



**SUBARU**

**Subaru of America, Inc.**

Subaru Plaza  
PO Box 6000  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-6000  
856-488-8500  
[www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com)

**To: All Subaru Dealers**  
**Attn: Service Manager**  
**From: Subaru of America, Inc.**  
**Date: May 22, 2008**

**Subject: WVD-14 Impreza Wagon Rear Gate Stay Stud Bolt Safety Recall**

Subaru of America, Inc. has initiated a voluntary Safety Recall to inspect and possibly perform repairs to the rear gate stay stud bolts and welded nuts on approximately 36,791 2002 and 2003MY Impreza wagons. Campaign code WVD-14 has been assigned to this Safety Recall.

Affected vehicles may have been manufactured with tailgate stays (also known as tailgate struts) that were inadequately tightened during production. The left and right tailgate stays are designed to support the tailgate when it is placed in an upright position. Each is connected to the tailgate by means of a stud bolt that is attached directly to a welded nut located within the tailgate. If one or both of the stud bolts were inadequately tightened, the loose stud bolt may put unintended stress at the area around the welded nut. Over time and after repeated tailgate operation (opening and closing), this condition could result in the welded nut, along with the tailgate stay, separating and detaching from the tailgate causing the tailgate to close unexpectedly.

There is a safety risk associated with this condition. If an affected stud bolt attaching nut were to detach from the tailgate, the tailgate stay would separate from its mounting position and cause the tailgate to drop unexpectedly. For persons underneath or near the tailgate, there is a possibility that the quickly closing tailgate may hit them and potentially cause personal injury.

This recall will involve the inspection of rear gate stay stud bolts for proper tightening torque. Based on the product investigation, the number of affected vehicles produced with insufficiently tightened rear gate stay stud bolts is expected to be very low. In some instances, replacement of one or both welded nuts along with both rear gate stays and stud bolts may be necessary. Please refer to the Service Procedure section of the Recall / Campaign bulletin for more details. The bulletin is available on <http://techinfo.subaru.com>.

**General information concerning this Safety Recall:**

- Campaign Bulletin WVD-14 has been posted on <http://techinfo.subaru.com>. The bulletin contains additional information concerning identification of affected vehicles, repair procedure, repair parts and claim submission procedures.

**(Continued)**

**General information concerning this Safety Recall (Continued):**

- Enclosed is your dealer affected VIN list along with a supply of campaign completion labels.

The enclosed VIN lists have been created and “dealerized” as follows:

- Original owners are assigned to the original selling dealer when their current address is within a 100 mile radius of that dealer.
- If the original selling dealer code was found to be inactive, the VIN has been assigned to the nearest active dealer.
- For any new owners or when original owners live more than 100 miles from the original selling dealer, the VIN has been assigned to the nearest active dealer.

**Important: The enclosed dealer report provides lists of VIN’s that include owner name and address information. This information will enable dealers to follow-up with owners of potentially affected vehicles. These listings contain owners’ names and addresses obtained from State Motor Vehicle Registration Records. The use of such motor vehicle registration data for any other purpose is unlawful. Accordingly, dealers are urged to limit the use of this listing only for the purpose of completion of this Safety Recall.**

- Owner notification letters will be mailed on or around June 2, 2008.
- Repair parts - The number of affected vehicles requiring a repair kit is estimated to be very low. Therefore, it will not be necessary for dealers to stock order this part. It will only be necessary to order the kit for vehicles that have been inspected and confirmed to require replacement of one or both rear gate stay welded nuts.

**Dealers should always confirm vehicle coverage by using the Vehicle Coverage Inquiry in the Dealer Communication System.**

**ATTENTION:**  
 GENERAL MANAGER   
 PARTS MANAGER   
 CLAIMS PERSONNEL   
 SERVICE MANAGER

IMPORTANT - All Service Personnel Should Read and Initial in the boxes provided, right.


QUALITY DRIVEN® SERVICE



**SUBARU**

**PRODUCT CAMPAIGN BULLETIN**

**APPLICABILITY:** 2002-2003 MY Subaru Impreza Wagon  
**SUBJECT:** Rear Gate Stays

**NUMBER:** WVD-14  
**DATE:** May 2008

**INTRODUCTION**

Subaru of America, Inc. has determined that certain 2002–2003 MY Subaru Impreza station wagons may have been manufactured with tailgate stays (also known as tailgate struts) that were inadequately tightened during production. The left and right tailgate stays are designed to support the tailgate when it is placed in an upright position. Each is connected to the tailgate by means of a stud bolt that is attached directly to a welded nut located within the tailgate. If one or both of the stud bolts were inadequately tightened, the loose stud bolt may put unintended stress at the area around the welded nut. Over time and after repeated tailgate operation (opening and closing), this condition could result in the welded nut, along with the tailgate stay, separating and detaching from the tailgate causing the tailgate to close unexpectedly.

