

INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET:www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

19-OCT-2010

Repository

Reference No.
10361217

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED]
City WICHITA State KS Zip Code [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED] E-mail Address [REDACTED]
Evening Telephone Number [REDACTED]

The information you provide will be used to identify potential safety-related defects. We may share your information with the applicable vehicle manufacturer during an investigation or recall in accordance with the routine uses described in the agency's Privacy Act notice. See 49 FR 53971 (Sep. 3, 2004).

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: JHMFA36296S [REDACTED] Make HONDA Model CIVIC Model Year 2006
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) 01-AUG-2009

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Vehicle Component Codes: 103000 POWER TRAIN: AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION, 100000 POWER TRAIN Failure Mileage 43381 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: DOTMAL9ABC036) 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 Number of Deaths 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 2006 HONDA CIVIC HYBRID. WHEN THE ACCELERATOR PEDAL WAS ENGAGED HE NOTICED THAT THE VEHICLE WAS NOT AS POWERFUL AS USUAL. THE VEHICLE WAS TAKEN TO AN AUTHORIZED DEALER WHO STATED THAT THE INTEGRATED MOTOR ASSIST WAS EXPERIENCING INTERMITTENT FAILURES. THE VEHICLE WAS NOT REPAIRED. THE PROBLEM HAD CONTINUED TO OCCUR INTERMITTENTLY. THE VEHICLE WAS TAKEN BACK TO AN AUTHORIZED DEALER WHERE THE SOFTWARE SYSTEM WAS UPDATED. THE FAILURE BECAME PROGRESSIVELY WORSE. THE FAILURE MILEAGE WAS 43,381 AND THE CURRENT MILEAGE WAS 56,000.

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 to 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.

Subject: 0361217
Date: Thursday, February 10, 2011 10:37:49 AM
Attachments: [Schofield Honda Service Invoice 080310.jpg](#)
[Schofield Honda Service Invoice 082409.jpg](#)
[Schofield Honda Service Invoice 092110.jpg](#)
[Honda Corporation Has No Honor In The Treatment Of Their Civic Minded Hybrid Consumers 101510.pdf](#)
[Autoblog - Honda to fix software flaw that affects battery life on Civic Hybrid 081210.pdf](#)
[10361217.pdf](#)

From: Mattson, Ryan CTR (NHTSA) **On Behalf Of** DataQuality, DataQuality (NHTSA)

Subject: FW: EVOQ Email Response 10361217

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 10:09 PM
To: DataQuality, DataQuality (NHTSA)
Subject: EVOQ Email Response 10361217

I have attached copies of relevant service invoices (service invoice 092110 documents the deliberate reprogramming of the IMA system to reduce the use of the IMA batteries to assist the gas motor impacting vehicle's ability to accelerate) and the complaint letter I sent to Honda Corporation (which also includes a timeline of the issue).

The major safety issue is that IMA batteries lose their ability to hold a charge and the reprogramming implemented by Honda Corporation, the acceleration capability of the vehicle has become extremely erratic. Sometimes it will accelerate normally and sometimes it doesn't. It is so inconsistent and unreliable it makes entering busy traffic and passing other vehicles unsafe.

I am not the only one who is experiencing this problem. I have included an article and related chat on this problem.

This is not right and Honda Corporation should be held accountable.

Thank you,
[REDACTED]

CUSTOMER #: 719444

342890

SCHOLFIELD HONDA

INVOICE

7017 East Kellogg - P.O. Box 780769
WICHITA, KANSAS 67278-0769
Direct Service Phone (316) 888-6450
website: www.shonda.com

WICHITA, KS

PAGE 1

HOME: [REDACTED] CONT: N/A
BUS: [REDACTED] CELL: [REDACTED]

SERVICE ADVISOR: 481 JENNIFER SNODGRASS

Table with columns: COLOR, YEAR, MAKE/MODEL, VIN, LICENSE, MILEAGE IN / OUT, TAG. Includes details for MAG 06 HONDA CIVIC, VIN JHMFA36296S, and delivery date 25FEB06.

Table with columns: LINE, OPCODE, TECH, TYPE, HOURS, LIST, NET, TOTAL. Includes line A for IMA BATTERY SOFTWARE UPDATE.

CAUSE: R4200
1255B2 UPDATE PGM-FI SOFTWARE S/B# 10-034 CIVIC HYBRID REFLASH
168 WH4 0.30 (N/C)
1255B2A ADD FOR UPDATING IMA BATTERY SOFTWARE
168 WH4 0.30 (N/C)
1255B2B ADD FOR UPDATING A/T SOFTWARE
168 WH4 0.30 (N/C)
1255B2C ADD FOR START CLUTCH LEARNING
168 WH4 0.10 (N/C)
FC: 5KC00
PART#: 1K100-RMX-A01
COUNT: 0
CLAIM TYPE:
AUTH CODE:

53385 UPDATE COMPLETE.

B CUST STATES THE CHARGE ASSIST GAUGE STARTS AT ABOUT HALF WHEN DRIVING THEN GOES ALL THE WAY DOWN TO ZERO. VEHICLE ALSO FEELS SLUGGISH WITH NO ASSIST POWER. GAS MILEAGE HAS DROPPED FROM ABOUT 42MPG TO 36MPG. STARTED NOTICING PROBLEM THIS PAST WINTER. CHECK AND ADVISE

