



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

# ODI RESUME

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

Manufacturer: DaimlerChrysler Corporation  
Products: 1999-00 Dodge Stratus, Plymouth Breeze and Chrysler Cirrus with 2.4L engine  
Population: 210,200

Problem Description: The power steering pressure 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
Complaints:	34	141	175
Crashes/Fires:	34	134	168
Injury Incidents:	0	1	1
# Injuries:	0	1	1
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

\*Description Of Other:

Action: An Engineering Analysis has been opened.

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

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Summary: On June 29, 2005, ODI opened Preliminary Evaluation (PE)05-036 to investigate complaints of engine compartment fires in model year (MY) 1999-2000 Chrysler Cirrus, Dodge Stratus and Plymouth Breeze passenger cars ("JA cars"). The JA cars were introduced in MY 1995 and ended with MY 2000. They were produced with 2.0L, 2.4L and 2.5L engines.

According to DaimlerChrysler, evidence collected from field inspections of fire incident vehicles indicate that fluid leakage from the high pressure power steering hose is the most likely cause of the fires in the subject vehicles. The subject high pressure power steering hose is used in JA cars with both the 2.4L and 2.0L engines in MY 1995 through 2000. The fire incident rate in the MY 1999 through 2000 JA vehicles with 2.4L engines is significantly higher than in the prior model year vehicles using that engine and in any of the vehicles with the 2.0L or 2.5L engines. DaimlerChrysler is continuing its investigation of the issue and has provided periodic updates to ODI.

An Engineering Analysis has been opened to further assess the scope and frequency of the alleged defect in the subject vehicles.

*all  
11-2-05*