

NVS-200

CL-10314329-7342

2010 FEB 23 AM 9:25 [REDACTED] EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
South Charleston, WV [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 3:31

RECEIVED - NHTSA

February 4, 2010

David L. Strickland, Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

Re: 2003 Buick Park Avenue 3.8L V6
VIN: 1G4CW54K634 [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Strickland:

We are the owners of a 2003 Buick Park Avenue 3.8L V6 vehicle.

We are writing to you out of concern of a possible safety defect with the intake manifold and gasket(s) on our vehicle. As indicated in the attached letter to General Motors Corporation dated January 8th, we contacted management about this problem.

On January 15th, we received a call from Joan Russell, a GMC Executive Assistant, responding to our letter. Though cordial, she dismissed our concern because we didn't take the vehicle to an authorized dealer for the repair when it happened the second time and was out of warranty. However, both technicians who repaired the manifold and gasket within a two-year period told us the OEM replacement parts were substandard as noted in the January 8th correspondence.

We are concerned if this could happen twice within a two-year period with less than 17,000 additional miles being put on the vehicle as a result of a faulty intake manifold and gasket(s) design, then, in all likelihood, it will continue to happen with what could be serious or deadly consequences. We wanted you to know our plight because, based on our research and what the technicians told us, we can't be the only Buick Park Avenue owners who have experienced this problem.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Enclosures

c: Mr. Raymond H. LaHood, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
Mr. Clarence Ditlow, Executive Director
Center for Auto Safety
The Honorable Senator John D. Rockefeller, IV
United State Senate

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02/25/2010
Bew

COPY

[REDACTED]
South Charleston,
[REDACTED]

January 8, 2010

Susan E. Docherty
Vice President of Sales, Service and Marketing
General Motors Corporation
300 Renaissance Center
Detroit, MI 48265

Re: 2003 Buick Park Avenue 3.8L V6
VIN: 1G4CW54K634 [REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Docherty:

We are proud owners of the above-referenced vehicle.

In 2007, with 35,331 miles on the vehicle, the intake manifold and gasket(s) had to be replaced. They are made of plastic and had degraded. Fortunately for us, the dealer, Crown Pontiac-Buick in Nitro, West Virginia, was able to make the repair under warranty with us incurring \$122.11 in charges for six spark plugs and labor. Two years later and now with 52,155 miles on the vehicle, we once again had to have the intake manifold and gasket(s) replaced at the end of December 2009. Since the warranty has expired on the vehicle and the dealer was one of the casualties of GM's restructuring last year, we had to take it elsewhere for service. This time it was at a cost of \$942.65 to us. Both times, the technicians informed us this is a re-occurring problem with certain older Buick models due to a poorly designed plastic intake manifold and gasket(s).

What concerns us is this happened twice within a two-year period with less than 17,000 additional miles being put on the vehicle. We were told the faulty intake manifold and gasket(s) for our make and model has not been redesigned and it could very well happen again.

Both times, we had little warning of the failure. The service light on the dashboard came on. Fortunate for us, we were pulling into a parking lot when it happened. We shudder to think what would have happen if we were on a busy freeway unable to pull off the road before the engine stalled. The consequences could have been injurious, or worse, deadly.

We feel we should be reimbursed for repairs in the amount of \$942.65 incurred for what appears to be serious design defect that could lead to total engine failure.

Ms. Docherty
January 8, 2010
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We no longer feel safe driving the vehicle. As a result, if available, we would like to have an upgraded intake manifold and gasket(s) replaced on our vehicle at GM's expense.

Over the years we have owned many GM vehicles. We have found the Buick line to be a premium brand with responsive performance. We are both in our seventies and it saddens us this problem exists with our present vehicle.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Enclosures

c: Edward E. Whitacre, Jr.
Chairman and CEO, GMC

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
S. Charleston WV [Redacted]

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National Highway Traffic Safety Adm.
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