DIAG DIAGNOSIS
168 CP 1.00 72.69 72.69
53385 BATTERY GAUGE STARTED AT HALF WHEN FIRST BROUGHT IN. PERFORMED UPDATE FROM LINE A AND 3 MORE UPDATES INCLUDING PGM-FI, AT (CVT), AND IMA MOTOR PER RYAN. CHECKED FOR CODES, NONE STORED. CHECKED AND ADJUSTED TIRE PRESSURES TO 32PSI. ALL UNDERSHIELDS ON VEHICLE OK. RAN VEHICLE AT 2500 RPM TO CHARGE IMA BATTERY, THEN TEST DROVE. IMA BATTERY GAUGE DID NOT GET DOWN TO HALF WHILE DRIVING. EVERYTHING IS OPERATING PROPERLY AT THIS TIME. VEHICLE BATTERY DID TEST BAD, RECOMMEND REPLACE BATTERY.

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE REPAIRS SHOWN ON THIS REPAIR ORDER INCLUDING ALL NECESSARY PARTS AND MATERIALS. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT I AM FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CHARGES NOT COVERED BY THE MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY...

Table with columns: SERVICE HOURS, DESCRIPTION, TOTALS. Includes hours for MON-FRI 7:00 AM TO 6:00 PM and SAT 8:00 AM TO 1:00 PM.

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES
ALL EXPRESSED WARRANTIES IF ANY, BY A MANUFACTURER OR SUPPLIER OTHER THAN THE DEALER ARE THEIRS, NOT DEALER'S UNLESS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN WRITING AND FURNISHED TO BUYER BY DEALER.

Table with columns: DESCRIPTION, TOTALS. Includes rows for LABOR AMOUNT, PARTS AMOUNT, GAS, OIL, LUBE, SUBLET AMOUNT, MISC. CHARGES, TOTAL CHARGES, LESS INSURANCE, SALES TAX, PLEASE PAY THIS AMOUNT.

CUSTOMER SIGNATURE X
Thank You for this opportunity to serve you. It is our aim to perform all the repairs requested on this repair order to your complete satisfaction.

Honda to fix software flaw that affects battery life on Civic Hybrid

by Eric Loveday (RSS feed) on Aug 12th 2010 at 7:57AM



Honda Civic Hybrid – Click above for high-res image gallery

According to a report from **Bloomberg**, **Honda** has decided to fix a software flaw that may cause batteries found in the **Civic Hybrid** to wear out sooner than expected. Honda began informing owners earlier this month that a flaw in the vehicle's software has affected all 2006 through 2008 Civic Hybrids sold in the U.S. Honda has issued a technical service bulletin and is asking owners to voluntarily bring affected vehicles in for software reprogramming.

Honda spokeswoman Christine Ra stated that the company did not elect to issue a recall because the flaw does not affect vehicle safety. Ra would not confirm whether or not any of the nickel-metal hydride batteries found in '06-'08 Civic Hybrids have failed due to the reported flaw, but she did state that the fix will not affect the vehicle's fuel economy or performance. Ra said the software modifications only affect the battery's usage, which we believe implies that the fix

will limit the battery's allowable levels of charge and discharge. According to Honda, modifications to the vehicle's software are necessary because "the batteries may deteriorate and fail much earlier than their warranty of at least eight years and 100,000 miles." We hope to update this developing story as more info becomes available.

[Source: **Bloomberg** via **HybridCars**]

Reader Comments (Page 1 of 2)



Jason 8:25AM (8/12/2010)

How about they fix their hardware flaw that makes the IMA system suck instead?

Mild hybrid FTL.



Sasparilla 9:11AM (8/12/2010)

As someone who has received one of these notices I can add some more detail to this issue:

The notice states that the following will happen (my comments are in parenthesis):

When the vehicle is in auto idle stop (like when your at a red light), the engine starts sooner. It now restarts when only two bars are displayed in the IMA battery guage. (this is okay, not a big deal)

Even with up to four bars displayed on the IMA battery level gauge, auto idle stop may not occur. (four bars is about halfway up the gauge, this will definitely affect the fuel economy you get since the engine will be idling much more, this is not good)

To ensure there's plenty of power for engine starting and accelerating from a stop, the IMA system reserves more battery power. This reduces the IMA assist as the vehicle speed increases. (this will affect the fuel economy as well since its during acceleration that the IMA is actually helping and reducing fuel usage, this is not good either)

The IMA battery level gauge more accurately indicates the battery's state of charge. You will also notice that the level bars stay in the middle of the gauge much longer. (not sure about this, are they just showing more of the battery capacity or adjusting the software to show the middle of the gauge where auto idle stop doesn't occur?)

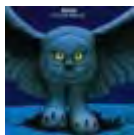
End of Notice details

My personal take on this is the following. Honda didn't put in a big enough NiMH battery into the vehicle (unlike the Prius), probably because it was cheaper, and its been using it outside of the central area of capacity (further up the capacity level and further down the capacity level) where a NiMH battery will almost last almost forever (like on the Prius). Now its turning out that this is killing the batteries (just like it did on the original Insight and the previous version of the Civic Hybrid - this should have been anticipated & dealt with before production of the 2006 model).

So now Honda is looking at having to replace a bunch of these \$3k batteries as the mileage piles up on these vehicles - because they didn't design it with enough a big enough capacity battery (unlike the Prius) to do what they wanted it to do and stay within the long lifetime area of the NiMH battery. This is a design flaw on Honda's part IMHO.

