Reply

2003 Altima Catalyst Converter/Let's ban together to try to get some help with this.

Options ▾

angel2
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 04-07-2008



Message 6 of 16
Viewed 5368 times
☆☆☆☆☆

I purchased my car brand new from the Nissan dealer. This has been a great car to drive until last year in June, I began experiencing some problems. I took the car back to the dealership and they said that my number 4 was misfiring. Well, I asked them if I needed to replace the ignition coil and they said no. So the car continue giving me problems. To make a long story short, the car continue misfiring and stalling really bad. The dealer told me that I needed to have some work done and service the car, I did that. Then they said I needed something else done and I did that. Finally, I read a blog that said they took the car to the Advance when the service engine light came on. Each time I took it to the Nissan dealer, they charged me \$75. After I read the blog, I took the car to Advance, by this time it was in November 2007. come to find our, my car did need the Number 4 ignition coil replaced, but by this time, the catalyst converter had messed up. I have been very frustrated with this because the dealer had the codes but failed to do anything to help with this problem. Finally, I had the converter replaced but now I need another one. If everyone would ban together and contact the Nissan North America to let them know the problems we have been having with these cars. They need to be aware that we are aware of these problems. The person that fixed my car said that this year he has had to replaced 5 on the Nissan altima and there is something bad wrong with these cars. it should not be that we have to replaced these with only 80,000 plus miles on them. I still have my Dodge intrepid that has the original converter on it and this is a 1997.

04-07-2008 08:15 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

eversunnyguy
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 04-10-2008



Message 7 of 16
Viewed 5294 times

I also had similiar problem with Nissan Altima 2003. The catalytic converter broke into powder inside and I spend 800 dollars to repair it at 120K mile service. The dealer told that if I delayed longer the ash powder can get into to engine due to back pressure rendering entire engine unusable. Seems like lot of people are having this problem. We should do something to report to Nissan. Maybe a recall for this common problem.

04-10-2008 07:43 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

Zcarnut
Super Contributor
Posts: 10258
Registered: 04-05-2001



Message 8 of 16
Viewed 5239 times

Yeah..Its a real problem..If you have a 02-03 4 banger Altima and the check eng light comes on,make sure its not a cat convertor code ASAP.99% of the ones ive seen with engines smoked were people who drove with that light on for months before having it checked.

Some Altimas have warranty extensions on the engines up to 100k.PM your VIN or have your Nissan dealer check to see.




03' 350z
01' Xterra SE 4x4
08' Nissan Quest

70' Dune buggy

04-12-2008 09:47 AM

 Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options 

CaseyA

Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 05-06-2008




Message 9 of 16
Viewed 4791 times

Zcarnut - you can add me to the list of 2003 Altima owners with complete engine failure. My light came on two months ago and the car felt like it was missing - felt like it wasn't running on all cylinders and I IMMEDIATELY brought it in to the dealer to have it checked out. They misdiagnosed the issue as a dirty sensor and sent me on my way. The same issue came up a month or so later and I brought it back again. This time they flatly told me that they had no clue what was wrong and actually told me to keep driving on it until the issue arose again. The issue arose again last week.....and now I need a new engine. Oddly enough the catalytic converter has caused major damage to my engine resulting in my need to get it replaced. At this point we are still fighting Nissan and they are failing to stand behind their product - even though they are fully aware of the issue with the converter. It was the guy at the dealership that told me to follow up with Nissan since the problem has come up several times at that dealership - funny thing, it's come up several times, but they weren't able to diagnose it. We will obviously wind up in an argument with the dealer over their failure to fix the problem - but I'm guessing we're SOL like everyone else.....

05-06-2008 05:18 PM

 Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence


Options 

sdurland

Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 06-26-2008






Message 10 of 16
Viewed 3823 times


This one has been costly! I'm on my second engine on a 2002 Nissan Altima. The first one failed at around 103,000. Same check engine light issue as discussed. I also had to continuously add oil to the engine even though it wasn't leaking. I mentioned it to the service department at Middletown Nissan in NY and I was told "It's an old car ... they just use oil". Well here I am spending \$4500 on a new engine which in hindsight was due to a faulty catalytic converter. I know that the because after the new Nissan engine was installed the check engine light still came on. So it was replaced for around \$850. But apparently too late. Because now the 2nd engine, with only 15000 miles on it is 'using' oil and needs to be replaced. I put a claim into Nissan, and it was denied for two reasons. One is that the 1 yr/12,000 mile warranty had been exceeded. And the other was because I used a local technician (a very good one!) to work on my car. This is totally unacceptable in my view. The engines were always taken care of, and the it's the result of these catalytic converters that caused the problem. I'm going to pursue through Nissan since my initial contact there said she's done all that she can. Anyone have thoughts or experience on who to send documentation to? I have the Consumer Affairs address, but I'm may reach out farther. Very frustrating!

