

May 25, 2009

CL-10269762-6186

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Ronald Medford
Acting Deputy Administrator
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE - West Building
Washington, DC 20590

2009 JUN -4 PM 5:27

Toyota Motor North America

Shigeru Hayakawa
President and COO
9 W. 57th St., Ste. 4900
New York, NY 10019-2701
Fax: 212-759-7670

Toyota Motor Sales USA

James E. Lentz III
President & CEO
19001 S. Western Ave.
Torrance, CA 90501
Fax: 310-468-7800

Subject: **Fire & Total Loss of 2005 Prius VIN JTDKB20U353** [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Medford, Dear Mr. Hayakawa, Dear Mr. Lentz:

I unfortunately have to report to you the total loss by fire of our 2005 Prius on May 11.
Please see the photos below.



Fortunately, no person was physically injured.

ET
5:27
6/4/09
NJ

The background of the incident: after my wife drove home at about 5:30 pm. on May 11, she shut off the engine when she parked the car in front of our house as usual. The ambient temperature was about 70 degrees. The vehicle did not display any unusual behavior prior to the incident. A few minutes after leaving the vehicle, our daughter and my wife noticed that the car was filling with smoke and that flames shot up from underneath the vehicle. Firefighters arrived a bit more than 10 minutes after the fire was first noticed. It speaks to the thoughtful design of the materials used in the Prius that the fire did not progress to the front of the car within that timeframe.

In the interest of safety for the large population of Prius drivers, I have informed NHTSA of the incident (ODI Number 10269762).

The vehicle was not modified with a plug-in hybrid kit which, as I understand, caused a devastating fire in a Prius owned by the Central Electric Power Cooperative of South Carolina in June 2008.

Since our purchase of this vehicle in 2005, all service and work on the vehicle was performed and in the hands of Toyota dealers, including during the time we spent in Europe when we shipped the vehicle with us and back as part of a corporate move (see enclosed list of the Toyota dealers which have worked on this vehicle).

You will understand that we are quite shook up and affected by this incident. We are happy that no-one was injured and that the fire did not affect the structure of our house (which was only 3 feet away from the burning vehicle), and that only a limited number of personal items was affected. Nobody who trusts the Toyota brand and the many people who work to create Toyota's products and services should have to see their car and our personal bond with it (our license plate: [REDACTED]) go up in flames like this.

For the safety of the many Prius owners, we expect a full investigation by your organizations into this incident and into the cause of the fire, in an unbiased and neutral way. We expect to be provided with the full and unbiased results of this investigation, and to also be provided with proof of the neutrality of such investigation. We will be pleased to cooperate with NHTSA and Toyota Motor in this endeavor. The vehicle itself is currently in the hands of our insurance company.

Please let me know how you propose to proceed in terms of public product safety, product liability toward us, and how you propose to assist us in our immediate transportation needs while the investigation is ongoing.

The investigation notwithstanding, we reserve the right to further pursue liability issues in this matter, and nothing in this information to NHTSA and Toyota Motor shall be deemed to limit our rights in this respect.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Washington D.C. [REDACTED]

eMail: [REDACTED]
cell: [REDACTED]

VIN JTDKB20U353 [REDACTED] dealer history

Putnam Toyota
50, California Drive
Burlingame, CA, 94010
USA

Purchase of the vehicle on 6/18/2005

Toyota Laville
2, Rue Maurice Caunes
31200 Toulouse
France

Toyota Continental Mauries
Puech-Petit; Route de Castres
81000 Albi
France

Toyota Auto Schultz GmbH
Niedergeorgswerder Deich 97
21109 Hamburg
Germany

Koons Toyota
4045 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22207
USA