They don't want to have to replace a bunch of these batteries (like they have had to on the original Insight and Civic Hybrid models - just google this to see), so they are going to drop in a new software load that will make it so the vehicle doesn't use IMA system (i.e. the battery) nearly as aggressively - since the IMA system is what gives you the low mileage (if you get it down to no capacity indication the mileage is atrocious), this will obviously affect the mileage - even though Honda is saying it won't.

Not a very satisfactory solution for the consumer who bought this car for the high mileage. Personally I'm not sure I will have this software load put in because of the obvious adverse effects on the main reason for owning the car, its still under warranty & the battery is already re-calibrating itself several times a week (going downhill fast).



Snowdog 9:47AM (8/12/2010)

I can see CR-Z batteries failing early as well, since you quickly exhaust the battery with a few lead-foot runs.



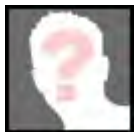
Sasparilla 11:29AM (8/12/2010)

Regarding #3 Snowdog's comment - I think it all depends if Honda has learned its lesson with NiMH batteries and made sure that the IMA system in the CR-Z only uses it (displays the full and empty capacities) within the middle range of the NiMH battery so it doesn't kill its cycle life. (I think I remember that number for extended cycle life being from around 35% - 75% or so) My guess is that (based on what they're doing with the Civic Hybrid here), they probably have and the IMA management system will keep things in good shape on the CR-Z during warranty (i.e. 80-100k on the mileage).

This is an unusual feature of NiMH batteries (other types don't have this characteristic), if you just use it within this mid capacity range, the cycle life of the battery becomes extremely large (I've heard it referred to as almost unlimited). To take advantage of this, your battery management system has to keep its use within this middle of the capacity bounds (Toyota figured this out way early and keeps the Prius batteries in this zone whether its indicating empty or full and is why the Prius doesn't have (for the most part) issues with battery life).

Everyone assumed Honda had learned its lesson on this with the original Insight and the 1st generation Civic Hybrid (both had issues with batteries dying, apparently because they used alot more of the capacity of the battery - smaller cheaper battery? - and killed its cycle life) and that with its "3rd generation IMA system" in the 2006 Civic Hybrid they'd be doing things correctly....but apparently they didn't learn their lesson and are trying to push out a "don't use the IMA" software load so they won't be exposed to having to replace as many batteries in 2006 through 2008 Civic Hybrids as the mileage starts getting high.

All that said, I would not plan on keeping a Honda Hybrid vehicle beyond its warranty period (unlike a non hybrid Honda which I'd have no qualms about). The CVT transmission used on these vehicles (some have manuals, but most have CVT's) are problematic (just google it), a good number have be rebuilt once you get past 100k on the mileage and with 3 clutches in there it isn't cheap (again, totally different experience from the Prius).



Invisible 11:58AM (8/12/2010)

Sasparilla, just ignore snowdog. Between he and middledude, they spew some laughable Honda B.S.



Middle Way 3:19PM (8/12/2010)

I didn't know that about NiMH, interesting. That could explain why the CR-Z doesn't tout very good MPG.

It sounds like the IMA is much worse than i thought. A larger battery, and generally not going cheap, would mitigate a lot of these problems.

Pretty shameful engineering, nonetheless!

On the upside, these cars are already aerodynamically optimized and somewhat wired for electric car duty. Maybe these paperweight cars (seriously, who's gonna drive these things with low tech 1.3L motors as the primary motivation) could be converted later on.



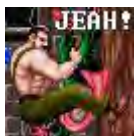
Snowdog 3:41PM (8/12/2010)

Invisible, you are such a hopeless fanboy, that you bleed Honda juice when cut.

I see you routinely ridiculing other brands like Hyundai in almost every post just because they are doing well these days and any Honda competitor doing well seems to cause you fits.

I am placing my bet now that using a small battery for max power to accelerate a, so called "sporty" hybrid will be harder on the battery.

Let's check back in 6 years and see how they fare.



Middle Way 4:18PM (8/12/2010)

^--- *round of applause*



npd2983 11:46AM (8/12/2010)

I was waiting for this story to break.

I received the notice too. I was not surprised because I have on occasion, in very hot weather, while at autostop, noticed the battery completely depleted by the AC. Upon taking off, the gas motor struggles to get the car moving. The engine has simply been tuned to let the battery provide torque at very low speeds. I could see where this could be dangerous, for example, turning left in front of oncoming traffic.

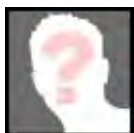
So when I was at a long stop in very hot weather, I would just take my foot off the brake and then reapply the brake, causing the engine to restart. Problem solved.

However, I did take my car in after the notice. IT IS NO LONGER THE SAME CAR. Honda has "dumbed down" the IMA so much that the battery hardly ever recharges, the car hardly ever auto-stops, and the electric assist is negligible. I was routinely getting mid-40s for mileage in my car. And I even got 56 MPG once on a long flat highway trip. Now I cannot get more than 30 MPGs out of the Honda Civic, even on a flat highway. It is utterly ruined.

I have called the dealer and told them they need to "undo" the update or replace the battery. This week I am either going to sell it outright to the dealer to get rid of the car or trade it in for a Prius.

I am so dissapointed by what Honda has done because this will damage the reputation of Hybrid cars and their batteries. It is also a major annoyance for me to have to get rid of the car. I really loved my HCH before the update destroyed it.

