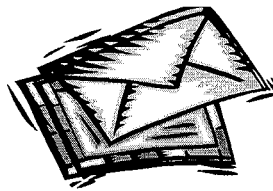


**NHTSA ccmMercury Routing Slip**



CL-10662300-6648

Printed: 12/16/2014

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<b>NHTSA #:</b> ES14-005735	Rec'd Date: 12/16/2014	Referred By: NPO-011
<b>XREF #:</b>	Doc Type: GEN	Doc Date: 12/7/2014
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<b>S10 #:</b>	<b>DOT/I #:</b>	<b>RMP #:</b>
<b>Subject: SUBMISSION FROM [REDACTED] RE GAS TANK 2004 JEEP HAD A RECALL</b>		
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## Jeep Fire Advocacy Heats up While Investigation Stalls

Posted on Wednesday, May 22nd, 2013

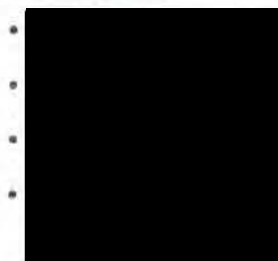
How much is your conscience worth? [REDACTED] figures it at about \$2,000 a month. That is roughly her monthly out-of-pocket cost for three billboards in the Frederick County, Virginia area, depicting a Jeep Grand Cherokee engulfed by flames and the plea: [REDACTED]

The Linden, Virginia woman, who works as a medical transcriptionist and a bookkeeper, is hoping that the graphic depictions will drive motorists to [sign her online petition](#) at [REDACTED] demanding that Chrysler recall the 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees to correct a design that sites the plastic gas tank behind the rear axle, where it is vulnerable to fuel fires in rear-impact crashes. As of this morning, she had collected nearly 3,355 signatures.

"I worked five years at my part time job, and I was at the point where I thought: 'It's time to let go of the second job.' Then the accident happened, and I said: 'I'm going to hold on to it to fund my Jeep campaign,'" [REDACTED] says. "It's insane that they are still on the road. [Chrysler] knows they are faulty."

The Jeep Grand Cherokees have been under the scrutiny of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration since November 2009, when the [Center for Auto Safety](#) petitioned the agency to open an investigation into fuel-fed fires in Jeep Grand Cherokees from the 1992-2008 model years. The advocacy group charged that the plastic fuel tank's placement behind the rear axle and below the rear bumper, and the lack of adequate shielding – similar in design to the infamous Ford Pinto – made it more vulnerable to rupture or leakage from rear-impacts and in rollovers. According to Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data, this design resulted in 172 fatal fire crashes with 254 fatalities, CAS said. The agency granted the CAS petition in August 2010, and opened a Preliminary Evaluation. In June 2012, ODI bumped up the investigation to an Engineering Analysis; it remains

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open.

Today, the Center for Auto Safety sent another letter to Chrysler Chairman Sergio Marchionne and John Elkann, Chairman of parent company, Fiat Spa, calling on the company to recall the 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees, 1993-2001 Jeep Cherokees and 2002-2007 Jeep Libertys. The letter was an emotional appeal, featuring the photos of toddlers and small children, who are among the occupants who have died in rear impact fire-involved crashes. CAS cited 349 fatal fire crashes of 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees, 1993-2001 Jeep Cherokees and 2002-2007 Jeep Libertys that have resulted in 478 deaths, at least 157 of which are deaths due to fire.

CAS Executive Director Clarence Dilow points out in the letter that a design change moving the gas tank forward of the axle has had a significant impact: "There has not been a single confirmed fire death since Chrysler moved the fuel tanks from behind the rear axle in 2005 for the Grand Cherokee and 2008 for the Liberty," the letter stated.

██████████ was called to this crusade by a shattering experience. On October 5, 2012, ██████████ dad, ██████████ ██████████, invited her to take a ride to show off in his new PT Cruiser on Interstate 81. They were sitting in a traffic jam near Kearnstown, when they were rear-ended by a tractor trailer, driving the Chrysler into a guard rail. As ██████████ and her father stood on the highway trying to recover from the shock of the crash, they noticed a Jeep across the road, with a small fire in the rear. ██████████ ran over and busted out a window, after discovering that the doors were jammed. He grabbed the first occupant he could reach, ██████████ and pulled him out of the window. Then ██████████ turned to a second boy, ██████████ but he was pinned under the collapsed rear seat, and could not unfasten his belt. He ran to the driver's door to try and extract the driver, ██████████, who seemed dazed by the crash.

