

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ)

NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

335

Date Received

06-JUN-2000

Od_or

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up_ltr

Reference No.

863053

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☐ NO
 In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner _____ Date ____/____/____

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN.) (located at front of vehicle or on driver's side)	Vehicle Make	Vehicle Model	Vehicle Year	Current Odometer Reading
1G8ZK5278VZ175621	SATURN	SATURN	1997	

Purchase Date	Dealer's Name _____	Engine Size (CID/CCL) _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
☒ New ☐ Used	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____	No. Cylinders _____	

Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☐ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☐ Yes ☒ No	Restraint System ☐ 3-Point Belt ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ Passengerside Airbag ☐ Motorbelt ☐ 2-Point Belt	Cruise Control ☐ Yes ☒ No	Drive Train ☐ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	Vehicle Type ☐ Car ☐ Van ☐ Minivan ☐ Other ☐ Sport Utl ☐ Truck ☐ Motorcycle	Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other
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FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 06136000	Part Name(s) FUEL:FUEL PUMP	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No. of Failures 0	Dates of Failure(s) 01-APR-2000 Mileage at Failure(s) 45000 Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) 0	Failed Part(s) Available? Yes No	NHTSA Previously Contacted? Yes No

APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured 0	Number of Fatalities 0	Estimated Property Damage	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

CONSUMER RECEIVED A RECALL LETTER ON FUEL PUMP. DEALER EXTENDED THE WARRANTY TO 70 MILES. CONSUMER FELT LIKE SHE WAITING ON A TIMING BOMB TO EXPLODE. *AK

CONTINUE ON BACK IF NEEDED

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 to 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.

 DOT Auto Safety Hotline Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT 1-888-327-4236 www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline		FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 335 Date Received RECEIVED 06-JUL-2000 PM 3:48 OFFICE DEFECTS INVESTIGATION Reference No. 863053 Work Number _____ Home Number _____	
OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print) [Redacted] 612736		Do you own this vehicle? ☒ YES ☐ NO If YES, is this vehicle for sale or lease? ☒ YES ☐ NO If YES, what is the date? 6/26/00	
Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (located at bottom of windshield or driver's side) 1G8ZK5278VZ175621		Vehicle Make SATURN	Vehicle Model SATURN
Purchase Date JANUARY-97		Vehicle Year 1997	Current Odometer Reading _____
Dealer's Name Saturn of Worcester	City Worcester	State MA	Zip Code 01606
Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____	No Cylinders _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection	☐ New ☐ Used
Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☒ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☐ Yes ☒ No	Restraint System ☐ 3-Point Belt ☒ Driverside Airbag ☒ Passengerside Airbag ☐ Motorbelt ☒ 2-Point Belt	Cruise Control ☒ Yes ☐ No
Drive Train ☒ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	Vehicle Type ☒ Car ☐ Van ☐ Minivan ☐ Other	Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☒ 4-Door ☐ Station wagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other	☐ Sport Utility ☐ Truck ☐ Motorcycle
FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION			
Component 08136000	Part Name(s) FUEL:FUEL PUMP	Location ☐ Left ☐ Front ☐ Right ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures 0	Date(s) of Failure(s) 01-APR-2000 Mileage at Failure(s) 45000 Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) 0	Failed Part(s) Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☐ No
APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION (Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies) on the back of this form)			
Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured 0	Number of Fatalities 0
Estimated Property Damage _____		Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No	
NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)			
CONSUMER RECEIVED A RECALL LETTER ON FUEL PUMP. DEALER EXTENDED THE WARRANTY TO 70 MILES. CONSUMER FELT LIKE SHE WAS WAITING ON A TIMING BOMB TO EXPLODE. *AK <i>I am enclosing correspondence to/from Saturn regarding this problem. I also went into the dealer service dept. They were unwilling to repair the pump (or replace it) on a "no-cost" basis, if I would assume some of the cost.</i>			
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 to 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.			

Saturn Corporation
100 Saturn Parkway
P.O. Box 1500
Spring Hill, TN 37174-1500

Letter #1 from Saturn



April, 2000

1G8ZK5278VZ175621

A large black rectangular redaction box covering several lines of text.

