

HONDA

American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

RECEIVED
HVT

2004 DEC -9 A 10:17

December 8, 2004

NVS-213dsy
EA04-027

OFFICE OF
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter,
Director
Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

Pursuant to our telephone conference call of December 2, 2004, American Honda is submitting a copy of the final customer letter for your review. The letter provides basic information to the customer concerning the potential risk of fire as the result of an improper oil filter change, at the first oil filter service, because of certain filter gasket characteristics unique to the American market. We will provide the customer with an adhesive label, to be attached to the repair order, advising the service technician to make certain that the original oil filter gasket has been removed, and to give the gasket to the customer. The letter also invites customers who have recently had the first filter change to go to an authorized Honda dealer to have the filter inspected to assure that the installation was done properly. We are confident that this letter and the suggested procedure to involve the customer in the process will virtually eliminate any further underhood fires as the result of a double-gasketed oil filter. This customer letter will be sent to all owners of 2003, 2004, and 2005 CR-Vs, with mailing to begin within a week.

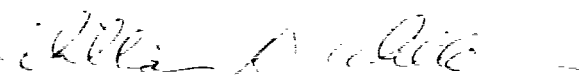
American Honda will advise its authorized dealers to anticipate customers presenting these letters at the time of the first oil change. We will also instruct the dealers to change the oil filters on all CR-Vs in stock, from the original filter to a service part oil filter, and we will continue this process until all such filters have been removed from the new vehicle stock. We have advised you that the changes in production oil filters will occur on December 4 for all CR-Vs produced in Japan, and on December 10 for all CR-Vs manufactured in Honda's United Kingdom factory.

American Honda will also notify the major aftermarket oil change organizations of the program, request that they advise all their service points of the letter, and request their cooperation.

We are attaching a copy of the customer letter, as well as our electronic communication to our dealers. We will forward a copy of our service bulletin, and any other relevant communications, when they become available. We believe that this matter can now be concluded.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.



William R. Willen
Managing Counsel
Product Regulatory Office

2004 DEC 10 11:07 AM

Enclosure

2004 DEC 10 11:07 AM

HONDA

December 2004

Dear CR-V Owner:

You may have heard reports about engine compartment fires in some 2003 and later model CR-Vs. We are writing to share with you what we know about this issue and to provide you with some important information about how you can reduce the risk of an engine compartment fire in your vehicle.

Honda has determined there is a risk of an engine compartment fire if the oil filter gasket is not properly removed during the first oil filter change. Although it has been standard industry practice for many years to be sure the old filter's gasket is removed from the engine block mounting surface before a new filter is installed, we are aware of several instances where this procedure was not properly followed. **The result has been oil leakage and, in some cases, engine compartment fires.**

We have found that the issue with the filter gaskets occurs **only during the first oil filter change**, resulting from changes to the gasket during extended overseas transport to the American market. If the replacement filter is installed on top of the original gasket ("double gasket" situation), leakage occurs shortly thereafter, usually within a few miles of driving or immediately following a cold start when the oil pressure is higher. **If your vehicle's first oil filter change occurred more than 30 days ago, it is extremely unlikely that this issue will affect you.** If you have had your first oil filter changed within the last 30 days, to assure a proper repair, you may take your vehicle to any Honda dealer for a free inspection. The dealer will use Honda's approved procedure to ensure the filter was correctly installed. This will be done at no charge to you.

Honda and its authorized dealerships have worked together closely to assure a proper procedure for performing an oil filter change. As a result, the vast majority of oil filter changes are performed properly. Still, there may be some service facilities that are not as aware of the importance of following proper procedures when replacing oil filters.

If you have not yet had your oil filter changed, since the consequences of an engine compartment fire can be severe, we ask for your assistance to try to ensure that such an improper procedure does not occur. **When your oil filter is replaced, please ask to see the gasket from your original factory oil filter.** In this way, you will have visible evidence that a "double gasket" situation did not occur.

As a convenience, we have enclosed an adhesive label (to attach to the technician copy of the repair order) you may provide to the service facility performing your first oil filter change. The label reinforces the importance of removing the old filter gasket and asks them to return it to you. Thank you for your cooperation.

If you have any question or concern about this matter, please contact your authorized Honda dealer, or contact Honda Customer Service at (800) 999-1009.

Sincerely,

American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
Honda Automobile Division

Attention Service Technician

**WARNING: TO AVOID
OIL LEAKAGE AND POSSIBLE ENGINE
FIRE, PLEASE FOLLOW THESE
PROCEDURES:**



2) Follow filter manufacturer's installation instructions carefully

3) Return old filter gasket to customer