



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

# ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA07-008

Prompted by: PE07-006

Date Opened: 06/12/2007

Date Closed: 05/01/2008

Principal Investigator: Kyle Bowker

Subject: Engine Compartment Fire

Manufacturer: General Motors Corp.

Products: 1999-2002 Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac with supercharged V6

Population: 177,746

Problem Description: Alleged non-crash fire originating in the engine compartment that may be related to oil leakage from the front valve cover gasket.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	69	83	138
Fires:	69	83	138
Injury Incidents:	1	2	3
# Injuries:	1	2	3
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0

Action: This Engineering Analysis has been closed. General Motors is conducting a safety recall (08V-118).

Engineer: Kyle M. Bowker *LMB*

Date: 05/01/2008

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Date: 05/01/2008

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 05/01/2008

Summary: By letter dated March 12, 2008, General Motors Corp. (GM) has notified the agency that it will conduct a safety recall (identified by NHTSA recall number 08V-118) to address a manufacturing defect in approximately 207,542 model year (MY) 1997-2003 Buick Regal GS and Pontiac Grand Prix GTP vehicles equipped with the L67 supercharged version of GM's 3800 Series II V6 engine. The recalled Regal GS vehicles were built from August 1996 to June 2003 and the Grand Prix GTP from March 1996 through January 2003.

According to GM, oil may escape past the valve cover gasket on the front cylinder bank (cylinders 1-3-5) and deposit onto hot exhaust system components. Under certain conditions, it is possible for this oil to ignite a small pilot flame, which may spread to the adjacent plastic spark plug wire channel, the spark plug wires themselves, the plastic engine cover, and other under hood components. Reports indicate this most often occurs on higher-mileage vehicles shortly after the vehicle has been driven and then parked. Typically, the fire was discovered within 5 to 15 minutes after the vehicle was parked. During this time window, under hood temperatures may become elevated. Such elevated temperatures combined with a lack of airflow through the engine compartment may permit a small pilot flame to propagate and ignite other fuel sources.

To correct the safety defect, GM will install an improved design front valve cover gasket and spark plug wire retainer. This remedy will be supplied free of charge for all recalled vehicles. Until sufficient parts become available to repair all of the affected vehicles, GM strongly recommends that owners observe the following important precautions: (1) they strongly recommend that owners do not park their vehicle in a garage, carport, or other structure; (2) if owners notice a burning odor, they should have their dealer inspect the vehicle - the dealer will inspect the vehicle without charge; and (3) use premium fuel (91 octane or higher) in the vehicle as recommended in the vehicle's owner manual.

The action taken by GM is sufficient to resolve the issues raised by this investigation. The subject fire incident rate on the C-, G-, and H-platform subject vehicles is low. The agency will continue to monitor this issue and reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances. Accordingly, this investigation is closed.

See document file for additional information regarding this resume.

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