Cheers!



Sasparilla 1:17PM (8/12/2010)

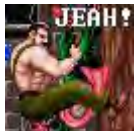
Wow npd2983, thank you for the details on what would happen after this IMA software update was applied (I was suspicious of this based on Honda's nonsensical description of what would happen, i.e. no mileage impact, and is why I didn't take it in for the update).

This is worse than I was afraid it would be. It basically sounds like Honda killed the IMA so the battery is just dead weight you carry around and they won't have to replace them. The engine is tuned to use the IMA constantly for acceleration, so its even worse than having a regular 1.3 liter pulling you on acceleration. Horrible.

There have been rare times where I've gotten the battery depleted (air conditioning while sitting a long time) and its just the engine pulling then and its sickly since the IMA is not being applied (I'm not someone who needs much acceleration anyways, but its bad) and mileage would fall into the 30's when that happened...so it sounds like this software load just makes that the new norm.

I'll definitely not have this update applied - shame on Honda for this. Someone said it before, but it seems like Corporate Honda has lost their soul over the last decade.

Thanks again for posting your experience npd2983 and good luck with your purchase. We have a Prius as well and other than it not driving as tight and sharp as the Civic, its a great car - fold down back seats, none of the worries about batteries and CVT issues and it consistently gets 45-50 mpg no matter if your on the highway or in city driving (unlike the Honda which is noticeably worse in city driving).



Middle Way 3:13PM (8/12/2010)

Failure to set proper thresholds for battery charge and discharge levels is a pretty elementary mistake!! shame on them. They wouldn't be fixing this if there weren't battery failures!!

NiMH cells don't get crazy out of balance like lithium cells do either. So i don't think that's why they are tuning it for a safer margin!

This certainly means for less capacity of the IMA. Adding a more safe margin to the battery charge = less available energy. Of course they are going to say it won't affect mpg.. my guess is that it will though, notably.

I wonder how bad they crippled it. I suppose we will see in due time.

This could all be avoided if they used a bigger pack.. but the entire system is just cheap :\

Man, what a failwhale. Honda has been really pissing me off lately. Soichiro must be spinning in his grave like a rotisserie chicken.



Middle Way 3:24PM (8/12/2010)

Whoops, i saw the comments above. Jesus christ, that's terrible :|

Didn't Honda 'revise' the MPG numbers of the Civic hybrid before '08 also? yikes.



jason 3:36PM (8/12/2010)

what about fixing our batteries that have already been greatly degraded by the prior software that caused issues. I'm still fighting honda on this. I can't even make it onto the highway anymore without killing the battery, and this update only makes it worse by "reserving" a ton of the battery for no use whatsoever compared to before.



Mike!!ekiM 4:21PM (8/12/2010)

Hmmm.

This sounds like how the 2010 Insight works right now.

- Battery Never goes below 50%.
- With the AC on auto-stop does not last as long as a red light.
- The electric motor has the capacity to pull you up short hills.

Up long hills, it drains down to 50%, and goes into regen mode. Which means it's hard to accelerate up a hill, you have to set your speed before regen kicks in.

- But, the engine has never failed to pull me up a hill with 2600 rpm. I've never had to go higher than that. The torque band seems to start at 2200 rpm.
- If I have to cross a busy intersection, I take it out of econ mode.

Not knowing the previous parameters, I've had no problem running the car with it's current parameters.



Mike!!ekiM 4:25PM (8/12/2010)

Also, my experience is:

- In City-Suburban driving econ mode can get 50, out of econ mode will get me 40 mpg.
- I think the AC takes away 5 mpg.
- With 4 people in the car, I take it out of econ mode, and get 33-36. I just feel safer with more power available, with more people in the car.



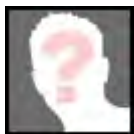
Mike!!ekiM 4:31PM (8/12/2010)

There's no doubt Honda could use a bigger battery and a plug. That would make a big difference.

And I'm very impressed with the Insight, the Torque [from 15 hp] is fantastic. What would it be with a 30 hp engine: Impressive.

I bought a hybrid and got a sports car, or a "sporty" car, tuned to be fun at normal driving speeds.

But, I have to admit: The Volt Never goes into Regen mode. But, they can't match the Insight's price [yet].



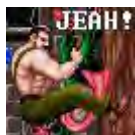
Dave B 4:37PM (8/12/2010)

It doesn't look like Honda solved the problem even by 2009.

My 2009 HCH II had battery issues after less than a year. My Honda dealer updated the software but it was too late. The damage was done. Eventually they changed the battery (RELUCTANTLY)

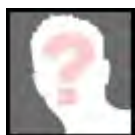
I'm glad I got the extended warranty.

I'm hoping a better 3rd party battery is developed before I reach 120,000 miles. If not, I'll get rid of it at 120,000 miles....



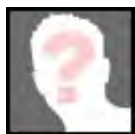
Middle Way 5:43PM (8/12/2010)

reluctantly changed the battery? what excuse did they have?!



baltojeff 7:31AM (8/13/2010)

Can anyone say "Class Action Suit"? I wonder if someone at Honda calculated the average hourly cost of the legal team versus the batteries' and mechanics' costs. Hmmmm...