We are writing to let you know of a Special Policy relating to 1997 model year Saturn vehicles. The fuel pump in these vehicles may fail prematurely and cause extended crank time, loss of power, and possible no-start conditions.

As a result, Saturn will provide fuel pump replacement coverage for a period of six years from the date the vehicle was originally placed in service, or 75,000 miles, whichever occurs first. This Special Policy covers both the original owner, and any subsequent owners for the six year/75,000 mile duration. Please keep this letter with your other important glove box literature for further reference.

This is not a recall campaign. At this time, it is not necessary to take your vehicle to your Saturn Retailer as a result of this letter. However, if you believe that your vehicle exhibits one of the symptoms described above, please contact your Saturn Retailer for assistance.

If your vehicle should require a fuel pump replacement within six-years/75,000 miles, whichever comes first, Saturn will repair your vehicle at no charge. A Saturn Retailer must perform repairs qualifying for this special coverage, and the time needed to replace a fuel pump is approximately 1.5 hours, although some additional time may be required for paperwork and processing.

You will be eligible for reimbursement if you have already paid for some or all of the cost to have the fuel pump replaced, and your vehicle was within the six-year/75,000 mile parameter at the time of the repair.

If you have already paid for some or all of the cost to have the fuel pump replaced, and the repair was performed by a Saturn retail facility, contact your Saturn Retailer to discuss reimbursement. The facility will have all the necessary documentation to process your reimbursement. If the repair was performed by a non-Saturn facility, your Retailer will need your original paid receipts or invoices verifying the repair, proof of payment, and proof of ownership of the vehicle at the time of the repair.

We sincerely regret any inconvenience this may cause you. However, we have taken this action in the interest of your continued satisfaction with our product. If you have any questions, please contact your Saturn Retailer or the Saturn Customer Assistance Center at 1-800-553-6000 prompt 3, or for the hearing impaired, 1-800-833-6000. We want you to know that we will do our best, throughout your ownership experience, to ensure that your Saturn provides you many miles of enjoyable driving.

Sincerely,

Saturn Corporation

April 15, 2000

PRESIDENT
SATURN CORPORATION
100 SATURN PARKWAY
P.O. BOX 1500
SPRING HILL, TN 37174-1500

I HOPE THAT YOU, AS A WOMAN, WILL UNDERSTAND THE SHOCK, ANGER, DISAPPOINTMENT AND FEAR THAT I FELT UPON RECEIVING NOTICE OF THE VERY PROBABLE FAILURE OF THE FUEL PUMP OF MY 1997 SATURN! MY PROFILE:

I AM 70 YEARS OLD, THE PRIMARY CAREGIVER FOR MY 88 YEAR OLD MOTHER, WHO SUFFERS FROM ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

I AM THE SOLE PROPRIETOR OF MY OWN BUSINESS.

I AM A GRANDMOTHER ACTIVELY INVOLVED WITH 9 GRANDCHILDREN.

OBVIOUSLY.....

MY SATURN IS NOT A FRIVOLITY; IT IS MY LIFELINE. THE PRIMARY REQUIREMENT OF MY VEHICLE IS THAT IT HAS TO BE DEPENDABLE; YOUR LETTER TELLS ME THAT IT IS NOT!

THE IDEAL TIME FOR THIS FUEL PUMP TO FAIL WOULD BE BETWEEN 9 AM AND NOONTIME ON A WEEKDAY, SO THAT IT COULD BE TOWED TO A SATURN DEALER AND REPAIRED THE SAME DAY (ONLY ON THE UNLIKELY CONDITION THAT THEIR SERVICE DEPARTMENT HAD A 15 HOUR SLOT OPEN). BECAUSE IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT SUCH A MECHANICAL FAILURE WOULD OCCUR AT AN OPPORTUNE TIME, I FEEL I CANNOT DRIVE THIS CAR WITH CONFIDENCE OF ITS RELIABILITY.

THE FOLLOWING TRIPS INDICATE TYPICAL USES OF THIS VEHICLE;

MEDICAL VISITS WITH MY MOTHER

EXCURSIONS WITH GRANDCHILDREN

BUSINESS TRIPS OUT OF STATE, DISTANCES OF 500+ MILES FOR SEMINARS, RESEARCH, AND PURCHASES OF GOODS.

