



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

# ODI RESUME

**Investigation:** EA 11-012  
**Prompted by:** Consumer complaints, PE11-017  
**Date Opened:** 09/12/2011 **Date Closed:** 09/17/2012  
**Investigator:** John Abbott **Reviewer:** Scott Yon  
**Approver:** Frank Borris  
**Subject:** Low Beam Headlights Stop Illuminating

## MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

**Manufacturer:** Honda (American Honda Motor Co.)  
**Products:** Model Year 2002 through 2004 Honda CR-V  
**Population:** 431,244  
**Problem Description:** Both low beam headlights stop illuminating simultaneously due to an electrical circuit failure.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
<b>Complaints:</b>	74	127	201
<b>Crashes/Fires:</b>	0	0	0
<b>Injury Incidents:</b>	0	0	0
<b>Fatality Incidents:</b>	0	0	0
<b>Other*:</b>	38	373	395**

\*Description of Other: MY 2003-2005 Pilot and MY 2002-2003 Civic reports, see below for further detail

\*\* Total eliminates duplicates received by ODI and manufacturer.

## ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

**Action:** Close Investigation (Safety Recall 12V-136)

### Summary:

This investigation was prompted by Preliminary Evaluation (PE) 11-017, and was based on reports from consumers alleging that both low beam headlights stopped illuminating simultaneously. Some complainants also reported that the combination switch (switch) that controls the headlights and turn signals, and/or its electrical wiring harness connector were damaged by overheating. ODI's PE information request letter asked Honda for certain data on model years (MY) 2002-2006 CR-V, 2003-2008 Pilot, 2003-2008 Element, 2001-2005 Civic, and 2000-2001 S 2000 vehicles.

Analysis of complaint and Honda data show that a complete low beam headlight circuit failure occurs in models with 2-bulb headlight systems (i.e., a single bulb on each side for high and low beam). Models with 2-bulb systems include MY 2002-2004 CR-V, 2003-2005 Pilot, 2001-2003 Civic, and 2003-2008 Element. Models with 4-bulb headlight systems (i.e., two bulbs on each side, one for high and one for low beam) have different electrical circuits for the headlights and do not experience the same failure mechanism as the 2-bulb system. MY 2000-2001 S 2000 models with 2-bulb high intensity discharge headlights also have different electrical circuits for the headlights and do not experience the same failure mechanism. Honda introduced the 4-bulb headlight system in CR-V in MY 2005, in Pilot in MY 2006, and in Civic in MY 2004.

On March 29, 2012 Honda submitted a defect information report (DIR) to recall 554,428 vehicles, including MY 2002-2004 CR-V and MY 2003 Pilot. In the DIR, Honda stated that tension from the combination switch wiring harness to the electrical terminal for the low beam headlight circuit could cause a small amount of motion as the combination switch was operated. This motion, over time, can wear the surface of the terminal creating copper oxide, increasing electrical resistance, which may cause the terminal to melt within the harness connector.

ODI continued its investigation, and on August 31, 2012 Honda submitted another DIR to recall an additional 820,789 vehicles. This report included the MY 2002 Civic vehicles which were not subject to a prior safety recall (04V-086) for headlights, all of MY 2003 Civic, and MY 2004-2005 Pilot. Honda's DIR advised that operation of the turn signal switch lever at high speed and/or with heavy force can cause movement between the combination switch body and the sub-harness wiring connector. This can cause wear and continued movement can create copper oxide, increasing electrical resistance, and potentially causing the terminal to melt within the harness connector. Please see both DIRs at <http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/> under safety recall 12V-136 for complete details.

Honda also provided additional information on the Element model, stating that it was not recalled due to its very low failure rate. Honda sold 301,497 Element vehicles in the United States and received 17 reports, while ODI received one report (see VOQ 10395219). Honda's technical explanation for the low rate, which was submitted under request for confidentiality, is that the headlight switch, as installed in the Element, reacts differently to the forces applied to it as compared to the recalled models.

See attachment for additional information.

The complaint counts by model year and model for “other” in the failure report summary are provided in the table below.

<b>Failure Report Summary for “Other”</b>				
Model Year	Model	ODI	Honda	Population
2003-2005	Pilot	13	94	401,380
2002-2003	Civic	25	279	542,405

ODI notes that there were 4 Pilot and 12 Civic reports that were duplicative of ODI reports. Honda reports one crash for MY 2003 Pilot and one crash each for MY 2002 and MY 2003 Civic. There is one report of injury in the MY 2003 Civic.

The ODI reports cited above can be reviewed at [www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints), under the following identification (ODI) numbers:

**MY 2002-2004 CR-V (74)**

10389638, 10387708, 10384717, 10380117, 10368693, 10362242, 10350508, 10334737, 10306665, 10305931, 10208098, 10201928, 10398695, 10398813, 10399110, 10268919, 10401121, 10402328, 10402804, 10403641, 10405805, 10407268, 10407704, 10410086, 10416365, 10417026, 10417000, 10413120, 10421245, 10421515, 10423378, 10423130, 10423230, 10423849, 10425021, 10425952, 10427179, 10427846, 10428049, 10428296, 10428768, 10429498, 10429605, 10430570, 10430850, 10434239, 10434342, 10434380, 10435356, 10435593, 10435556, 10432613, 10432827, 10432839, 10432997, 10433591, 10436192, 10436586, 10437276, 10438009, 10439653, 10439025, 10440313, 10440828, 10441312, 10442097, 10442724, 10442838, 10445070, 10447729, 10449711, 10451536, 10453123, 10452975.

**MY 2003-2005 Pilot (13)**

10321231, 10276863, 10234095, 10312202, 10412341, 10436132, 10453673, 10454230, 10454700, 1046260, 10467161, 10464288, 10471569.

**MY 2002<sup>1</sup>-2003 Civic (25)**

10399988, 10370364, 10365250, 10361190, 10342507, 10281713, 10251832, 10245445, 10242384, 10229307, 10216577, 10208187, 10204321, 10180618, 10169834, 10299059, 10416641, 10424322, 10433076, 10439020, 10443189, 10443936, 10445123, 10451155, 10461703.

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<sup>1</sup> Not included in safety recall 04V-086