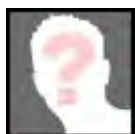


Invisible 8:53AM (8/13/2010)

Of course the ticks are going to file a class-action lawsuit. It's Honda, they are profitable, and the lawyers look for every little crack they can find to exploit the situation. Just watch, some lawyers will start seeding autoblogs about this, stirring up discontent, registering owners.

| 1 | 2 | [Most Recent](#) | [Next 20 Comments](#)

Reader Comments (Page 2 of 2)



zeorai 12:41PM (8/13/2010)

npd2983's experience is not unique. I got the notice a few weeks ago as well. Prior to receiving the notice I had already read up about the software update. There wasn't an official notice sent out until recently but I read that several owners would take their car in to the dealer and the dealer would tell them their was a service update and the flashed the new software. The result in every case was the car losing mpg because of more aggressive charge management. Most

people reported going from the mid 40's to the mid to high 30's. Prior to this the only recourse was battery replacement and that was getting expensive. In every case I read, it was a long drawn out process to get Honda or the dealership to replace the battery under warranty. We bought our HCH used and got an extended warranty just in case, looks like that \$1500 warranty will be paying for itself when we need the battery replaced.



Ljbad4life 10:18PM (8/14/2010)

Didn't Honda just get sued for this? I was never impressed with Honda's IMA system. Honda is on the 3rd gen IMA, but frankly the IMA has never been improved since gen I. The motor and the battery size are roughly the same. Is this why Ford now sells more Hybrids than honda?



Chris 3:29PM (9/02/2010)

Per the manufacturers instructions we did the software upgrade on our 2008 Honda Hybrid. Acceleration is terrible now. You have to get up to around 12 MPH before you get any power. The electrical side doesn't kick in very often. We now get about ten miles less per gallon. My wife almost got into an accident as she tried to accelerate to get onto the freeway because there is no acceleration. Took the car back to the Honda dealer today and they said they can't do anything about it and they said it will cure things if we put a higher octane gas in the car. Guess what? We have only used the highest octane since we bought the car brand new. Now I am stuck with a crappy car that I can't stand that gets crappy gas mileage and contributes as much to air pollution as any non-hybrid car.



C.Hack 11:50AM (9/10/2010)

My 2009 HCH went in for oil, tranny fluid and air filter replacement a few weeks ago. Afterward, I noticed an obvious 5 mpg drop in MPG. In addition I noticed the battery would not charge up often and was frequently discharged to the point where it provided no boost. I called my Honda dealer and they refused to help. It became so unsafe to drive with my family (car could not merge into traffic uphill or on highways) that I just traded it in.

Being an engineer that deals with similar troubleshooting often, this appears to be a serious defect in the IMA design. I am glad I traded in before it becomes common knowledge and the Honda IMA cars become worthless.

September 24, 2010

Wichita, KS

To Honda Corporation Consumer Representative,

I have taken my 2006 Honda Civic Hybrid vehicle into the local Honda Dealership (Schofield Honda of Wichita) multiple times complaining about the low gas mileage and more serious lack of power / acceleration. The problem continues to degrade to where I am not only getting 36 mpg and having major power / acceleration problems especially during hot days when the air conditioning is operating (see the my enclosed story). I have paid for diagnostic tests which have resulted in "no problems with your vehicle".

Obviously, there is a problem in that 36 mpg is nowhere near the 48-50 mpg stated on the sales sticker and the lack of power / acceleration was not how the vehicle performed when I purchased it.

I am a product design engineer designing storage systems for LSI Corporation. These storage systems rely on a battery backup unit (BBU) designed around lithium ion battery cells. I recently had a technology review with 3 of our battery suppliers and their major concerns was the battery cell life over time and especially when exposed to extended periods of high / low temperatures. Sound familiar?

To send out a service call to reprogram the hybrid IMA system transferring most of the load from the hybrid electronic system to the gas motor (that was obviously not designed to support the load on its own) resulting in poor gas mileage and a more importantly a potentially unsafe vehicle just to avoid or delay replacing the hybrid batteries under warrantee is not only negligent but also extremely dishonorable.

Has the power of capitalism become so overwhelming that a giant Japanese owned company such as Honda Corporation completely discards its honor based culture? Being of Japanese descent, I would hope not.

I have attached my story for your review. If I do not receive a phone call on my cell phone () within the next 2 weeks to bring my car in for service and replacement of the hybrid batteries, I will push the send button on an email with my story targeted to major media giants like NBC News, CBS News, Fox News, New York Times, etc. and other organizations like Consumer Reports, Facebook, YouTube, Better Business Bureau, etc., and we shall test the power of the media and internet. If this happens, I wouldn't depend on sales of too many hybrid vehicles in the future.

I look forward to hearing your response soon.

An Unhappy Honda Civic Hybrid Consumer,

Honda Corporation Has No Honor In The Treatment Of Their Civic Minded Hybrid Consumers

Here is my story: In 2006, my family and I were in need of a new car. We had purchased a 2003 Honda Odyssey from the local dealership and were very pleased with the vehicle and Honda's service so we decided to shop with them again. Hybrid vehicles had just been introduced to the general public and having come from Seattle where we recycled everything to benefit the ecology, we thought it would be the civic minded thing to do and purchased a Honda Civic Hybrid. Being an engineer, I was concerned about such a new technology but was told by the Honda sales person, "if you purchased the 10 year / 100K mile bumper to bumper warranty and the additional 8 year hybrid battery warranty, you shouldn't have to worry about anything in the future."

