



October 27, 2004

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 5321
Washington, D.C. 20580

04V-524
(3 pages)

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

The following information is submitted pursuant to the requirements of 49 CFR 573.8 as it applies to a determination by General Motors of a safety defect involving certain 2003 Chevrolet Cavalier and Pontiac Sunfire model vehicles.

573.8(c)(1): Chevrolet and Pontiac Division of General Motors Corporation

573.8(c)(2)(3)(4): This information is shown on the attached sheet.

573.8(c)(5): General Motors has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain 2003 Chevrolet Cavalier and Pontiac Sunfire model vehicles. Some of these vehicles were produced without the required dielectric grease being applied to the rear light bulb socket assemblies. Absence of the grease in these vehicles can result in electrical arcing between the light bulb major filament contact and the socket terminal that can render the stop and turn signal bulb inoperative. An inoperative rear turn signal lamp will not convey the driver's intention to turn to drivers in following vehicles. If a stop lamp is inoperative, indication of brake application to a following vehicle will be reduced, although during braking, warning to the rear of the vehicle will be conveyed by the remaining functional stop lamp and the center high-mounted stop lamp (CHMSL).

573.8(c)(6): In February 2003, a Problem Resolution Tracking System (PRTS) issue was initiated to reduce warranty for bulbs used on J Car rear turn signal/brake/tail lamps. A General Motors Warranty Engineer identified that dielectric grease was used in the rear lamp bulb sockets of J Car vehicles prior to the 2003 MY to dissipate heat and prevent melting of the socket material or electrical arcing of the bulb contact. Without the grease, temperatures at the bulb-socket interface that exceed the thermal limitations of the socket material could cause the socket to deform permanently. Deformation of the socket material could reduce the contact pressure between the socket terminal and the bulb contact, and create a potential for electrical arcing of the bulb contact. The supplier, Guide Lighting Technologies, suspended the use of the dielectric grease in the bulb socket assemblies for the 2003 model year.

On June 6, 2003, Guide Lighting Technologies resumed producing bulb socket assemblies with the dielectric grease. On June 9, 2003, Lordstown Assembly and Ramos Arizpe Assembly began using the greased sockets received from Guide Lighting Technologies in production.

On May 27, 2004, General Motors received a Preliminary Evaluation investigation request from the NHTSA. On September 28, 2004, GM received an Engineering Analysis request from the NHTSA. On October 7, 2004, Product Investigations presented the issue to the FPE Director. The GMNA Senior Management Committee reviewed the issue and on October 20, 2004, the Field Action Decision Committee decided to conduct a safety recall.

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573.6(c)(8): Dealers will inspect/replace the rear lamp bulb socket assemblies on all involved vehicles.

Pursuant to 577.11(e), GM will provide reimbursement to owners for repairs completed on or before ten days after the owner mailing is completed, according to the plan submitted on January 16, 2003.

573.6(c)(9): GM will provide a draft copy of the bulletin and owner letter along with the release and mailing dates when available.

Sincerely,



Gay P. Kent

Director

Product Investigations

2166 - 04083
Attachments

579.6(c)(2)(3),(4)

**VEHICLES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY MAKE, MODEL, AND MODEL YEAR
PLUS INCLUSIVE DATES OF MANUFACTURE**

<u>MAKE</u>	<u>MODEL SERIES</u>	<u>MODEL YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER INVOLVED</u>	<u>INCLUSIVE MANUFACTURING DATES (FROM) (TO)</u>		<u>DESCRIPTIVE INFO. TO PROPERLY IDENT. VEH.</u>	<u>EST. NO. W/CONDITION</u>
Chevrolet	J	2003	216,228	04/2002	08/2003	Cavaller	*Unknown
Pontiac	J	2003	37,797	04/2002	08/2003	Sunfire	*
		GM Total:	256,025				

* All affected vehicles will be corrected.

2168/04083