



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 04-018
Prompted By: IE04-003
Date Opened: 02/19/2004
Principal Investigator: Peter Kivett
Subject: Oil Filter Fires

Manufacturer: American Honda Motor CO., Inc.
Products: 2003 Honda CR-V
Population: 33000

Problem Description: The complaints allege that following the first oil change, an engine compartment fire occurred while the vehicle was being driven.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	5	0	5
Crashes/Fires:	5	0	5
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

*Description Of Other:

Action: a Preliminary Evaluation has been opened.

Engineer: Peter Kivett

Date: 02/19/2004

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Date: 02/19/2004

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 02/19/2004

Summary:

ODI has received five complaints alleging engine fires following the initial oil changes for 2003 Honda CR-V vehicles. All five complaints involved an engine compartment fire while being driven. Owners alleged that the fires occurred within as little as a mile to as much as 200 miles of driving after the oil change. All five of the vehicles sustained fire damage that was severe enough for the vehicle to be declared a total loss. Engine oil leakage onto the exhaust manifold has been alleged as the cause of the fires.

ODI has interviewed service staff at several Honda dealerships concerning the oil change procedure and the original equipment oil filter for the subject vehicles. ODI discovered that when the oil filter is removed, the rubber seal may adhere to the engine block. If the seal is not removed before installing the new filter, the rubber seals become stacked. This produces a poor seal between the engine block and oil filter, which may result in leakage of pressurized engine oil. ODI has opened a preliminary evaluation to assess the scope and frequency of the alleged defect.

VRS
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