We bought the 2006 Honda Civic Hybrid and were pretty pleased with its performance although we were never able to quite achieve the 48-50 mpg gas mileage specified on the sales sticker. Surprisingly the vehicle had good acceleration and power even though it was a hybrid and we were able to get 43-45 mpg. When I took my car in for its first service, I asked about the lower gas mileage and was told it was probably due to the way the oil companies were formulating their gas. 43-45 mpg wasn't bad so I didn't think to pursue it any further. Unlucky for me since there was eventually a class action lawsuit against Honda Corporation for falsely advertising an unachievable gas mileage.

3 years passed and I started noticing the vehicle would not hold a charge when it had sat out in hot or cold weather for an extended period of time (i.e. 4-5 hours). I also noticed my gas mileage had decreased to about 41-43 mpg. When I took the vehicle in for the standard maintenance, I questioned if there was something wrong with the vehicle. The service personnel looked over the IMA hybrid system and said they tweaked the program so it would perform better. I didn't notice any real improvement but I did notice the vehicle was not charging the batteries as efficiently as it had been prior to being serviced and it wasn't providing electronic assistance to the gas motor as frequently as it had been in the past. It was still running okay so I didn't think too much of it.

1 more year passes (summer of 2010) and I start to notice significant power and acceleration problems with the vehicle especially after it has sat for a while in the heat of the summer. I receive a notice in the mail from Honda that I need to take my vehicle in for service to the IMA system. I took my vehicle in for the service and also complained about the lack of power / acceleration and poor gas mileage (now only getting 38-41 mpg). I was charged \$85 for a diagnostic test that resulted in no problems found with the vehicle and was told the IMA system had been reprogrammed per the service notice. I was also told that the IMA charging gauge may read a bit funny but that would be normal for the service performed on the vehicle.

The week after having the vehicle serviced for the IMA system reprogramming, I took the vehicle on a trip from Wichita to Chicago. The temperature averaged 95 degrees throughout the trip and with the A/C on in the vehicle, I had major power / acceleration problems during the trip. There were times driving cross country on the interstate when I thought the vehicle wouldn't maintain the speed limit going up some of the minor hills (we are not talking the Rocky Mountains here) we encountered. Once in Chicago I

stopped at a red light on a hill and when the light turned green, I pressed on the gas to pull into traffic and the vehicle went nowhere. It took 3-5 second before the vehicle started forward. I wasn't even quite sure if the vehicle would make it up the hill but eventually it did. Thank goodness I had left enough room for oncoming traffic to slow down and go around me. I endured the honking and finger flipping as the cars went by thinking how lucky I was not to have caused an accident. When I returned home from the trip, I looked at the gas mileage and was only able to get 36 mpg during the trip (far cry from the 48-50 mpg on the sales sticker).

I took the vehicle back in for service and told them the gas mileage was even worse, the power / acceleration was worse and the vehicle nowhere near performs like it did when I bought it. I also told them the reason why it had all these issues was because the hybrid battery cells were dying and that someone reprogrammed the IMA hybrid system to draw less power assist from the batteries which applies more load onto a gas motor that wasn't designed to operate efficiently without the hybrid power assistance. They ran their standard diagnostics which showed no issues with the vehicle. They even called Honda Corporate to inquire about the problem and were told by their Honda Corporate Engineers that the recent IMA program change was implemented to "extend the life of the hybrid batteries".

"Extend the life of the hybrid batteries" means to lower the amount of hybrid electric power assist to the gas motor which translates directly to overloading a gas motor not designed for that type of load (which will increase the wear and tear on the gas motor) resulting in much lower power / acceleration, much lower gas mileage and lowering the reliability of the gas motor. All of this burden placed onto the hybrid car consumer who made a conscious decision to do something to help the global green initiative and be more ecologically friendly.

This is a most dishonorable strategy being implemented by Honda Corporation in avoidance of replacing dying hybrid batteries and consciously making the consumer pay the price of lower performance, reliability and safety. How many accidents, injuries and deaths need to happen as a result of the poor power / acceleration of these hybrid vehicles before Honda Corporation decides to repair the hybrid vehicle properly and honor the battery warranties purchased by the consumers to protect against this type of issue?

If people are thinking about purchasing a hybrid vehicle from Honda Corporation, DON'T DO IT. If people have already purchased a hybrid vehicle from Honda Corporation, write letters to anyone and everyone who will listen until Honda does the right thing and replaces your hybrid batteries under warranty.

9/24/10

Mailed complaint letter to:

American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
Honda Automobile Customer Service
1919 Torrance Boulevard
Mail Stop: 500 - 2N - 7D
Torrance, CA 90501-2746

10/5/10 Honda Customer Service Initial Contact with Me
Brian Magania (spelling?)
(800) 999-1009 x117746
Case #N012010-10-0101467

Brian called me on my cell phone to discuss the gas mileage, power and acceleration issue identified in my letter. He asked some questions as to what was actually happening. He asked why I thought this was an issue with the IMA system and the hybrid batteries. I told him the information I was told by Schofield Honda that "the IMA program was changed to extend the IMA battery life by limiting the amount it gets used to assist the engine" He said he will discuss this issue with Schofield Honda and get back to me by the end of the week. He did not leave a call back number or his last name.

10/13/10

Brian left a message to call him back to discuss what he has discussed with Schofield Honda service manager. (800) 999-1009 x117746

10/15/10

I called Brian and left a message on his voice mail to return my call.