"Then there was the noise. It was a gushing noise that brought fire... lots of fire," writes ██████████ on her ██████████ petition. "The entire vehicle was swallowed up by flames. At the moment the fire consumed the Jeep, the teen in the back was still hopeful of getting out, the Mom was still processing the wreck that had just happened, and the saved teen was still hopeful the three of them would be arriving home together that night, as planned. My Dad changed direction continuing to run but away from the blistering Jeep. In that instant, they burned to death. My Dad barely escaped the fire. Dad ran over to me shaking his head and said, in a heartbreaking tone, "That's it. It's over." Dad and I stood in front of the Jeep and watched in horror as the Mom and teen burned to death. The saved teen watched the burning Jeep too as he tearfully screamed, "Mom! Mom!"

██████████ and ██████████ both of Staunton, Virginia, perished in the crash.

██████████ recalls a police officer at the scene surveying the wreckage and sighing "That's the same kind of vehicle that burned up that family last year."

On June 26, 2011, ██████████ and their sons, ██████████ died after their Jeep Cherokee burst into flames after it was rear-ended by a drunk driver at a light on Route 11 at Interstate 81. The fire killed ██████████ Their sons died from blunt force trauma of the crash. It was a traumatic event for the Winchester community, and ██████████ petition drive prompted comparisons from online signers, such as resident ██████████

"Nobody should have to endure such a preventable tragedy," she wrote in her comments. "It's criminal, and heartbreaking. I drive by the memorial for the ██████████ family every day. I'm thankful ██████████ has the courage to stand up and speak out for those who can't and try to prevent further senseless losses. Shame on Jeep for not taking action on their own."

Three days after the crash, the officer's comment propelled ██████████ to do some research. When she discovered that the Jeep Grand Cherokee was under investigation for the crash-involved fuel fires, she was "very angry," she recalled. It took another three months for ██████████ to grapple with the emotional aftermath of the ██████████ crash and to decide that she would launch a petition to get the Jeep Grand Cherokee recalled. The petition went live in January. The billboards went up in April - just in time to be noticed by the 250,000 tourists who pour into Winchester in the northern Shenandoah Valley for the annual apple blossom festival.

While ██████████ campaign has begun to attract media attention, the public file of ODI's Engineering Analysis is stalled awaiting more data from other manufacturers for a peer vehicle analysis.

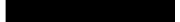
Chrysler's main defenses have been statistical analyses that purport to show that the Jeeps are no more likely to catch fire in a rear impact than peer vehicles, and that the vehicle meet the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 301, Fuel System Integrity. The auto company reached this conclusion, submitted to ODI's EA12-005 in December:

"After an exhaustive engineering analysis, Chrysler Group has found no evidence that the fuel systems in the Subject Vehicles are defective in either their design or manufacture. All of these vehicles exceeded the stringent requirements of the applicable FMVSS 301, the standard by which a fuel system design is evaluated in the



4 Dec

"If the data aren't there, sometimes there's no action. And...there still might be a defect that's a concern..."



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United States. Moreover, a review of almost 30 years of internal field data revealed an extremely low number of rear impact crashes with fire or fuel leak that occurred in a fleet of over 5 million Subject Vehicles that have travelled over 500 billion miles over 50 million registered vehicle years. Finally, after studying a vast, 30 year collection of publicly available crash data, Chrysler Group has concluded that the rate of rear impact fires in the Subject Vehicles is statistically indistinguishable from comparable SUVs and other light-duty vehicles of a similar design. For these reasons, Chrysler Group believes are neither defective nor does the performance of their fuel systems in a rear impact pose an unreasonable risk to motor vehicle safety."

But others have looked at the data and have seen quite clearly that the Jeep Grand Cherokee is an outlier by a significant margin.

Ditlow included in his letter a graph included in a Chrysler presentation to NHTSA showing that the Grand Cherokee was 20 times more likely to be involved in a fatal rear-impact fire crash where fire was the most harmful event (MHE) than its closest competitor, the Ford Explorer. The graph showed that per million years of use, the Ford Explorer had one such crash, the Chevy S-10 Blazer 5, and the Jeep Grand Cherokee 12. Further, Ditlow said, this graph omitted three Jeep deaths from the total, making the Jeep 27 more times likely than the Explorer to be involved in a fatal rear-impact crash in which fire was the most harmful event.

Other internal Chrysler analyses found in filed court documents show, similarly, that the Jeep Grand Cherokee has significantly higher rates of fatal rear-impact MHEs than other peer vehicles -- from 1993-2004, the Jeep Grand Cherokee has approximately 22 times more crashes per million years of use of rear impacts with fatalities and fire being the most harmful event than the Ford Explorer.