There is a safety risk associated with this condition. If an affected stud bolt attaching nut were to detach from the tailgate, the tailgate stay would separate from its mounting position and cause the tailgate to drop unexpectedly. For persons underneath or near the tailgate, there is a possibility that the quickly closing tailgate may hit them and potentially cause personal injury.

This recall will involve the inspection of rear gate stay stud bolts for proper tightening torque. Based on the product investigation, the number of affected vehicles produced with insufficiently tightened rear gate stay stud bolts is expected to be very low. In some instances, replacement of one or both welded nuts along with both rear gate stays and stud bolts may be necessary. Please refer to the Service Procedure section of this bulletin for more details.

**AFFECTED VEHICLES**

- 2002-2003MY Subaru Impreza Wagon.

Potentially affected vehicles are identified in the VIN range chart below. Prior to performing repairs, confirm coverage for potentially affected vehicles by using the Vehicle Coverage Inquiry in the Dealer Communication System (DCS).

MODEL		FROM	TO
2002MY	Impreza Wagon	2*800021	2*837226
2003MY	Impreza Wagon	3*800001	3*807609

*\*Various Characters may occupy this position*

*continued...*

**CAUTION: VEHICLE SERVICING PERFORMED BY UNTRAINED PERSONS COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY TO THOSE PERSONS OR TO OTHERS.**  
 Subaru Service Bulletins are intended for use by professional technicians ONLY. They are written to inform those technicians of conditions that may occur in some vehicles, or to provide information that could assist in the proper servicing of the vehicle. Properly trained technicians have the equipment, tools, safety instructions, and know-how to do the job correctly and safely. If a condition is described, DO NOT assume that this Service Bulletin applies to your vehicle, or that your vehicle will have that condition.



## OWNER NOTIFICATION

SOA will prepare and mail Owner Notification Letters to owners of affected vehicles on or around June 2, 2008.

A copy of the Owner Notification Letter is included at the end of this bulletin.

## DEALER PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITY

Dealers should promptly perform the applicable service procedures defined in this bulletin to correct all affected vehicles in their inventory (new, used, demo). Additionally, whenever a vehicle subject to this recall is taken into dealer new or used inventory, or is in the dealership for service, necessary steps should be taken to ensure the recall correction has been made before selling or releasing the vehicle.

New or used vehicles listed in a recall/campaign that are in dealer stock must be:

- Immediately identified.
- Tagged or otherwise marked to prevent their delivery or use prior to inspection and/or repair.
- Repaired in accordance with the repair procedures outlined in this Product Campaign Bulletin.

**Any Authorized Subaru Dealer failing to perform the applicable service procedures defined in this bulletin to correct all affected vehicles in their inventory (new, used, demo) prior to the vehicle being placed in service may be subject to civil penalties of up to \$5,000 per violation (i.e., for each vehicle), as provided in 49 USC §30165(a) of the Safety Act, and will also be in breach of the Subaru Dealer Agreement.**

## PARTS INFORMATION

### **Please Do Not Stock Order Parts.**

There is only a very small possibility that replacement of the rear gate stay stud bolts, welded nuts and stays will be necessary. Part replacement is only necessary when indicated by the inspection results described in the Service Procedure section of this bulletin. Parts should only be ordered for those vehicles requiring repair. If needed, the part should be ordered VOR. The VIN should be entered in the PO reference field. If applicable, the additional freight charges may be included with the Recall/Campaign claim submission.

Note: If repair is required, only one Rear Gate Stay Kit (P/N 63269FE210) is necessary per affected vehicle. Each kit contains all parts necessary to repair both sides.

