

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Houston, Tex. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4 December 2020

NHTSA Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

SENT CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED
RECEIPT # [REDACTED]

Sheila Gallucci-Davis, General Counsel
Subaru of America
2235 Route 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

SENT CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED
RECEIPT # [REDACTED]

2012 Subaru Forester 2.5X
VIN # JF2SHABCXC [REDACTED]
Mileage: 123,097

NOTICE OF DEFECTIVE PRODUCT AND REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

SUBARU SHEARED OFF WHEEL STUDS

Dear Sirs;

I am the owner of the above referenced Subaru Forester which I purchased new from Gillman Subaru, Southwest in Houston Texas in February 2012.

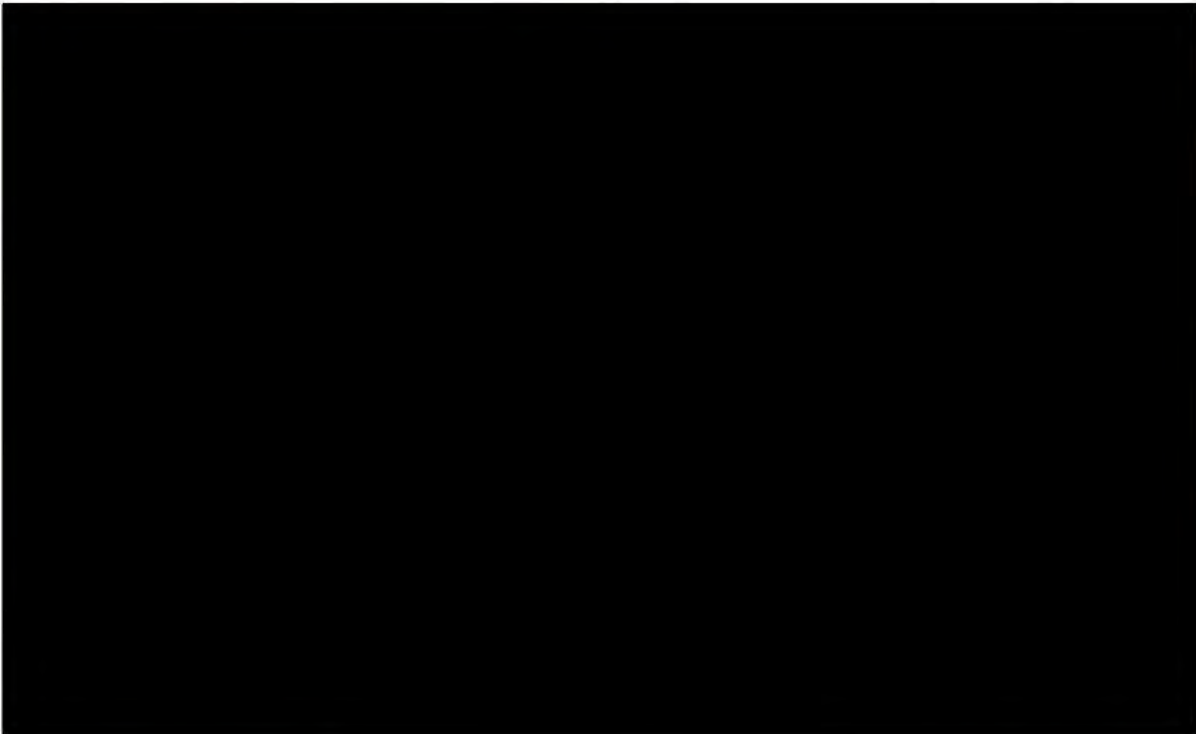
On December 1, 2020 I experienced the shearing failure of three of the five-wheel studs while a wheel on my Forester was being removed. In investigating this matter, I became aware that the wheel stud failure is a common occurrence in many Subaru models. I suspect the same grade of studs is used throughout the range of Subaru products. I believe the failure was due to

defective studs, and this condition constitutes a safety hazard that must be immediately addressed.

On December 1, 2020 I purchased 4 new tires at Walmart Store # 2066 in Houston, Texas and arranged for the auto department to install the tires. Upon inspection they informed me that a lug nut on the right rear wheel was missing and they would not change the tire till the situation was remedied. That day, I took the car to my regular mechanic, Toyocars located at 4640 Holmes Rd, Houston, TX 77033. Upon inspection I was informed that the stud had been sheared off, that a new nut could not be installed, and that the stud would have to be replaced. Later that day I received a call from Toyocars, that in the process of removing the lug nuts on the wheel, two other studs had sheared off, and that all three would have to be replaced. After the job was completed, I requested that the defective studs be returned to me. Attached as Exhibit "1" are the three sheared off wheel studs. The cost of the repair was \$126.33, attached as Exhibit "2".

On December 2, 2020 I spoke personally with Roland Flores, Jr., the Service Manager at Gillman Subaru, Southwest, requesting a reimbursement of the \$126.33 repair bill. I was told he could do nothing, and to address this matter to Subaru America's corporate office.

After speaking with Mr. Flores, I did a Google search of "Subaru Forester sheared wheel studs" and found a number of discussion boards that document that this problem is widespread on the Forester and other Subaru models. See;



[REDACTED]

Of particular interest is a 2017 YouTube video where a mechanic, while removing a wheel on a 2012 Subaru Forester for a safety inspection, three of the five studs snapped off. See:

[REDACTED]

I have been driving for 50 years, and have had wheels taken off my cars, by mechanics and myself, hundreds of times with no stud failure. In this instance, where 3 studs on one tire failed virtually simultaneously is unprecedented. The large number of complaints evidenced in the above referenced discussions forums points to the possibility of an inherently defective product, which failure can result in a wheel separating from the axle with catastrophic consequences.

I believe there is more than sufficient evidence to warrant an investigation whether or not the wheel studs and nuts used by Subaru constitute a defective product and a safety hazard.

By this letter, I am requesting that Subaru America reimburse me for my \$126.33 repair bill. The only effective remedy for this potential safety hazard is that all 20 studs on the vehicle be replaced by a more robust product. I am hereby requesting that Subaru immediately authorize this remedial action.

This letter constitutes notice of a potential safety hazard and request to the NHTSA and Subaru America to investigate this matter.

A prompt response to this Notice from both the NHTSA and Subaru America will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Houston, Texas

W41-306

RETURN RECEIPT
REQUEST

CERTIFIED MAIL



7017 0190 0000 5611

NHTSA Headquarters
Consumer Complaints
1200 New Jersey Ave
West Building
Washington, DC 2059

20590-

NORTH HO
4 DEC 2012

Company Name

To: W41- 306

Mailstop: 4 West

Department: NEC, NOA, NIA

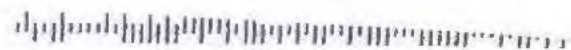
Phone:

Purchase Order USPS Certified Mail
(ItemVarName4)

Route



70170190000056111676



U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FCM LETTER