In response to Chryslers conclusion that "the rate of rear impact fires in the Subject Vehicles is statistically indistinguishable from comparable SUVs and other light-duty vehicles of a similar design," independent statisticians [redacted] found: "Our own statistical analyses showed the opposite. We found much higher rates of fire occurrence in fatal, rear impact crashes of model year 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees compared to the class of other small and mid-sized 1993-2004 SUVs. These differences were, in fact, statistically significant."

[redacted] says that she isn't sure how long she'll fund the billboards, but she does know that she isn't ready to quit.

"I'm willing to fight until I die," she said. "I'm doing the right thing."

Category: center-for-auto-safety chrysler fire fuel-tank jeep-cherokee jeep-grand-cherokee nhtsa rear-impact-fire

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## Jeep Liberty Fire Lawsuit

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The Chrysler Jeep Liberty is currently being investigated by federal regulators due to the risk of rear-impact gas tank explosions. The gas tank on this vehicle is located behind the rear axle, below the rear bumper. A fuel-fed fire in a rear-end collision could potentially cause occupants in multiple vehicles to suffer severe physical injury, disability, or death.



### What You Can Do & How a Jeep Liberty Fire Lawsuit Can Help

The Schmidt Firm, LLP is currently accepting Jeep Liberty injury cases in all 50 states. If you or somebody you know has been injured or killed by a gas tank fire in a rear-end collision, you should [contact our lawyers immediately](#) for a free case consultation. Please use the form below to contact our Personal Injury and Automotive Crashworthiness Litigation Group or call us toll-free 24 hours a day at [REDACTED]

### UPDATE: Jeep Recall Under Fire After Pregnant Woman Dies in Michigan

November 18, 2014 — One week after a pregnant woman died in a fiery rear-end collision while driving a recalled 2003 Jeep Liberty, Chrysler is facing criticism for only repairing 8% of 1.6 million vehicles that were recalled in June 2013. [Click here to read more.](#)

July 3, 2014 - Federal safety officials issued a 12-page letter demanding to know why it has taken Chrysler over a year to start fixing 1.56 million Jeeps that were recalled last year. The trailer hitch repair was approved in January, but at Chrysler's current rate of production, it will take 5 more years before owners are provided with the repair. Meanwhile, deaths continue to occur in rear-end collision fires. [Click here to read more.](#)

March 13, 2014 - Despite issuing a recall for Jeep Liberty SUVs nine months ago, Chrysler has failed to provide a replacement part and deadly fuel-fed fires in continue to occur. [Two people from West Virginia died](#) when an at-fault driver rear-ended their 2004 Jeep Liberty, causing the gas tank to rupture.

### Chrysler Recalls 1.56M Jeep Grand Cherokees, Liberty SUVs

June 18, 2013 - In an abrupt about-face, Chrysler has agreed to comply with the NHTSA and

Go [REDACTED]

Below is a partial list of the awards and recognition that the attorneys / lawyers at our law firm have been awarded with, as well as a list of professional memberships.

recall Jeep Grand Cherokee and Liberty vehicles. However, the recall will only include 1.56 million vehicles. It will exclude 1 million Jeep Grand Cherokees (model years 1999 – 2004). [Click here to read more.](#)

June 12, 2013 – in response to a June 3 request from the NHTSA to recall all 2.7 million Jeep Grand Cherokee and Liberty SUVs, Chrysler has stated that they do not intend to comply with the mandate by the June 18 deadline. [Click here to read more.](#)

## Overview

The Jeep Liberty is a sport-utility vehicle (SUV) manufactured by Chrysler. The models of the Jeep Liberty currently under federal investigation include:

- Jeep Liberty models from years 2002 through 2007, including approximately 975,000 vehicles

The agency investigating the Jeep Liberty is the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This agency is responsible for investigating possible vehicle safety issues. It can also force recalls if safety hazards are discovered.

Chrysler is assuring its customers that the Jeep Liberty is safe, and there is no need to worry.

However, some are concerned that the gas tank on the Jeep Liberty, Jeep Cherokee, and Jeep Grand Cherokee is not designed safely. Amazingly similar to the Ford Pinto, which was recalled due to fire hazards and dozens of deaths, the Jeep Liberty was engineered with a plastic gas tank behind the rear axle, and below the rear bumper. If the high-clearance Jeep is rear-ended by a lower vehicle, it is possible that the front bumper of a rear-ending vehicle could hit the gas tank, triggering a fuel-fed gas tank explosion.

Fuel-fed car accidents are extremely dangerous hazards that can occur when the gas tank is ruptured in a rear-end collision. The fire is usually triggered by an electrical spark in either vehicle. A single spark can trigger a massive explosion, which can trap occupants inside either car. Fuel-fed gas tank fires often cause severe injuries, permanent disabilities, or death.

