U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

May 10, 2016

[redacted]
Odessa, FL [redacted]

NEF-160 rrr
Ref. No. 10731086

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your (MY) 1999 Buick Park Avenue. Your correspondence was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation. We regret any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

You wrote to follow up on a form letter you received from NHTSA regarding your MY 1999 Buick Park Avenue. You want to know if our agency found any new information concerning General Motors' (GM) plastic intake manifolds used in their 3.8L engines. You assert that your vehicle stalled on two occasions and sustained major engine failures due to intake manifold coolant leaks. You feel that the engine stall caused by the plastic intake manifold is dangerous. In addition, you request a reimbursement from GM for engine repairs you paid for.

We re-examined our database in an effort to identify whether any new information has been identified with regard to a safety defect trend in the plastic intake manifold in MY 1999 Buick Park Avenue vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to indicate a defect trend and thus warrant opening a safety defect investigation or to initiate a recall. The intake manifold coolant leak occurs over time and therefore can be easily detected during routine maintenance or a low coolant warning light before the condition causes a major engine problem. Moreover, we did not identify a significant trend of catastrophic engine failure resulting in an abrupt stall without warning. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention. For your information, an explanation of NHTSA's investigation and recall process is on our Web site at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/recallprocess.cfm.

NHTSA is aware of two GM Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) (Article No. 01-06-01-007C and 00-06-01-026G, enclosed) concerning the intake manifold in certain MY 1999 Buick Park Avenue vehicles. However, the issuance of a TSB does not necessarily reflect the existence of a safety-related defect in accordance with our statute, the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Therefore, NHTSA cannot require GM to perform the corrective action described in the TSBs on your vehicle at no cost, or to reimburse you.

If you have not done so already, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency or the Florida Office of the Attorney General regarding your problem and rights under the State laws. You may also ask your local dealer for a meeting with a GM district manager regarding your problem. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over non-safety defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 877-382-4357; by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

You may also consider contacting the Better Business Bureau (BBB) Auto Line. The BBB offers free mediation/arbitration to resolve warranty disputes under guidelines established by the FTC. Remedies include repair, reimbursement, repurchase or replacement, depending on program eligibility. You can visit their Web site at www.bbb.org to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB Auto Line at 800-955-5100.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems.

Sincerely,

Randy Reid

Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement

Enclosures

PRODEMAND

1999 Buick Park Avenue 3.8L Eng Ultra

ENGINE COOLANT CONSUMPTION OR COOLANT LEAK (INSPECT FOR MATERIAL DEGRADATION/REPLACE INTAKE MANIFOLDS)

TECHNICAL SERVICE BULLETIN

Reference Number(s): 01-06-01-007C, Date of Issue: September 20, 2007

Affected Model(s):	1995-1997 Buick Riviera; 1995-1999 Buick LeSabre, Park Avenue; 1996-1999 Buick Regal; 1998-1999 Chevrolet Lumina, Monte Carlo; 1995-1996 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight; 1995-1999 Oldsmobile Eighty-Eight; 1998-1999 Oldsmobile Intrigue; 1995-1999 Pontiac Bonneville; 1997-1999 Pontiac Grand Prix; with 3.8L Engine (VIN K - RPO L36)
Supercedes:	This bulletin is being revised to add to the 1999 model year. Please discard Corporate Bulletin Number 01-06-01-007B (Section 06 - Engine).

Condition

Some customers may comment on excessive engine coolant consumption, or an engine coolant leak near or under the throttle body area of the upper intake manifold.

