

Dealer TO: ALL CHEVROLET DEALERS

Salutation:

**ATTENTION: DEALER OPERATOR, GENERAL MANAGER, SALES MANAGER, USED
CAR MANAGER, SERVICE MANAGER, PARTS MANAGER AND WARRANTY ADMINISTRATOR**

**GM SERVICE AND PARTS OPERATIONS
DCS1178
URGENT - DISTRIBUTE IMMEDIATELY**

Date: April 20, 2004

**Subject: Upcoming Safety Recalls
04027 / Seat Belt Lower Anchorage
04030 / Antilock Brake System**

Models: 2004 Chevrolet Malibu

To: All Chevrolet Dealers

**Attention: Dealer Operator, General Manager, Sales Manager, Used Car Manager,
Service Manager, Parts Manager and Warranty Administrator**

The media may report that General Motors will be recalling approximately 108,000 Chevrolet Malibus to fix a seat belt anchor that may detach in a severe side impact crash and an antilock brake system (ABS) that could inadvertently activate during braking as the vehicle reaches about 3 MPH.

The models involved are certain 2004 Chevrolet Malibu vehicles built between May 2003 and March 2004. Of the total, approximately 95,000 of the vehicles are in the U.S. and 8,300 are in Canada. The rest are outside these countries.

The detachment of the seat belt could affect the driver if the vehicle rolls over or has a second impact. Unexpected ABS activation could increase stopping distance up to about 11 feet depending on the grade of the road.

To correct these conditions, Chevrolet dealers will insert a retainer in the seat belt anchor and, in about 73,000 of these vehicles, reprogram the ABS controller. The repairs will be performed at no cost to the customers.

Due to parts availability, GM plans to notify customers about these recalls in June of this year. GMVIS information will not be available until the recalls are formally announced.

Attached below are some potential questions and answers to assist in responding to customer inquiries.

Please contact the GM Dealer Business Center at 1-888-414-6322

(Prompt #3) if you have questions about this message.

**PLEASE DOUBLE CLICK ON THE ICONS BELOW
THEN SINGLE CLICK ON THE LAUNCH BUTTONS**

TO VIEW OR PRINT THE ATTACHMENTS

(See attached file: ABS Questions and Answers.pdf)

(See attached file: Seat Belt Questions and Answers.pdf)

END OF MESSAGE

GM SERVICE AND PARTS OPERATIONS

Potential Questions and Answers – Seat Belt Condition

Q1: What is the condition that prompted a nonconformance recall?

A1: The driver-side seat belt lower anchorage on 2004 model year Chevrolet Malibu vehicles may detach during some side impact crash events.

Q2: What might occur as a result of this condition?

A2: The detachment of the belt could affect the driver if the vehicle rolls over or has a second impact.

Q3: Is there a reason why we should be concerned about this condition?

A3: Detachment of the anchorage results in the loss of belted restraint. The loss of belted restraint has a negligible, adverse effect in a side impact crash. However, loss of belted restraint may be a concern regarding subsequent impacts or rollovers.

Q4: How would a customer realize the condition exists?

A4: A person would not be able to detect the condition. It may occur in certain types of side impacts.

Q5: Describe the seat belt connector anchorage?

A5: The seat belt connector anchorage is a seat belt anchorage designed to aid the assembly plant in attaching the webbing end of the seat belt to the seat without the need to drive a fastener during assembly.

Q6: How was this condition discovered?

A6: In a NHTSA New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) side impact test, the terminal portion of the driver-side seat belt lower anchorage detached from the seat portion of the device.

Q7: How did the driver-side seat belt lower quick connector anchorage detach from the seat portion of the device?

A7: Crush and deformation created by the moving deformable barrier penetrating into the driver side compartment forces the anchorage to be compressed into the trim on the side of the seat. The combination of the compressive force acting on the anchorage and the motion resulting from the impact causes the trim on the side of the seat to forcefully contact the protrusion on the anchorage latch. This interaction results in the protrusion disengaging from its seated position. When the latch protrusion is not engaged and the anchorage is subject to load from the webbing generated from the crash dummy's motion, the terminal portion of the anchorage may detach from the seat portion of the anchorage.

Q8: Why does this only affect the driver side?

A8: The vertical position of the passenger seat is different from the vertical position of the driver seat in the tested position. The difference in position does not allow the trim on the side of the seat to interact with the passenger anchorage.