## Jeep Liberty Fire Investigation

The Jeep Liberty fire investigation began as an investigation into hazards of the Jeep Grand Cherokee, which has been associated with 15 deaths and 46 injuries due to rear-impact vehicle fires. That investigation began in 2010, prompted by a petition from a consumer safety lobbying group. After more than two years, the NHTSA concluded that, indeed, the Jeep Grand Cherokee was associated with a higher number of rear-end collision gas tank vehicle fires than non-Jeeps.

The NHTSA also decided to expand their investigation to include some models of the Jeep Liberty and the Jeep Cherokee. The NHTSA could potentially issue a recall of the Jeep Liberty if it determines that there is an unacceptably high risk of gas tank fires.

## Jeep Liberty Fire Lawsuit

When you purchase any vehicle, you expect that it is safe for you, your children, your family members, and your friends. You assume that the manufacturers did their best to design the safest vehicle possible. You assume that if there are safety hazards, the manufacturers will issue recalls, or warn you, or promptly fix the hazard. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. If a car company failed to keep you safe from known hazards, they could be liable for your injuries.

## Do I have a Jeep Liberty Fire Lawsuit?

The [REDACTED] is currently accepting Jeep Liberty injury cases in all 50 states. If you or somebody you know has been injured or killed by a gas tank fire in a rear-end collision, you should contact our lawyers immediately for a free case consultation. Please use the form below to contact our Personal Injury and Automotive Crashworthiness Litigation Group or call us toll-free 24 hours a day at [REDACTED]

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PDF Document: NHTSA ODI Resume

NHTSA upgrades safety defect investigation

PDF Document: Chrysler Response

Chrysler's response regarding NHTSA's upgraded investigation of the 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee

PDF Document: Center For Auto Safety Petition 12 10 10

Center For Auto Safety Petition to request NHTSA to add additional cases to its investigation

here and ended up smashing the guardrail on this side," he says.

According to police accident reports and witness statements, the Jeep burst into flames.

"We were a family of five. Now, we're a family of four," her mom [redacted] says.

"People who are lucky survive. But there's absolute tragedies," says Clarence Dittlow.

Dittlow heads up the Center for Auto Safety, a non-profit here in Washington founded in 1970.

His office petitioned the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in 2009 to investigate crashes involving 1993 to 2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee's like the one [redacted] was driving.

The Center used the government's Fatal Analysis Research System, also known as FARS, to make their case. Using that FARS data, the Center for Auto Safety now counts at least 51 accidents where 72 people died in rear, side and rollover crashes and fire was the chief cause of their death.

"You'll have a huge ball of fire and people can't get out of the vehicles before they burn," says Clarence Dittlow.

NHTSA granted the Center's petition two years ago, but focused only on rear end crashes.

October 2, 2009 Center for Auto Safety Petition

Just days ago, NHTSA took a step forward in their investigation, ordering an engineering analysis of the vehicles.

But, NHTSA officials pointed out that not all of the people who died were in a Jeep Grand Cherokee, some were in the vehicle that struck the SUV.

It is one of the key factors that convinced NHTSA to upgrade its safety defect investigation.

Chrysler's response to the expanded probe is that the Jeep Grand Cherokee is no riskier than its closest competitors.

Chrysler says 1.8 million of these vehicles are still out on the roads. Dittlow wants all of them recalled.

Auto experts say the problem is where the plastic fuel tank is positioned, behind the rear axle.

You can see it below the bumper. In the 1993 to 1998 models, the fuel tank looks like a spare tire well. The plastic tank that carries gallons of fuel, literally hangs down, exposed with no protection.

A brush guard covers the gas tank in the 1999 to 2004 models. It's supposed to protect the plastic tank in low speeds from brush and other obstructions, but experts say that's not enough. The

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placement of the tank is simply too risky.

"It's in the crush zone of any vehicle striking it from behind. The vehicle that strikes it will push on that gas tank and any number of bad things can happen," Ditlow says.

In an effort to move the investigation forward, the Center for Auto Safety asked the Federal Highway Administration to conduct rear impact tests on a 1995 Jeep Grand Cherokee. They used a non-flammable liquid in the tests to demonstrate what can happen when the gas tank ruptures.

#### July 8, 2011 Center for Auto Safety Petition

"You'll begin to see the gasoline, right there, coming out of the fuel tank. And, it's vaporizing and producing a mist and it's a perfect source for combustion. There's not much damage in the Grand Cherokee itself. But then there's the gasoline. You're surviving the trauma of the crash, but you get burned," Clarence Ditlow says.