10/15/10

Brian returned my call and we discussed his findings. Primarily, unless the Honda Civic Hybrid vehicle reports a problem with the IMA system and/or hybrid batteries, Honda does not recognize a lack of power/acceleration and low gas mileage as a problem with the vehicle. He denied that there was any problem with the hybrid batteries even when I told him I have a service document from Schofield Honda that states Honda has reprogrammed the IMA hybrid system to transfer power to the gas engine to extend the life of the hybrid batteries.

10/18/10

I called the National Transportation and Safety hotline to file a safety complaint against the lack of power/acceleration due to the IMA system on the 2006 Honda Civic Hybrid vehicle. Complaint / Office of Defect Investigations (ODI) #10361217 (view complaint investigation status on www.safercar.gov). Telephone call ref #304389

10/18/10

I left a message on the Schofield Honda website complaining about how Honda is handling the IMA issue impacting the gas mileage and vehicle safety with poor power/acceleration. I received a automated response email from Greg Crawford Internet Manager at Schofield Honda acknowledging receipt of my message.

CUSTOMER #: 719444

345869



INVOICE

7017 East Kellogg · Wichita, KS 67207
Direct Service: (316) 688-6450
www.scholfieldhonda.com

WICHITA, KS [REDACTED]

PAGE 1

HOME: CONT:N/A
BUS: CELL:

SERVICE ADVISOR: 481 JENNIFER SNODGRASS

COLOR	YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	VIN	LICENSE	MILEAGE IN / OUT	TAG	
MAG	06	HONDA CIVIC	JHMFA36296S [REDACTED]		55916/55916	T628	
DEL. DATE	PROD. DATE	WARR. EXP.	PROMISED	PO NO.	RATE	PAYMENT	INV. DATE
25FEB06 DD			17:00 21SEP10			CASH	21SEP10
R.O. OPENED	READY	OPTIONS: STK:N18980 DLR:206607 ENG:1.3 Liter					
07:44 21SEP10	11:32 21SEP10	TRN:AUTO 1)DEL 2.25.06 2)MILES 36 3)CNA VCA-12990699					

LINE	OPCODE	TECH	TYPE	HOURS	LIST	NET	TOTAL
------	--------	------	------	-------	------	-----	-------

A ENGINE LACKS POWER AND IS GETTING POOR FUEL MILEAGE. CUSTOMER STATES VEHICLE WAS GETTING 43-45 MPG CONSISTENTLY AND IS NOW ONLY GETTING AROUND 35-36 MPG.

900 MISC LABOR

154 CP 0.00 0.00 0.00

55916 REFERENCE TECH LINE, UPDATE WAS DESIGNED TO EXTEND IMA BATTERY LIFE BY LIMITING THE AMOUNT IT GETS USED TO ASSIST THE ENGINE. NO REPAIR AT THIS TIME.

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING SCHOLFIELD HONDA AS YOUR SOURCE FOR QUALITY HONDA SERVICE.

DID YOU KNOW WE OFFER :

- EXPRESS OIL CHANGE - FREE COFFEE
- FREE INTERNET - EARLY BIRD DROP OFF
- CABLE TV, CURRENT NEWSPAPER & MAGAZINES

*Honda
Cust Assst
1-800-999-1009*

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE REPAIRS SHOWN ON THIS REPAIR ORDER INCLUDING ALL NECESSARY PARTS AND MATERIALS. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT I AM FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CHARGES NOT COVERED BY THE MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY. I UNDERSTAND THAT SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. WILL BILL MY INSURANCE OR EXTENDED WARRANTY COMPANY AS A COURTESY TO ME. I ALSO UNDERSTAND IF SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. HAS NOT RECEIVED PAYMENT WITHIN 60 DAYS, THIS ACCOUNT WILL BECOME MY RESPONSIBILITY. I HEREBY GRANT YOU AND/OR YOUR EMPLOYEES PERMISSION TO OPERATE THE VEHICLE HEREIN DESCRIBED ON STREETS, HIGHWAYS OR ELSEWHERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF TESTING AND/OR INSPECTION. I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL ESTIMATES ARE APPROXIMATE PRICES, NOT EXACT PRICES. SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. AND EMPLOYEES WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO VEHICLES OR ARTICLES LEFT IN VEHICLES IN CASE OF FIRE, THEFT OR ANY OTHER CAUSES BEYOND OUR CONTROL.

I authorize the retrieval of on-board data as needed to facilitate vehicle repair, as well as sharing of that data with the manufacturer for diagnostic and research purposes.
CUSTOMER SIGNATURE X _____

Thank You for this opportunity to serve you. It is our aim to perform all the repairs requested on this repair order to your complete satisfaction. If our service was satisfactory tell your friends, if not, please tell us immediately.

