



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

## ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 04-002  
 Prompted By: IE03-075  
 Date Opened: 01/07/2004 Date Closed: 05/27/2004  
 Principal Investigator: Peter C. Ong  
 Subject: Fuel Line Leakage in Engine Compartment

Manufacturer: Subaru Of America, Inc.  
 Products: 2002 and Early-2003 (9/2002) Subaru Impreza WRX  
 Population: 42,111

Problem Description: The complaints allege gasoline odor in the passenger and engine compartments during extreme cold temperature vehicle startup

### FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	114	137	251
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	484	484

#### \*Description of Other: Warranty Claims

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation (PE) has been closed

Engineer: Peter C. Ong <sup>PE</sup>  
 Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper  
 Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: Subaru reports that the fuel odor is caused by "fuel seepage during cold start of the engine under extremely cold temperatures." The leak occurs in a fuel line in the engine compartment. It reports that the failure is due to "the misaligned angle between two fuel delivery lines which resulted in such fuel seepage during the first few seconds of cold engine start during these cold temperatures." Subaru reports that the two fuel lines are connected with a hose that becomes too stiff in very cold temperatures to conform to the misalignment. Subaru has issued a technical service bulletin (Subaru service bulletin number 09-36-03) to replace the fuel lines with new lines that are properly aligned and that have a longer connecting hose.

ODI phone calls to many of the complainants confirm that fuel odor is noticeable during very cold temperatures and cold start but goes away as the engine warms up, and the odor is not present in warmer temperatures. A few owners report that attempts to eliminate the leakage by tightening the connecting hose clamps is not effective in eliminating the fuel odor.

A safety-related defect has not been identified at this time and further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. Accordingly, this investigation is closed. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that a safety-related defect does not exist. The agency will monitor this issue and reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

6/1/04  
ED