

CL-10625690-6788

July 30, 2014

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

Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590

AUG - 6 2014

Re: Inadequate Cabin Heat in Winter, 2012 Nissan Sentra

To Whom It May Concern:

Owner name, address, and telephone number:

[Redacted]
Cedar Rapids, Iowa [Redacted]
[Redacted] (land line)
[Redacted] (cell)

Vehicle identification number

3N1AB6AP5CL [Redacted]

Date of purchase:

March 6, 2012

Odometer reading, time of original complaint:

31,827

Current odometer reading:

36,075

Dealer's name and address:

Dave Wright Nissan Subaru
1900 51st Street, N.E.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Nature of defect: My wife and I noticed this past winter (which was an especially cold one in Iowa) that our 2012 Nissan Sentra does not warm up to normal operating temperature on a timely basis when the outside temperature is roughly 15 degrees or colder. Instead, the coolant temperature gauge moves about 1/3 of the way up (normal is 1/2 way up) and just stays there for an extended period of 20 or more minutes. As a result, the heater puts out only minimally warm air. Eventually the car fully warms up and the heater output is normal. The car is unpleasant to drive in this condition and could pose a health and safety problem if we were stranded on a cold winter day. Moreover, the engine's failure to reach proper operating temperature in the proper amount of time will likely lead to premature engine wear.

Communication with dealer: **The dealer is aware that this is a problem with this model/year vehicle but is unable to correct the problem and has not received any technical advice or assistance from Nissan North America, Inc.** Let me say a word about my dealer: I have been doing business with this dealership (and its predecessor, Jim Miller Nissan) for over 28 years. I've purchased 5 new and 4 used vehicles from them and do all my service work there. They are honest, competent, and professional. I am completely confident that if they were able to remedy the problem, they would.

ET
81514
SMD

Communication with manufacturer: In summary, in my opinion Nissan North America, Inc., has been very unresponsive. I first provided notice to them of the problem in a letter dated March 17, 2014. They did not respond to that communication so I wrote another letter on May 10, 2014. They then responded telephonically and told me I needed to have the car checked out by my dealer. I did, on May 21, 2014. Of course, the dealership could not then find a problem because the air temperature was by this time much warmer, far above the 15 degrees when the problem surfaces. Had Nissan made a timely response to my March 17 letter, I'm confident the dealer would have been able to replicate the problem. I received no communication from Nissan after the dealer checked out the vehicle, so I wrote another letter on June 24, 2014. I finally got a telephonic response from the Consumer Affairs Department of Nissan North America, Inc., and was at that time assigned a case number: 14870623. I have since been trying to contact Nissan's representatives to get an update of my case but to no avail. *Specifically, over the course of the period July 3 through July 18, I called the number they provided each day, usually two times per day.* I got return calls to my calls on some occasions, but it was never at a time when I was home. I also gave them my cell phone number but they **never** called that number. They have not attempted to contact me at all over the course of the last two weeks

I believe, and I infer from my dealer that they believe, there is a basic design flaw with the engine in this vehicle which results in the inadequate and improper warm-up of the engine in very cold weather conditions. I believe Nissan should acknowledge this fact and make whatever design/engineering changes are necessary to remedy the problem.

I have been unable to resolve the problem with the manufacturer and am therefore requesting that you begin an investigation into the matter. Based on the dealer's comments, this is not an isolated problem but affects many, many other Nissan Sentra owners.

I am enclosing a copy of my most recent communication with the Consumer Affairs Department of Nissan North America, Inc., and would be happy to provide you copies of the other letters I've written, as described above, should you so desire them.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Cedar Rapids, Iowa 

(copy to NHTSA)

July 30, 2014

Nissan North America, Inc.
Consumer Affairs Department
P.O. Box 685003
Franklin, Tennessee 37068-5003

THIRD NOTICE

Re: Inadequate Cabin Heat – Claim Number 14870623

To Whom It May Concern:

Background: On March 17, 2014, I sent a letter to you informing you of a problem with our 2012 Nissan Sentra. The issue involved inadequate cabin heat. I did not receive a timely response to that letter, and therefore sent a second letter on May 10, 2014. Subsequent to my second letter, I received a phone call from one of your representatives and I reiterated the information contained in my two prior letters. Your representative indicated that we needed to have the vehicle checked out by our Nissan dealer. We had that done on May 21, 2014. I sent a follow-up letter to you on June 24, 2014, requesting an update on your review of my case. I subsequently received a phone message from a person named "Jessica", at phone number 800/343-6913, extension 457278. She said nothing material in the phone message about the case itself but just informed me in her phone message that I could call back and that she would return my call "...at my earliest convenience." [that's an exact quote from her recorded message]

Current status: I did call back, at the extension I was given, on July 3, 2014. I was unable to reach her so I left my phone number, as her message requested (notwithstanding the fact that you already had that phone number because it was in my original letter dated March 17, 2014).

Over the course of the period July 3 through July 18, I called the above number each day, usually twice each day. I was never able to reach "Jessica" or the person she said (via phone message) I should call, a "Marie," at extension 458156. Each time I had to leave a phone message. In many of my daily calls, I also provided my cell phone number. I NEVER received a call back to my cell phone. I did receive some call-backs on my land line but they were, at minimum, hours after my call, or would not be made until the following day or a still later day. You have made no attempts to reach me over the course of the last two weeks.

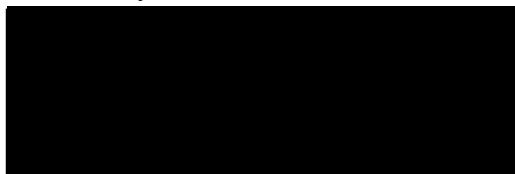
Follow-up: It's obvious that your procedure of using the telephone to respond to these inquiries is woefully inadequate. You don't even have the professional courtesy of indicating, in your call back messages, a date and time (or range of time) that you would call again. I wouldn't think it necessary to have to point out that ordinary people do not just sit idly by their telephones waiting for a return call when they have no idea whatsoever what day, let alone what possible time of day, such a return call might be made.

Nissan North America, Inc. has been totally unresponsive to my good-faith efforts to get my case reviewed and for me to receive a formal response with the results of that review. It's clear to me

that you assign a very low priority to such matters. Nissan certainly has not resolved the fundamental problem laid in in complete detail in my original March 17, 2014, letter. In view of these facts, I am therefore making a formal complaint to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, and am including with that complaint a copy of this letter along with all my previous communications with you.

One would reasonably think that with all the adverse publicity – not to mention huge financial costs – surrounding recent vehicle recalls by General Motors Corporation and other manufacturers, Nissan would be particularly sensitive to customer complaints about vehicle defects, and would respond promptly and professionally. You are, instead, utterly tone deaf.

Sincerely,



Cedar Rapids, Iowa [redacted]

Cc: National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590

[Redacted]
Cedar Rapids, Iowa [Redacted]

CERTIFIED MAIL™



7013 3020 0001 5707 1142

**RETURN RECEIPT
REQUESTED**



1000



U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA
52402
JUL 31, 14
AMOUNT

\$6.49

Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590

W48-226