



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA05-019
 Prompted By: PE05-036
 Date Opened: 11/07/2005 Date Closed: 01/12/2006
 Principal Investigator: Chris Lash
 Subject: Power steering fluid fires

Manufacturer: DaimlerChrysler Corporation
 Products: 1999-00 Cirrus, Stratus and Breeze w/2.4L engines
 Population: 216,299

Problem Description: The high-pressure power steering hose may fail and spray fluid onto the exhaust manifold where it can be ignited causing an engine compartment fire while driving or parked.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total (duplicates removed)
Complaints:	29	94	116
Crashes/Fires:	29	94	116
Injury Incidents:	0	1	1
# Injuries:	0	1	1
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	12	81	90

*Description of Other: Engine compartment fires of unknown origin.

Action: This Engineering Analysis is closed. Recall 06V-001 (DCC Recall E23).

Engineer: Christopher Lash *CL*
 Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
 Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 01/12/2006
 Date: 01/12/2006
 Date: 01/12/2006

Summary: ODI has received 29 reports of engine compartment fires that appear to be related to power steering hose leakage in Model Year (MY) 1999 and 2000 Chrysler Cirrus, Dodge Stratus and Plymouth Breeze vehicles (JA-cars) equipped with 2.4L engines. These reports indicate that the fire resulted from a power steering hose leak or that it occurred after an extended drive and shortly after being parked - conditions consistent with ignition of power steering fluid on a hot engine or exhaust surface during the vehicle hot soak period.

On January 6, 2006, DaimlerChrysler Corporation (DCC) notified NHTSA of a safety defect on MY 1999 and 2000 JA-cars built from July 1, 1998 to July 31, 2000 and equipped with 2.4L engines (Recall 06V-001). The notification stated that "the high pressure power steering hose may prematurely heat, age and develop a leak. Power steering fluid leakage in the presence of an ignition source may result in an under hood fire." DCC indicated that it was aware of 94 complaints and field reports that may be related to this condition when it made the defect determination. To remedy the defect condition, DCC will replace the high pressure power steering hose on the affected vehicles with a new part made from a hose material with increased heat resistance capability.

Consequently, this investigation is closed. ODI will monitor the effectiveness of the remedy and take further action if warranted.