



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration**



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January 4, 2022

[REDACTED]  
Knoxville, TN [REDACTED]

NEF-109 tgd  
Ref. No. 11443583

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the letter about your model year (MY) 2009 Chevrolet Avalanche truck. Your letter was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation. I am pleased to respond.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's roadways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects, such as in their design, construction, or performance. Among other activities, we also monitor the completion rates and adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for NHTSA. The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act requires a manufacturer to remedy the noncompliance or safety-related defect without charge; however, it does not require manufacturers to reimburse vehicle owners for additional costs associated with the safety defect, the noncompliance, or the recall. In general, the manufacturer must pay to temporarily remove original equipment manufacturer (OEM) parts or their standard replacements to make the repair and then reinstall them. On the other hand, generally, the manufacturer is not obligated to pay for the temporary removal and reinstallation of aftermarket products that are not standard replacements. We understand that you installed the aftermarket dashboard skin due to a quality problem with the OEM dashboard in your vehicle. However, in this case, the removal of the aftermarket dashboard skin and subsequent purchase and installation of an OEM dashboard are not the responsibility of the vehicle manufacturer.

We encourage you to continue to work with General Motors (GM) and your dealer to explore the potential for an amicable resolution to your problem. You may also ask your dealership for a meeting with a GM district manager regarding your problem. As you know, the Takata air bag recall for your vehicle presents a serious safety risk. In the event of a crash necessitating deployment of the front air bags, these inflators may rupture due to propellant degradation occurring after long-term exposure to high absolute humidity and temperature cycling

You may also consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency or the Tennessee Attorney General's Office regarding your problem and rights under state law. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulates and investigates warranty and dealership problems, reimbursement matters, and fair-trade practices. Therefore, if you believe this issue potentially

relates to such a practice, you may contact the FTC to discuss the matter. 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](http://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov).

Finally, 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 website at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB Auto Line at 800-955-5100.

If you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, please complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) or call the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. Also, you may review owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc., on our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Reid".

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