DESCRIPTION	PART NUMBER
Stay RG Kit (Left & Right Stay)	63269FE210

*continued...*

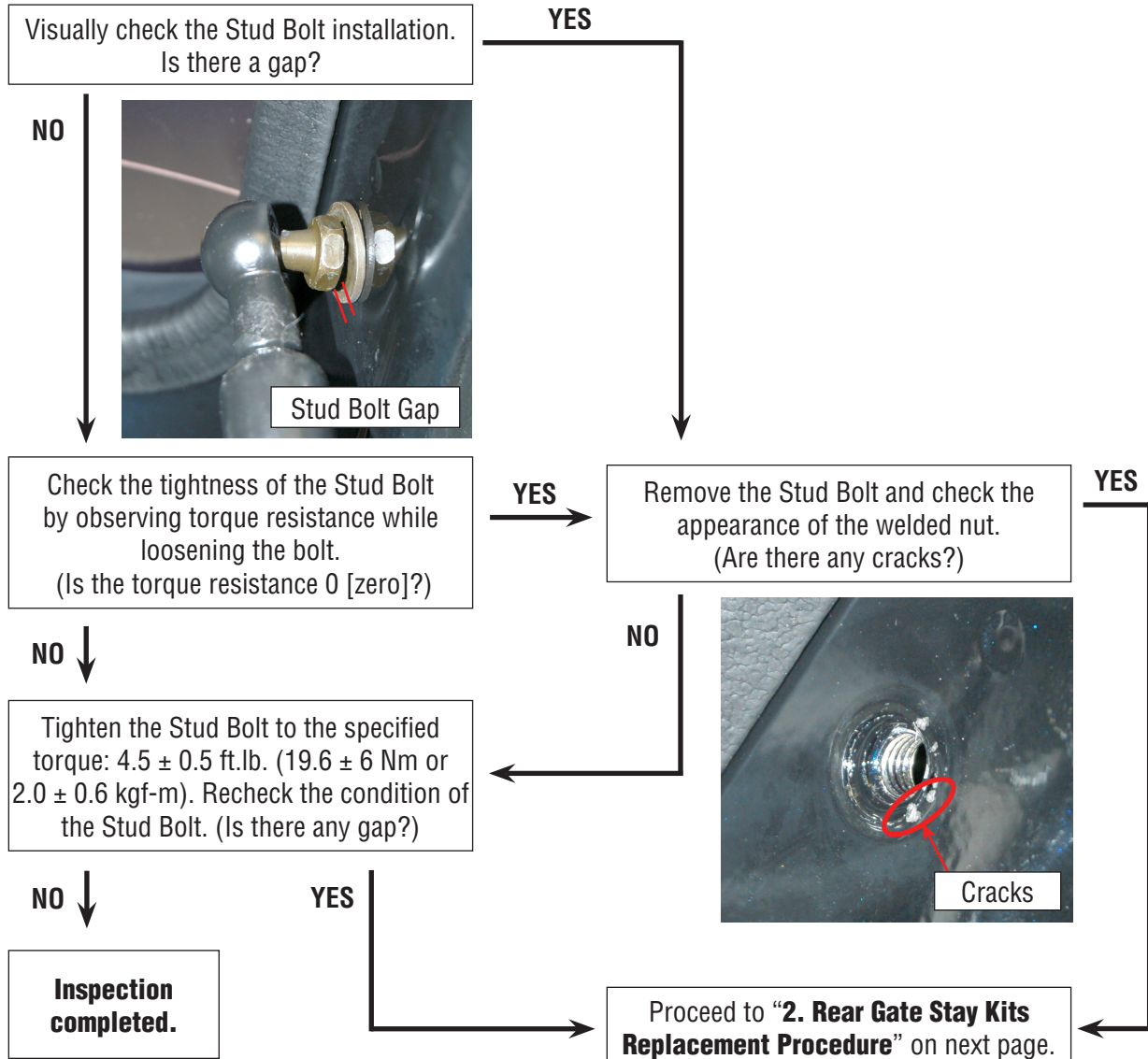
## SERVICE PROCEDURE

This recall will involve the inspection of rear gate stay stud bolts for proper tightening torque. The number of affected vehicles produced with insufficiently tightened rear gate stay stud bolts is expected to be very low. In some of these cases, replacement of one or both welded nuts along with both rear gate stays and stud bolts may be necessary. Replacement of the rear gate stays will only be necessary when indicated by the inspection results described in the Inspection Procedure.

**Note: Do not replace the rear gate stays unless specifically instructed to do so while following the inspection procedure.**

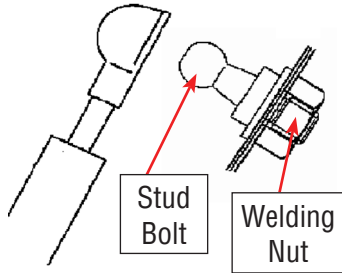
### Inspection Procedure

- 1) Tools required:
  - 12MM Combination Wrench
- 2) Inspection procedure:



*continued...*

Note: Never disassemble the rear gate stay or separate the stud bolt from the stay.



Specified tightening torque of Stud Bolt:  $4.5 \pm 0.5$  ft.lb. ( $19.6 \pm 6$  Nm or  $2.0 \pm 0.6$  kgf-m).

The proper torque for the Stud Bolt is:  $4.5 \pm 0.5$  ft.lb. ( $19.6 \pm 6$  Nm or  $2.0 \pm 0.6$  kgf-m).