Q9: Why are you adding the retainer to the passenger-side?

A9: While we believe the difference in position does not allow the trim on the passenger side to interact with the passenger anchorage, we are taking this action to relieve customers of any concerns about their passenger-side seat belt.

Q10: Why wasn't this condition discovered in GM testing?

A10: The 2004 Malibu passed the test requirements of IIHS and NCAP side impact with no detachment.

Q11: Have there been any reports of accidents or injuries related to this condition?

A11: There have been no reports of accidents or injuries related to this condition.

Q12: What will GM do to correct this condition on the subject vehicles?

A12: Chevrolet dealers will insert a retainer between the latch spring and the latch spring guard on both the driver-side and passenger-side anchorage. These repairs will be performed at no cost to the customers.

Q13: Can customers bring in their vehicles for repair right away?

A13: The mailing of customer notification letters will begin in June of this year. After receiving the letter, customers should contact their Chevrolet dealers to arrange for service.

Potential Questions and Answers – ABS Condition

Q1: What is the condition that prompted a safety recall?

A1: Some 2004 model year Chevrolet Malibu vehicles have an erratic rear wheel speed sensor signal that may cause the electronic control unit (ECU) to trigger two-wheel or four-wheel ABS activation during braking as the vehicle reaches about 3 MPH (5 k/hr).

Q2: What might occur as a result of this condition?

A2: This could cause an increase in stopping distance up to about 11 feet (3.4 m,) depending on the grade of the road. If an increased stopping distance occurs, it would be greater on a steep hill than it would on a flat road.

Q3: How would a customer realize the condition exists?

A3: If this condition occurs, the ABS pump will activate and create a noise that the vehicle operator may hear while braking. Also, the brake pedal will pulse. The driver would be alerted to this condition because the instrument panel ABS telltale lamp will illuminate after the ABS pump activates in this situation.

Q4: Could this condition occur at any time while driving the vehicle?

A4: If a vehicle is traveling at approximately 3 MPH (5 k/hr), the ECU may receive an erratic rear-wheel sensor signal. This may temporarily isolate the driver from the foundation brakes. This condition might occur as the vehicle slows to approximately 3 MPH (5 k/hr) while the brakes are applied, or if the vehicle is traveling at approximately 3 MPH (5 k/hr) while the brakes are applied.

Q5: How does this condition affect the ABS operation?

A5: If the condition occurs, there are two possible modes:

- 1) The ABS system only performs ABS operation on the rear wheels of the vehicle, the front brakes will perform normally and stopping distance can be regulated by changing pedal effort;
- 2) The ABS system may cycle all four-wheel brakes (for up to 2.5 seconds). The ABS system may isolate the driver from the foundation brakes and cycle all four wheel brakes in an ABS fashion until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.

The two-wheel event may occur more often than the four-wheel event. Also, if the ABS telltale lamp is illuminated, the ABS brakes will not be operational but the foundation brakes will function normally.

Q6: Can drivers stop the vehicle if an unexpected antilock brake activation occurs?

A6: The brake system will stop the vehicle but the stopping distance may be longer than anticipated if the ABS is activated while the brakes are applied and the vehicle is traveling at approximately 3 MPH (5 k/hr).

Q7: Why wasn't the condition discovered during GM testing?

A7: The complex scenario required to create the condition was not predicted and was not tested or mitigated in the design.

Q8: How many incidents of the condition have been reported to you?

A8: There are three confirmed reports of the condition. Two occurred at the assembly plant. A customer reported the other incident.

Q9: Have there been any reports of crashes or injuries related to this condition?

A9: There are no reports of a crash or injuries related to this condition.

Q10: How was this condition discovered?

A10: The first known occurrence of the condition was discovered on a vehicle at the assembly plant.

Q11: What will GM do to correct this condition on the subject vehicles?

A11: Chevrolet dealers will reprogram the ABS controller. These repairs will be performed at no cost to the customers.

Q12: Can customers bring in their vehicles for repair right away?

A12: The mailing of customer notification letters will begin in June of this year. After receiving the letter, customers should contact their Chevrolet dealers to arrange for service.

Q13: Is it safe to drive these vehicles?

A13: These vehicles meet all federal safety standards and are safe to drive. This condition may only occur while braking at a slow speed (3 MPH or 5 k/hr).