VISITS WITH FAMILY, 100+ MILES.

MANY OF THESE TRIPS ARE ON WEEKENDS, AND INVOLVE LOTS OF NIGHT DRIVING. IS IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO HAVE A CELL PHONE, WARM CLOTHES BECAUSE THE HEATER WILL NOT WORK, AND A PRAYER BOOK SO THAT ANOTHER MOTORIST WHO MIGHT STOP WOULD BE A GOOD SAMARITAN AND NOT A PREDATOR? YOU HAVE PUT ME IN AN UNTENABLE SITUATION!

I FIND ALL OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS UNACCEPTABLE.

RIDE AROUND FEARFULLY IN A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AUTOMOBILE

SELL THE CAR AT A LOSS TO A BUYER WILLING TO TAKE ON THIS RISK (IF ONE CAN BE FOUND)

ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY, WHICH SHOULD BE YOURS AND TAKE ON THE CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE OF THE REPAIRS.

I AM EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTED IN YOUR COMPANY, AND APPALLED AT THE CONTENTS OF YOUR LETTER.

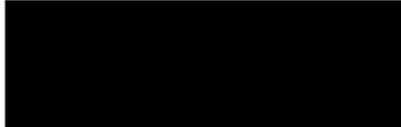


Saturn Corporation
Customer Assistance Center
100 Saturn Parkway
P.O. Box 1500
Spring Hill, TN 37174-1500
Telephone (800) 553 6000

Letter #2 from Saturn



April 24, 2000



RE: 1G8ZK5278VZ175621

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

In response to your most recent letter, I would like to take the opportunity to explain how correspondence to Cynthia Trudell is handled. After mail is reviewed in Ms. Trudell's office, it is forwarded to the Saturn Customer Assistance Center for action. I have been empowered by Ms. Trudell to act on her behalf. I want to assure you that your situation has been taken seriously, and the fact that Ms. Trudell is unable to answer every piece of correspondence personally by no means indicates a lack of concern on her part.

In an effort to bring clarification to your situation, I believe it is necessary to explain Saturn Corporation's position. Although the need for repairs is unfortunate, motor vehicles are complex machinery and sometimes they do break or require replacement parts. That is why every Saturn sold is backed by the New Car Limited Warranty. Saturn Corporation will provide for repairs to the vehicle during the warranty period (3 years or 36,000 miles, whichever comes first) to correct any vehicle defect related to materials or workmanship.

We track all warranty repairs and conduct case studies to indicate a peak in any type of necessary repair. Since we found a greater than average number of repairs to the fuel pump on 1997 Saturns, we issued a special policy extending the coverage on this part. This does not mean that every fuel pump in the 1997 fail. In fact, it is probable that you will never have a fuel pump failure; but if you do, Saturn Corporation will stand behind it for six years or 75,000 miles, whichever comes first.

Saturn will continue to stand behind our product. Your concerns have been documented and reviewed thoroughly.

Thank you for giving Saturn the opportunity to review your concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lynette C. Sullivan'.

Lynette C. Sullivan
Saturn Customer Assistance Center

Replacing Your Fuel Pump

BY BOB FREUDENBERGER

► Ten minutes late.

Gulp half your coffee, sprint out to the car. Twist the key and she cranks. And cranks. And cranks. No fire, and your ulcer potential

SATURDAY MECHANIC

increases along with your blood pressure. It always seems to happen when you're behind schedule, as if the gods of internal combustion are eternally against you. You should've paid attention to that occasional bucking on the highway.