Chrysler says the crash tests conducted on its Jeep Grand Cherokee were conducted 20 miles per hour faster than the fuel standard required at the time the vehicle was manufactured which was 30 miles per hour.

FHWA also tested one of the Grand Cherokee's peer vehicles, the Ford Explorer. The tests on this 1995 model were conducted at even higher speeds, at 70 and 75 miles per hour, and the gas tank did not rupture.

We should point out, that the gas tank in the Explorer is placed in front of the rear axle.

██████████ car rolled multiple times," her dad ██████████ says.

You can still see the gas line where fuel poured out of ██████████ car here at the scene. But what gives the ██████████ some measure of comfort is knowing that ██████████ likely was unaware of what was about to happen after her car was hit.

NHTSA would not talk on camera because of their ongoing investigation, and has not given any timetable for when they will reach a decision.

But in their Office of Defects Investigation resume, NHTSA says "that rear-impact-related tank failure and vehicle fires are more prevalent in the Jeep Grand Cherokee than in non-Jeep vehicles."

And, just last week NHTSA added the 1993 to 2001 Jeep Cherokee and the 2002 to 2007 Jeep Liberty vehicles to their investigation. Those vehicles also have the gas tank behind the rear axle.

NHTSA said "the agency's analysis of it's FARS data for the peer vehicles and three Jeep models shows a higher incidence of rear impact, fatal fire crashes for the Jeep products."

Chrysler disagrees.

In a statement, the company tells ██████████ the "the 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees are neither defective nor do their fuel systems pose an unreasonable risk to motor safety in rear impact collisions."



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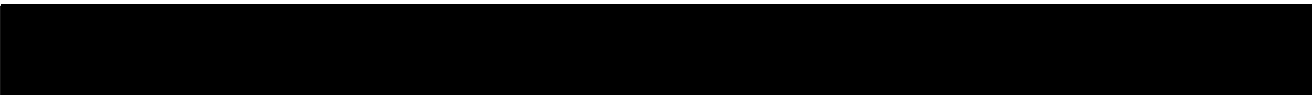
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# Jeep Grand Cherokee & Jeep Liberty Recall: Are Chrysler's Fixes Safe?

By [Redacted] 2 | 7,309 views | Jul 2, 2013

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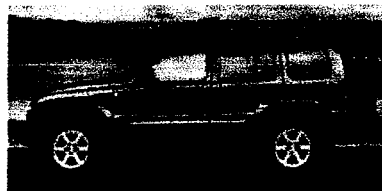
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2007 Jeep Liberty Limited

Last month, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration asked Chrysler to recall a few Jeep vehicles – and by “a few”, we mean 2.7 million.

Chrysler's response? No.

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That was pretty unusual, and it made headlines for days afterward. As a result, Jeep's reputation suffered. Things got so bad that Chrysler finally said “Uncle”, agreeing to inspect the 1992-2004 Grand Cherokee and 2002-2007 Liberty. In an email to owners, the automaker said:

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*As a result of the agreement [with NHTSA], Chrysler Group will conduct a voluntary campaign with respect to the vehicles in question that, in addition to a visual inspection of the vehicle will, if necessary, provide an upgrade to the rear structure of the vehicle to better manage crash forces in low-speed impacts.*

That “upgrade” consists of a trailer hitch. Though final details of the recall haven't been released, it appears that Chrysler will install hitches on most of the affected vehicles that don't currently have them. (On vehicles with aftermarket hardware, Chrysler will check to make sure the hitches meet the appropriate standards.) Of note: Chrysler says that it plans to inspect 1999-2004 Grand Cherokees, but probably won't install hitches on them unless the existing hitch is defective.

Chrysler believes that trailer hitches will protect the gas tanks of recalled

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# One Year Later, Still No Fix For Recalled 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee, 2002-2007 Jeep Liberty

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2007 Jeep Liberty Limited

One year ago, [we reported](#) on an unusual showdown between Chrysler and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration over a proposed recall of the Jeep Grand Cherokee and Jeep Liberty. Despite Chrysler's initial resistance, the stalemate was short-lived, and within a couple of weeks, the automaker had agreed to fix the faulty models.

Twelve months later, vehicles affected by the recall still roam the roads, unrepaired. What gives?

## A RECAP

### New Jeep Secret Prices

In the Market for a Jeep? Get Your Possible Lowest Price Now!

The problem with the 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee and the 2002-2007 Jeep Liberty stems from the placement of the gas tank. That tank sits behind the rear axle, which makes it more susceptible to rupture during a rear-end collision, a thus, a greater fire hazard (see also: the [Ford Pinto](#)).