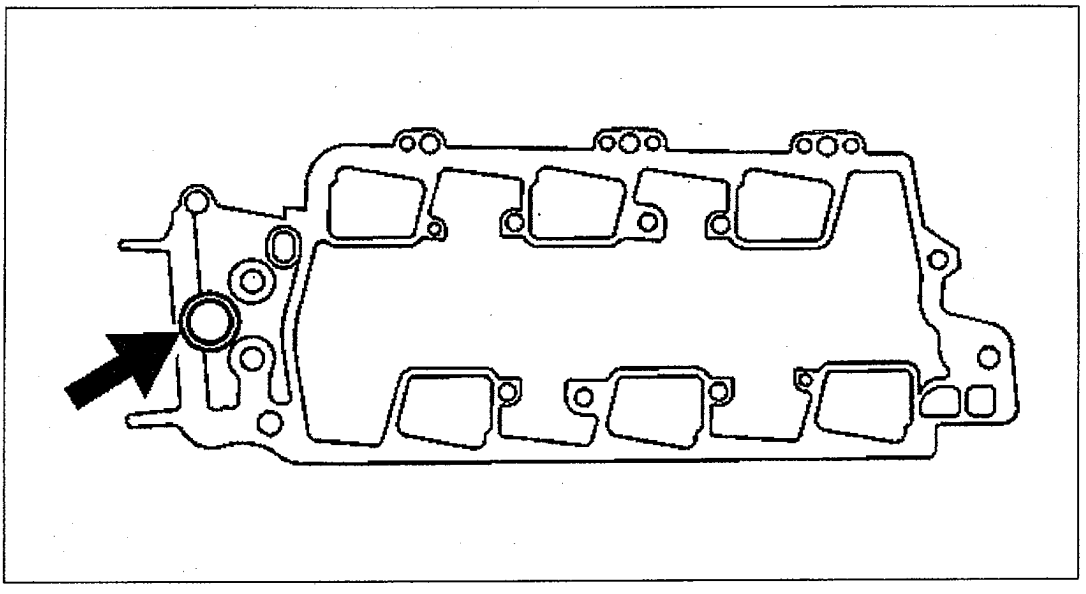
Cause

Upper intake manifold composite material may degrade around the EGR stove pipe and could result in an internal or external coolant leak.

Correction

1. Follow the upper intake manifold removal instructions found in the Engine Unit Repair Section of the Service Information Manual.

Fig.1: Locating EGR Passage



Courtesy of GENERAL MOTORS CORP.

2. Refer to the arrow in the illustration of the upper intake manifold above. Inspect the inner diameter of the EGR passage for signs of material degradation. Degradation will appear as "pitting" of the composite material in the EGR port passage.
3. If degradation of upper intake manifold composite material is found, replace the lower and upper intake manifolds with the following part numbers:
    1. Gasket Kit, Upper Intake Manifold - 89017554
    2. Manifold Kit, Upper Intake - 89017272
    3. Gasket, Lower Intake Manifold - 89017400
    4. Manifold, Lower Intake - 24508923
4. Follow the lower and upper intake manifold installation instructions found in the Engine Unit Repair Section of the appropriate Service Manual.
5. If degradation is not apparent, skip to Step 7.
6. Verify the repair.
7. If no degradation is found, evaluate the vehicle for other causes of excessive coolant consumption as noted in the Engine Diagnosis Section of the appropriate Service Manual.

Parts Information

Parts Information

Part Number	Description	Qty
89017554	Gasket Kit, Upper Intake Manifold	1
89017272	Manifold Kit, Upper Intake	1
89017400	Gasket, Lower Intake Manifold	1
24508923	Manifold, Lower Intake	1

Warranty Information

For vehicles repaired under warranty, use:

Warranty Information

Labor Operation	Description	Labor Time
J0258*	Manifold, Lower Intake - R & R	Use Published Labor Operation Time
J0255**	Manifold, Upper Intake - R & R	

* Used for replacement of both the upper and the lower intake manifolds.
** Used for inspection purposes only, where no condition was identified and the upper intake

[redacted]

manifold is re-installed on vehicle.