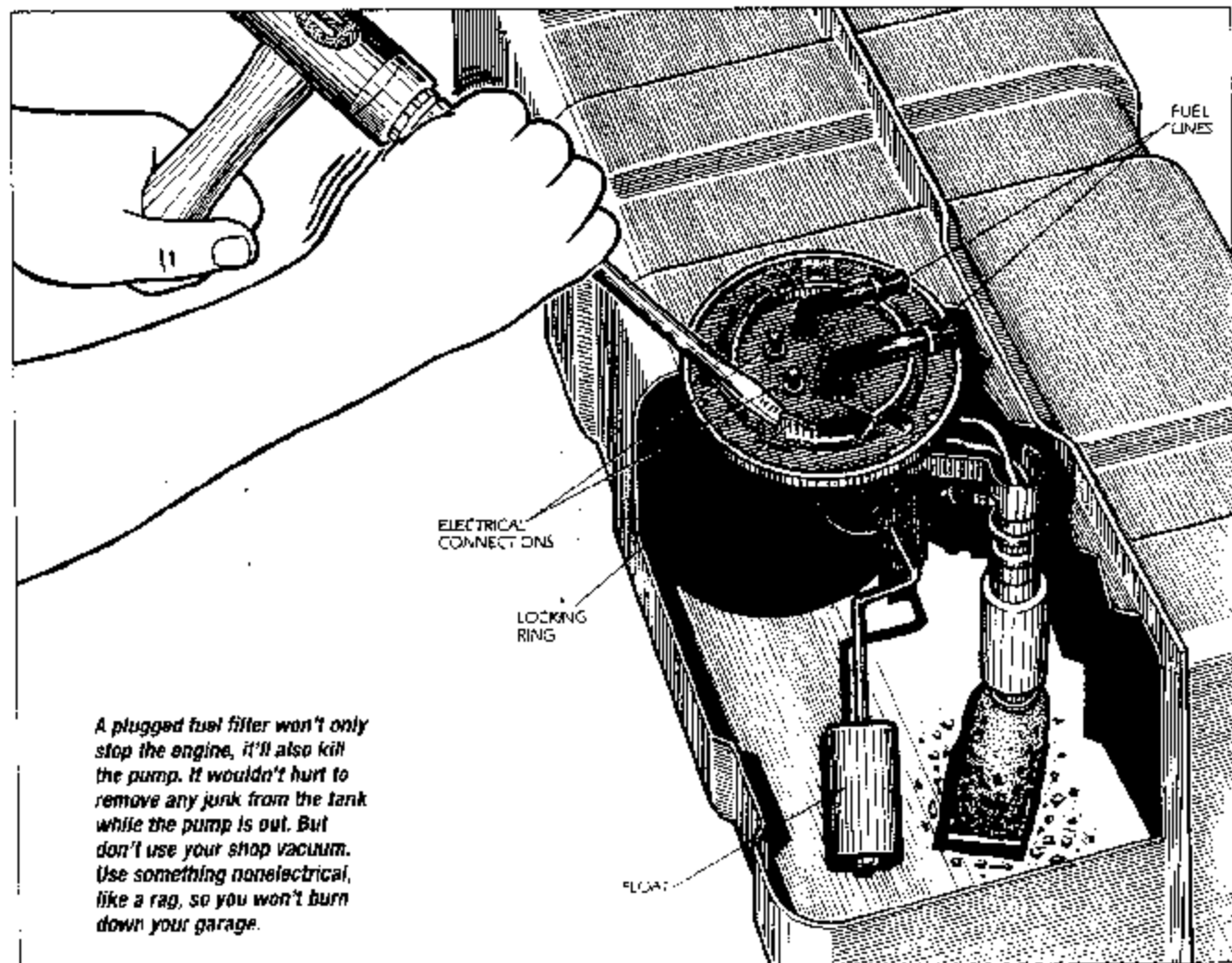
If there's anything over 60,000 miles on the odometer, but more commonly 100,000 plus, there's a good chance that the cause of this distressing no-start condition is an electric fuel pump that's no longer capable of forcing fuel forward with sufficient pressure. Even if the condition hasn't reached the point of grounding you, pump inadequacies can cause numerous drivability problems, such as momentary cutting out, hesitation, low power and stalling at inopportune moments (typically, it'll start again after it's cooled off).

Degree of Difficulty



DIFFICULT

For years, the car companies have been looking for a pump life of 10,000 hours (say, 400K miles) as a bogey. Now, they're asking their O.E. suppliers for "life-of-car" (that many miles isn't a car's life span anymore!). To reach this goal, pump makers have lowered amperage draw and balanced armatures more precisely. That's all very ad-



A plugged fuel filter won't only stop the engine, it'll also kill the pump. It wouldn't hurt to remove any junk from the tank while the pump is out. But don't use your shop vacuum. Use something nonelectrical, like a rag, so you won't burn down your garage.