NHTSA linked at least 49 deaths and scores of injuries to fires that broke out on the affected models. Chrysler didn't dispute the linkages or the underlying problem, but it insisted that fires on the Grand Cherokee and Liberty were rare and that the tank placement didn't constitute a design flaw. (Notably, however, the company changed the tank's location on later models.)

And so, Chrysler dug in its heels, refusing to follow through on NHTSA's request for a recall of the 2.7 million Jeep vehicles. That was unusual, and it made headlines across the country.

Unfortunately, Chrysler didn't foresee the backlash that would follow. The idea

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## NHTSA Expands Probe Into Jeeps Catching Fire

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More than 5 million face potential recall

Posted: Jun 14, 2012 | By: [Redacted]

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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has expanded a probe into more than 5 million Jeep vehicles for a possible faulty gas tank that can catch fire after an accident, according to its website.

NHTSA has determined that certain models of the Jeep Cherokee, Grand Cherokee and Jeep Liberty are more likely to catch fire after rear impact crash than similar vehicles such as the Chevrolet Blazer, Toyota 4Runner and Ford Explorer.

The expanded probe will now undergo an engineering analysis to determine if the vehicles are safe.

"NHTSA's assessment of the data collected during preliminary evaluation indicates that rear-impact-related tank failures and vehicle fires are more prevalent in the (Jeep Grand Cherokee) than in the non-Jeep peer vehicles," the government agency said.

The affected vehicles include: 1993-2001 Jeep Cherokees; 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees; and 2002-2007 Jeep Liberties.

At issue is the design of the vehicle, which places the fuel tank behind the rear axle. Chrysler Group LLC, which owns the Jeep brand, changed the design for 2005 models, but insists that the previous design remains safe.

In a statement this morning, the company said:

"The 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee and other subject vehicles meet or exceed all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards and have excellent safety records with hundreds of billions of vehicle miles driven."

Additionally, Chrysler added, "We would expect that a similar analysis of subject vehicles recently added to this

## JEEP PROBLEMS

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### JEEP REAR IMPACT GAS TANK FIRES

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Jeep owners [continue to wait for recalled parts](#) that safety advocates agree do nothing to fix the problem. In other words, just another typical day in Chrysler's world. Millions of Jeep vehicles have a gas tank that is positioned in such a way that it is highly vulnerable to being punctured during a rear-impact accident. The combination of leaking fuel and sparks caused by collisions can easily set the car ablaze, prompting a government investigation and a muted recall that sparked a [whole lot of controversy](#).



Is Chrysler ignoring a dangerous design flaw?

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### A Compromised Recall of Jeeps



The 1993 Jeep Grand Cherokee in which [REDACTED], was fatally injured on Feb. 12, 2006, in Cleburne, Tex.

In June, 2012, NHTSA[1] (#fn:1) announced an investigation into rear-impact gas tank fires in Jeep vehicles would be expanded to [include 5 million vehicles](#) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The following year, NHTSA asked Chrysler to recall 2.7 million Grand Cherokees which were found to be the most vulnerable to fires. At the time we called it a victory for consumers, but now that some time has passed it turns out we were wrong. Here's why.

### Chrysler Dodges the Issue

Chrysler initially refused the government's recall request, stating their vehicles were perfectly safe, but caved a few weeks later in June of 2013. In a brash move, however, Chrysler opted to [recall only 1.5 million of the 2.7 million vehicles](#) [REDACTED] requested by NHTSA.

Chrysler's idea for the limited recall "fix" is to install trailer hitches on certain model year 1992–98 Grand Cherokees and 2002–07 Liberty vehicles. One big problem: research shows the trailer hitch is essentially [useless in high-speed rear-impact crashes](#) [REDACTED]. As far as low-speed crashes are concerned, even Chrysler admits the hitch will only provide "incremental improvement in the crash energy management."

To make matters worse, some of the Jeep vehicles that had already been involved in rear-impact fires already had a trailer hitch installed. Some good it did those owners.

So, if you're keeping score at home, Chrysler:

- [Initially refused the government's recall request](#) [REDACTED]
- Eventually (and reluctantly) [recalled only 55% of the vehicles suggested](#) [REDACTED] by research
- Offered a "fix" for those vehicles lucky enough to be recalled that [provides little to no value](#) [REDACTED]

### NHTSA Responds in an Odd Way

Oddly enough, NHTSA seems quite content in Chrysler's actions:

"The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is deeply committed to reducing the number of deaths and injuries on our nation's roadways. Throughout this process, the agency has been in close communication with Chrysler and has no reservations at this time with their announced actions to move forward."

