



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

# ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE06-006  
Date Opened: 01/24/2006  
Principal Investigator: Chris Lash  
Subject: Timing chain failure

Manufacturer: General Motors Corp.  
Products: 2000-03 Saturn L-Series and 2003 Saturn Ion with 2.2L engine  
Population: 457,000 (estimated)

Problem Description: The timing chain may break while driving resulting in engine stall with no restart.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	26	0	0
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	0	0

\*Description Of Other:

Action: A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION HAS BEEN OPENED.

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

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Summary: On December 2, 2005, the Office of Defects Investigations (ODI) received a petition (DP05-008) requesting a defect investigation of timing chain failures on model year (MY) 2002-2003 Saturn L-series and MY 2003 Saturn Ion vehicles. The petition was submitted by the North Carolina Consumers Council, Inc. (NCCC) which reported receipt of consumer complaints regarding timing chain failure in MY 2000-2004 Saturn L-series vehicles. The petition indicates that the NCCC complaints report incidents of sudden loss of engine power, with some occurring at highway speeds. The petition alleges that Saturn redesigned the timing chain assembly to address concerns with "improper oil flow." NCCC also identified 24 records in ODI's consumer complaint database that were allegedly related to the issue.

ODI's analysis of the petition identified 26 complaints alleging timing chain failures in MY 2000-2003 Saturn L-series vehicles equipped with the 2.2L I4 engine. In most of the complaints the timing chain failure allegedly resulted in a sudden loss of power and engine stall.

On June 9, 2003, General Motors issued a technical service bulletin (bulletin no. 03-06-01-017) titled, "Service Information - Timing Chain Design Change and Revised Service Procedures," covering the subject vehicles and MY 2002-2003 Saturn Vue vehicles with 2.2L engines and MY 2003 Saturn Ion vehicles. The bulletin states that "all timing chain service kits now available in service will include the oiler nozzle" and that the oiler nozzle is a new design that "will increase oil flow to the timing chain under low RPM operating conditions." ODI has not received any complaints of timing chain failure in the Vue or Ion populations covered by the bulletin.

A Preliminary Evaluation has been opened to assess the frequency, trend, scope, and safety consequences associated with the alleged defect in the subject vehicles.

*Onl*  
*1-25-06*