



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator
1900 North Howard Street, Suite 100
Baltimore, MD 21218

NEF-109 mrr
Ref. No. 11509082

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

Thank you for the letter on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED], regarding her model year (MY) 2015 Toyota RAV4 vehicle. Your letter was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation (ODI). 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. We received [REDACTED] report regarding her vehicle problem through our www.nhtsa.gov website on February 25, 2023 (enclosure). The information from [REDACTED] report was entered into our complaint database as part of our continuous monitoring for potential safety defect trends. As [REDACTED] mentioned in her letter, the vehicle fire she described may be related to an ongoing NHTSA investigation. We are grateful for her report as it is a meaningful contribution to our investigation.

We understand [REDACTED] concerns regarding the length of NHTSA's investigation identified as Preliminary Evaluation (PE) 21-005. On February 25, 2021, ODI opened PE 21-005 (resume enclosed) to investigate allegations of the 12V battery B+ terminal short-circuiting to the battery hold down frame in MY 2013 to MY 2018 Toyota RAV4 vehicles. This problem may result in the sudden loss of electrical power, vehicle stalling, and/or a fire originating in the engine compartment. At this time, ODI is continuing its analysis into the relevant data and has not reached a final determination. We appreciate [REDACTED] diligence and attention to this issue, and we encourage her to monitor our website for any updates in the investigation. [REDACTED] can locate the public file for the investigation by going to nhtsa.gov/recalls, selecting the "vehicle" tab, clicking on "search by NHTSA ID," and entering PE21-005 into the search bar. [REDACTED] can learn more about NHTSA's investigation and recall process on our website at https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.dot.gov/files/documents/mvdefectsandrecalls_808795.pdf.

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The Honorable Chris Van Hollen

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Patrick.lally@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick J. Lally". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Patrick Lally
Acting Director
Office of Governmental Affairs,
Policy and Strategic Planning

Enclosures

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**DOT Auto Safety Hotline**
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET:www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

25-FEB-2023

Repository ☐Reference No.
11509082**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name			
Address			
City	Severna Park	State	MD
ZIP Code			

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

The information you provide will be used to identify potential safety-related defects. We may share your information with the applicable vehicle manufacturer during an investigation or recall in accordance with the routine uses described in the agency's Privacy Act notice. See 49 FR 53971 (Sep. 3, 2004).

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side		MAKE TOYOTA		Model RAV4	Model Year 2015
Date Purchased	Dealer's Name and Telephone Number			Engine: No: Cylinders	Fuel Type:
Original Owner ☐	Dealer's City		STATE	ZIP Code	
Transmission Type	☐ Antilock Brakes ☐ Cruise Control	Powertrain	Multiple Failure:	Incident Date(s) [REDACTED]	

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Vehicle Components Codes: 110000 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM, 980000 UNKNOWN OR OTHER, 060000 ENGINE (PWS)	Failure Mileage	Failure Speed
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ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make	Tire Model (Name or Number)		Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)
DOT No. (Example: DOTMAL 9ABC036)	☐ Original Requirement ☐ Prior Repair	Failure Location:	
Tire Component Code			Tire Failure Type:

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make:	Date Manufactured:	Model No./Name:
Seat Type:	Installation System:	
Child Seat Component Code:	Failed Part:	

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), Injury(ies).)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☒ Yes ☐ No	Number of Persons Injured	Number of Deaths	Reported to Police N
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Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), Injury(ies).

Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

Today I started my RAV4 in my driveway to warm it up and went back in the house. Approximately 5-10 minutes later someone knocked on the door to let me know the car was on fire. The fire department said it was likley that the fire started in the engine and spread to the rest of the vehicle.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579. This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic. Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.