### The Center for Auto Safety Speaks Against the Jeep "Fix"



Clarence Ditlow Isn't Ready to Let Chrysler Off the Hook

At least someone out there isn't buying the BS. The CAS[2] (#fn:2) has continued to lobby that [all 5](#)

million vehicles in the original investigation should be recalled

and a new fix needs to be implemented.

The numbers from CAS research are harsh: 478 people have died in 349 fatal car crashes due to the location of the fuel tank behind the rear axle.

Clarence Ditlow, Director at the CAS, has called out the NHTSA and Chrysler calling the recall a sham:

“It is tragic that NHTSA approved Chrysler’s sham trailer hitch recall for Jeeps that explode in rear impacts. NHTSA Administrator David Strickland will be remembered as the Administrator who took a job with one of Chrysler’s law firms rather than save more children like [REDACTED] from burning to deaths in Jeeps with trailer hitches.”

## **The Defective Gas Tank Design**

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So what makes these vehicles so dangerous? According to multiple reports it’s the gas tank which is a dangerous combination of:

- **Materials:** Made of cheap plastic
- **Location:** Tucked between the rear axle and bumper
- **Height:** Higher clearance vehicles mean a tank that hangs lower than most.

According to many, this is a formula for disaster.

NHTSA says rear-impact-related gas tank failures and vehicle fires are more common in the Grand Cherokee than in the similar non-Jeep vehicles such as the Chevrolet Blazer, Ford Explorer, and Toyota 4Runner. The agency believes at least 24 rear-end collisions have resulted in fires, some deadly.

The CAS takes says that at least 55 people have died in crashes were fire was the primary cause of death. They have been keeping track of fatal fire crashes in 1993–2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees and made that data accessible on their website.

## **Something Needs to Be Done**

One grieving mother told [REDACTED] that she lost her beautiful [REDACTED]-year-old daughter in a 2004 Jeep Liberty fire.

“She was rear-ended on Interstate–10 by a man driving a Ford F–150 pick-up truck. The vehicle she was driving, a 2004 Jeep Liberty, burst into flames upon impact and my daughter was burned to death,” said [REDACTED], of Metairie, Louisiana. “Since my daughter’s death, I have learned that this same thing has happened before and Chrysler has had numerous law suits that were settled out of court.”

went on to describe the same problem the NHTSA is investigating, mainly the location of the gas tank.

“The fuel tank and filler neck on the Jeep Liberty (and Jeep Grand Cherokee) was designed and installed in a location (behind the rear bumper) that is susceptible to rupture or puncture in a rear-end collision,” said. “When gasoline escapes from a ruptured or punctured fuel tank, a high risk of fire and explosion exists.”

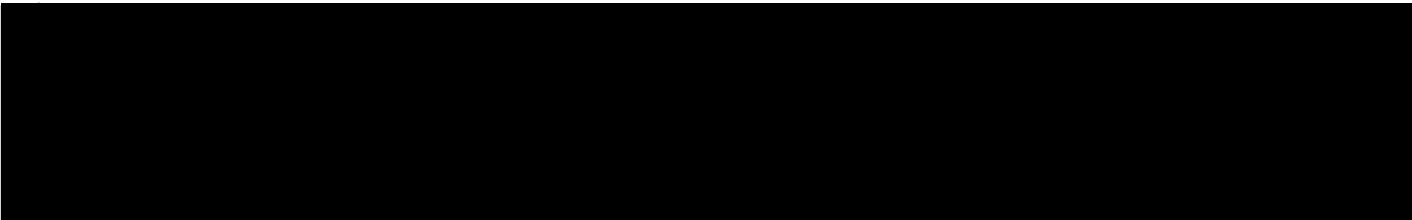
has said that children as young as four years old have been burned to death after a rear-end collision.

In one case, was killed despite riding in a child seat to protect her when the 1993 Jeep Grand Cherokee driven by her mother was struck from behind and burst into flames. In another tragedy, was killed despite riding in a child booster seat to protect him when the 1999 Jeep Grand Cherokee driven by his aunt was struck from behind and engulfed in flames.

### **This Generation's Ford Pinto?**

In the late 1970's the Ford Pinto was made famous for tales of exploding into flames. Clearly that is not the type of publicity Chrysler, parent company of Jeep, wants to be receiving for the Grand Cherokee. In an ABC news report the automaker said that accidents leading to fires are “very rare” and that the popular SUV meets all government safety standards and regulations. When asked why Chrysler changed the design of their Grand Cherokee in 2005 by moving the gas tank to the front of the rear axle, they simply said it that was to make more cargo room and didn't have anything to do with safety concerns.