06-26-2008 12:27 PM

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Catalytic Converter 2002 Altima

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Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options

hawilliams

Newbie

Posts: 2

Registered: 09-28-2008



Have 2003 2.5 and the same problem with the Cataylic Converter and have to replace the engine and exhaust. We need to get together and get a class action law suit together. Anyone interested, send me an e-mail at hawilliams@frontiernet.net. Enough is enough!

Message 11 of 16

Viewed 1165 times

09-28-2008 10:04 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options

hawilliams

Newbie

Posts: 2

Registered: 09-28-2008



So here is what Canada has done regarding the defective Cataylic Converter and engine replacement in the 02/03 Altima 2.5 cars: We need to get the department of Transportation or some government behind us and get reimbursed for our costs and inconvenience.

Transport Canada Recall Number 2003060. Units affected: 30589.

2002-2003: On certain vehicles equipped with the 2.5 liter engine, the exhaust pipe hanger pin may catch debris from the road which could be ignited by contact with the main catalyst. Correction: Dealer will remove the protruding portion of the exhaust pipe hanger pin. Also, certain operating conditions may cause the pre-catalyst to overheat and damage the catalyst substrate. If substrate particles enter the combustion chamber, they may score the cylinder walls, resulting in increased oil consumption. If the engine oil level is not checked on a periodic basis, engine damage may occur which could result in fire. Correction: Dealer will reprogram the engine control unit to prevent the possibility of the pre-catalyst overheating. If the conversion efficiency of the pre-catalyst has deteriorated, then the catalyst will be replaced. The original pre-catalyst will then be inspected for evidence of damage to the catalyst substrate. If damage is present, the vehicle engine will be replaced.

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Viewed 1163 times

09-28-2008 10:14 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options

v2c4
Newbie
Posts: 3
Registered: 08-27-2008

thank's for tips



Message 13 of 16
Viewed 1149 times

09-29-2008 12:59 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

Yolie1
Newbie
Posts: 1
Registered: 10-15-2008

Hello, This is the third time I have had to have the cat convertor replaced. My wonderful mechanic contacted our local distributor and conferenced in the Nissan manufacturer, stayed on the line, and ensured everyone who could make a decision was on the line. He explained that this is the third time the convertor was replaced, and he was not going to do the work for free, nor was I going to pay for it. Long story short, the manufacturer stated there is an updated convertor that needs to be used now. They will send it over night, re-imburse the mechanic for his time and see what they can do to re-imburse me for a portion of the rental car bills I incurred. I will keep you updated as to if everything works out okay. (This issue has been re-occurring over a 3 month period.) If you have your convertor replaced, please ensure you are purchasing the newest version!



Message 14 of 16
Viewed 974 times

10-15-2008 06:40 PM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

Zcarnut
Super Contributor
Posts: 10258
Registered: 04-05-2001

The only time ive seen a 2nd convertor "fail" is if the engine was already burning oil and it basically ruins the new cat.



Message 15 of 16
Viewed 953 times

03' 350z
01' Xterra SE 4x4
08' Nissan Quest

70' Dune buggy

10-16-2008 11:24 AM

Reply

Re: Altima catalytic converter failure - a common occurrence

Options ▾

bhouston65

Newbie

Posts: 1

Registered: 10-24-2008



My 2004 2.5 Altima catalytic converter just failed. Had 82,000 miles (warranty 80,000) and the car was serviced regularly. They are now denying my claim for reimbursement, even though there is clearly an issue with the part in general, see Canadian recall. Unless they changed the part manufacturer and/or design, they are clearly aware they have a problem and trying to avoid a larger recall. Instead they choose to deny the claims. This car is the second Nissan I have owned. Never again.

Message 16 of 16

Viewed 832 times