PRODEMAND

1999 Buick Park Avenue 3.8L Eng Ultra

INTAKE MANIFOLD INSPECTION/REPLACEMENT AFTER SEVERE INTERNAL ENGINE DAMAGE

TECHNICAL SERVICE BULLETIN

Reference Number(s): 00-06-01-026G, Date of Issue: Aug 4, 2015

Affected Model(s):	2016 and Prior GM Passenger Cars and Trucks
Attention:	This Bulletin also applies to any of the above models that may be Export vehicles.
Supercedes:	This Bulletin has been revised to add graphics and additional information. Please discard Corporate Bulletin Number 00-06-01-026F.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- When replacing an engine due to internal damage, extreme care should be taken when transferring the intake manifold to the new Genuine GM Part service engine long block. The internal engine damage may have resulted in the potential discharge of internal engine component debris into the intake manifold via broken pistons and/or bent, broken, or missing intake valves.
- After removing the intake manifold from the engine, the technician **MUST** carefully inspect all of the cylinder head intake ports to see if the valve heads are still present and not bent. Usually when the valve heads are missing or sufficiently bent, internal engine component debris will be present to varying degrees in the intake port of the cylinder head. If this debris is present in **ANY** of the cylinder head intake ports, the intake manifold should be replaced.
- This replacement is required due to the complex inlet runner and plenum configuration of most of the intake manifolds, making thorough and complete component cleaning difficult and nearly impossible to verify the complete removal of debris. Reinstallation of an intake manifold removed from an engine with deposits of internal engine component debris may result in the ingestion of any remaining debris into the new Genuine GM Part service engine. This will cause damage or potential failure of the new Genuine GM Part service engine long block.

BROKEN VALVES, BROKEN PISTONS AND PISTON TO CYLINDER HEAD DAMAGE - CATALYTIC CONVERTER FAILURES

Broken Valves, Broken Pistons and Piston to Cylinder Head Damage

Broken valves, broken pistons and piston to cylinder head damage all create material debris that scatters throughout the induction system.

- If **ANY** of the above were to occur, the intake manifold **MUST** be replaced or subsequent severe engine damage will occur. This replacement is required due to the complex inlet runner and plenum configuration of most of the intake manifolds, making thorough and complete component cleaning difficult and impossible to verify the complete removal of all debris.

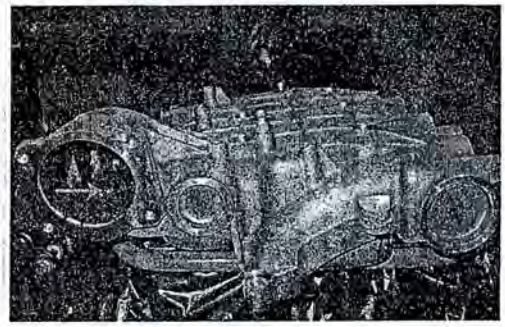
Catalytic Converter Failures

When catalytic converter failures occur and the inner brick becomes plugged and breaks apart, the

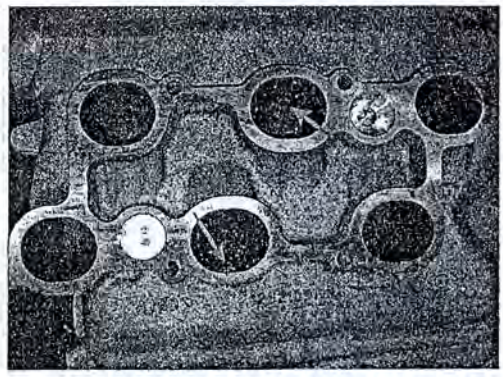
catalytic converter material can be sucked back into the engine during valve overlap and transfer throughout the intake manifold and into the cylinder. Any such material transfer can cause heavy wear to piston rings and cylinder walls. Misfires and oil consumption are the by products of ingested catalytic converter material into the combustion chamber and cylinder bores.

TYPICAL INTAKE MANIFOLD DEBRIS VIEWS AFTER INTERNAL ENGINE DAMAGE

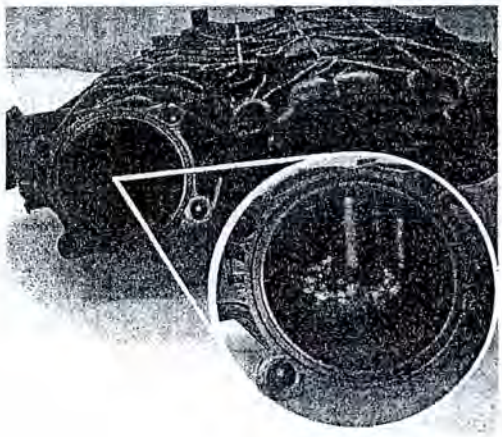
View of Debris in Aluminum Intake Manifold - Throttle Body Opening



View of Debris in Aluminum Intake Manifold - Ports to Cylinder Heads



View of Debris in Plastic Intake Manifold - Throttle Body Opening



[redacted]