### **Let Your Voice Be Heard**



This step is crucial. Don't just complain on forums; The sites below actually manage your complaint in ways that allow useful statistics and they report dangerous trends to the authorities. Law firms often contact these sites for help with Class Action lawsuits. **Make sure to file your complaint on all three sites**, we can't stress that enough.

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**AUTOWEEK**

## Chrysler recalls Jeeps for fire risk

JUNE 17, 2013



Jeep is recalling Grand Cherokee and Liberty models.  
PHOTO BY JEEP

Chrysler has decided to recall 2.7 million 1993 to 2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee and 2002 to 2007 Liberty models for a potential risk relating to the fuel tank placement between the rear bumper and rear axle. The recall is initiated 15 days after the automaker originally denied a request following a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration investigation.

On June 4, one day after NHTSA's finding, Chrysler rejected the request in a media statement, stating the NHTSA's initial conclusions are based on "incomplete analysis of the underlying data." Chrysler said the impacted models met or exceeded all applicable requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, including the ones pertaining to fuel system integrity.

Chrysler's denial of the request prompted concern from Jeep owners, including ██████████ who started a petition at ██████████ that asked Chrysler to take action.

██████████ was involved in an accident with a Jeep Grand Cherokee and a semi truck on Oct. 5, where she says she saw a car that was rear-ended go up in flames with people trapped inside. (You can read the tale here at ██████████ but be warned, the story is graphic.)

In a statement Chrysler said ██████████ case featured a crash 23 times more powerful than the required performance threshold, which was doubled in 2008.

On Monday, before the recall was issued, ██████████ took her mother's 2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee to a dealership in Fairfax, Va. to symbolically

ask the dealer to initiate a recall. She brought her signatures, along with pictures of people injured by the Jeeps in question. Her campaign at the petition site had more than 125,000 signatures.

██████████ was turned away by the dealer, who basically said at that time if Chrysler doesn't issue a recall there is nothing that it can do.

Chrysler said today that they will inspect vehicles involved in the recall and, if necessary, provide an upgrade to the rear structure of the vehicle to better manage crash forces in low-speed impacts.

"Chrysler Group's analysis of the data confirms that these vehicles are not defective and are among the safest in the peer group," Chrysler said in the statement. "Nonetheless, Chrysler Group recognizes that this matter has raised concerns for its customer and wants to take further steps, in coordination with NHTSA, to provide additional measures to supplement the safety of its vehicles."

NHTSA head David Strickland told the Detroit News last Thursday the organization "felt very strongly that the process that we undertook and the findings that we made [warranted] the decision to issue a recall request. We do not take that very lightly."

NHTSA didn't tell owners to stop driving their cars, something it has done in the past. "They can make their own risk assessment and their own choices," Strickland said.

██████████ [reporting on cars, car tech and the world at large.](#)  
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### Your Information

Title: Mr.

First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Country: UNITED STATES

Address: [REDACTED]

City/Town: TOLEDO

State/Province/Region: OH

ZIP/Postal Code/Postcode: [REDACTED]

Daytime Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Age: [REDACTED]

Gender: Male

### Business Information

Name: Chrysler Group, LLC

Address: 1000 Chrysler Drive

City: Auburn Hills

State: MI

Zip/Postal Code: 48326

### Complaint Information

Complaint Type: Product Issues

Description of Complaint: gas tank 2004 jeep had a recall had contacted mike there in mi over two years ago about it and he said that it would take a little time to make the plates then has changed it to a trailer hitch.If it was hit from behind it would blowup they had 51 killed and 71 burnt. i had got it from the internet under recalls willing to send you a copy. im sending them a copy as well to mike at auburn hills and will send you a copy of nhtsa complete as well odi number 10662300 my wife will not drive it.

Desired Settlement: Other (requires explanation)

Desired Outcome Description: fix the truck or they can get me a new one

### Additional Complaint Details

First Date you complained to the company: 5/5/2011

#### HELP

Please review your complaint. If any information is inaccurate, you may return to the step in question and make corrections. All your information will be saved when you go back through the process. To go back to a previous step, click the step you want to go to in the progress bar at the top of this page.

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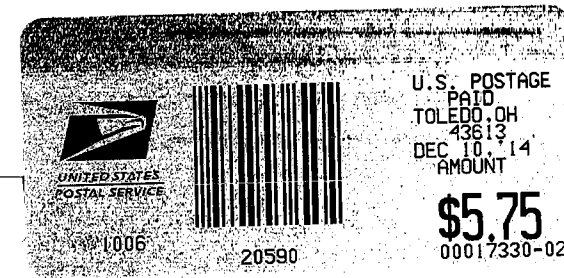
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