SERVICE HOURS	DESCRIPTION	TOTALS
MON-FRI 7:00 AM TO 6:00 PM	LABOR AMOUNT	0.00
SAT 8:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	PARTS AMOUNT	0.00
DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES	GAS, OIL, LUBE	0.00
"ALL EXPRESSED WARRANTIES IF ANY, BY A MANUFACTURER OR SUPPLIER OTHER THAN THE DEALER ARE THEIRS, NOT DEALER'S UNLESS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN WRITING AND FURNISHED TO BUYER BY DEALER."	SUBLET AMOUNT	0.00
	MISC. CHARGES	0.00
	TOTAL CHARGES	0.00
	LESS INSURANCE	0.00
	SALES TAX	0.00
	PLEASE PAY THIS AMOUNT	0.00

CUSTOMER #: 719444

322680

SCHOLFIELD-HATCHETT, INC
7017 E. KELLOGG
WICHITA KS 67207

INVOICE

WICHITA, KS

PAGE 1

HOME: [REDACTED] CONT: N/A
BUS: [REDACTED] CELL: [REDACTED]

SERVICE ADVISOR: 131 STEVE CARMER

COLOR	YEAR	MAKE/MODEL	VIN	LICENSE	MILEAGE IN / OUT	TAG
MAG	06	HONDA CIVIC	JHMFA36296S		43381/43381	T990

DEL. DATE	PROD. DATE	WARR. EXP.	PROMISED	PO NO.	RATE	PAYMENT	INV. DATE
25FEB06 DD			17:00 24AUG09			CASH	24AUG09

R.O. OPENED	READY	OPTIONS:
07:31 24AUG09	16:10 24AUG09	STK:N18980 DLR:206607 ENG:1.3 Liter TRN:AUTO 1)DEL 2.25.06 2)MILES 36 3)CNA VCA-12990699

LINE	OPCODE	TECH	TYPE	HOURS	LIST	NET	TOTAL
------	--------	------	------	-------	------	-----	-------

A CHECK ENGINE LIGHT IS ON SOLID, NO DRIVABILITY CONCERNS

DIAG DIAGNOSIS

154 CP 0.50 36.35 36.35

43381 VERIFIED CONCERN, SHOWED CODE 01221 FOR INTEGRATED MOTOR ASSIST ERROR. CHECKED CODE AND MONITORED OBD STATUS, SYSTEM PASSED. INTERMITTENT FAILURE, NO REPAIR AND NO SERVICE BULLETINS FOR CODE.

B MAIN MAINTENANCE ITEM A, HYBRID

MMA MAIN MAINTENANCE ITEM A

154 CP 0.30 13.16 13.16

1 15400-PLM-A02 6663991-15400 FILTER, OIL 7.26 7.26 7.26

1 94109-14000 0171876-90400 WASHER, DRAIN (14MM) 0.33 0.33 0.33

4 08798-9029 796476 OIL, MOTOR (0W-20) 7.22 7.22 28.88

C RE-APPLY AUTO BUTLER PROTECTION

RAPP RE-APPLY AUTO BUTLER PROTECTION

184 IPSP 0.40 (N/C)

43381 RE-APPLIED AUTO BUTLER PROTECTION

D WASH & VACUUM

WV WASH & VACUUM

184 CP 0.30 9.95 9.95

43381 COMPLETE

CUSTOMER PAY SUPPLIES FOR REPAIR ORDER

5.95

MAINTENANCE CURRENT

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING SCHOLFIELD HONDA AS YOUR SOURCE FOR QUALITY HONDA SERVICE.

DID YOU KNOW WE OFFER ;

- EXPRESS OIL CHANGE - FREE COFFEE
- FREE INTERNET - EARLY BIRD DROP OFF
- CABLE TV, CURRENT NEWSPAPER & MAGAZINES

I HEREBY AUTHORIZE THE ABOVE REPAIRS SHOWN ON THIS REPAIR ORDER INCLUDING ALL NECESSARY PARTS AND MATERIALS. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT I AM FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CHARGES NOT COVERED BY THE MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY. I UNDERSTAND THAT SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. WILL BILL MY INSURANCE OR EXTENDED WARRANTY COMPANY AS A COURTESY TO ME. I ALSO UNDERSTAND IF SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. HAS NOT RECEIVED PAYMENT WITHIN 60 DAYS, THIS ACCOUNT WILL BECOME MY RESPONSIBILITY. I HEREBY GRANT YOU AND/OR YOUR EMPLOYEES PERMISSION TO OPERATE THE VEHICLE HEREIN DESCRIBED ON STREETS, HIGHWAYS OR ELSEWHERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF TESTING AND/OR INSPECTION. I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL ESTIMATES ARE APPROXIMATE PRICES, NOT EXACT PRICES. SCHOLFIELD HONDA, INC. AND EMPLOYEES WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO VEHICLES OR ARTICLES LEFT IN VEHICLES IN CASE OF FIRE, THEFT OR ANY OTHER CAUSES BEYOND OUR CONTROL.

CUSTOMER SIGNATURE X

Thank You for this opportunity to serve you. It is our aim to perform all the repairs requested on this repair order to your complete satisfaction. If our service was satisfactory tell your friends, if not, please tell us immediately.

SERVICE HOURS	DESCRIPTION	TOTALS
MON-FRI 7:00 AM TO 6:00 PM	LABOR AMOUNT	59.46
SAT 8:00 AM TO 1:00 PM	PARTS AMOUNT	36.47
DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES	GAS, OIL, LUBE	0.00
"ALL EXPRESSED WARRANTIES IF ANY, BY A MANUFACTURER OR SUPPLIER OTHER THAN THE DEALER ARE THEIRS, NOT DEALER'S UNLESS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN WRITING AND FURNISHED TO BUYER BY DEALER."	SUBLET AMOUNT	0.00
	MISC. CHARGES	5.95
	TOTAL CHARGES	101.88
	LESS INSURANCE	0.00
	SALES TAX	6.42
	PLEASE PAY THIS AMOUNT	108.30