### **Rear Gate Stay Kit Replacement Procedure**

**Note: The procedure will only need to be followed if indicated by the inspection procedure.**

**Note: Even if only one Rear Gate Stay welded nut requires replacement, the rear gate stay, stud bolts and 33mm flat washer on both sides must be replaced to ensure consistent appearance.**

Tools and parts kit required:

- Electrical drill
- Hole saw tap or drill bit (22mm in diameter)
- Drill bit (3.3mm)
- File
- Rivet gun
- Water paint marker
- Nox Rust or equivalent anti-rust protection
- Touch-up paint
- Bolt to temporarily hold the Nut Plate (8mm in diameter and 25mm or longer) [The spare tire holder can be used as a substitute for a bolt.]
- Stay RG (Rear Gate) Kit (P/No.: 63269FE210)
- Vacuum cleaner

*continued...*

Replacement procedure:

**Note: Only replace one rear gate stay and related hardware at a time. Do not attempt to separate the stud bolts from the gate stay. The Stay will be permanently damaged if an attempt is made to disconnect it from the Stud Bolt.**

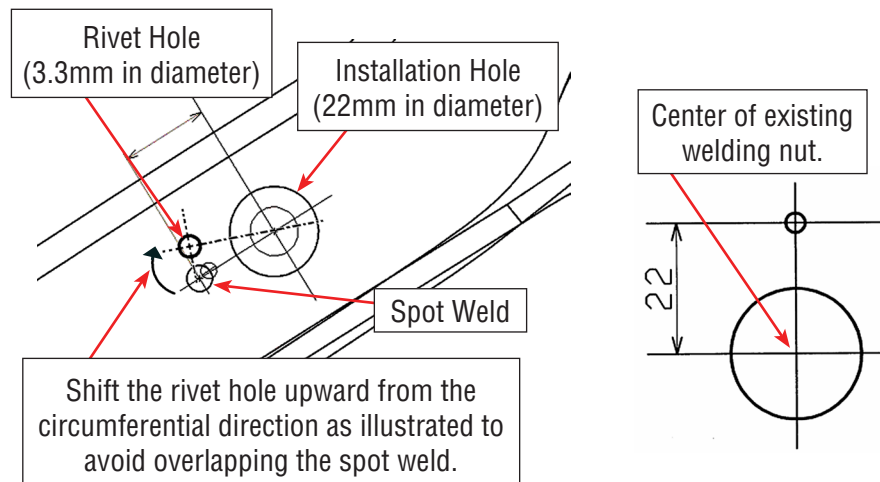
(a) Support the tailgate in the full upright position by using a suitable device such as an adjustable jack stand.



(b) Using a 12mm open end wrench, remove the rear gate stay by unfastening both the upper and lower stay stud bolts. Note: On some models it will be necessary to remove the lower trim panel found around the lower stud bolt.



(c) Using a water paint marker, draw a 22mm diameter circle around the existing welded nut and a 3.3mm diameter circle on the rear gate as illustrated below. The 3.3mm rivet hole must be drilled adjacent to the spot weld as illustrated [**DO NOT drill out the spot weld!**].

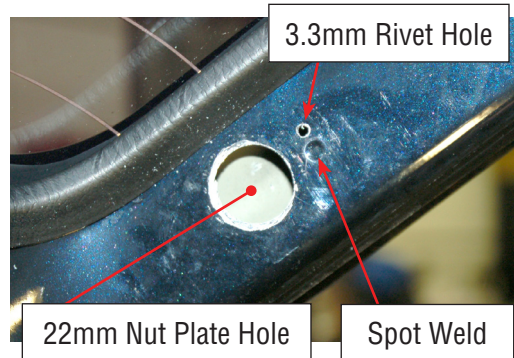


*continued...*

**Caution: The wire harness for the rear window defroster is located within the area of the tailgate to be drilled. To avoid damaging the harness, be careful not to drill deeper than necessary.**

(d) Using a 22mm hole saw or drill bit, drill a 22mm (0.87in) hole by centering the hole saw tap bit or drill bit within the existing welded nut. If the welded nut is found to be missing, a hole saw should not be used. Only use a 22mm (0.87in) drill bit to enlarge the hole.

(e) Drill a 3.3mm (0.13in) hole through the tailgate panel for the blind rivet at the marked position.

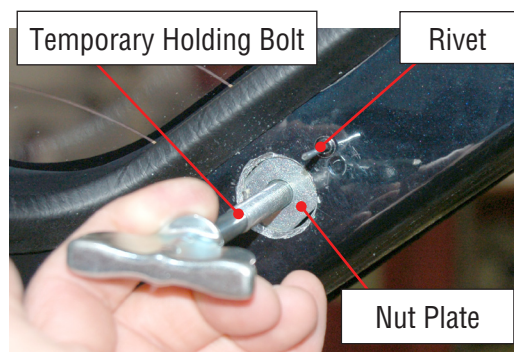


**Caution: The drilled areas will have sharp metal surfaces. Use appropriate care when touching these areas.**

(f) Carefully remove any chips and burrs from around the holes. Use touch-up paint and anti-rust protection to preserve the unpainted metal surface. Use a vacuum cleaner to remove any metal chips from the vehicle. Note: Never use compressed air to remove metal chips.

(g) Temporarily insert an 8mm bolt into the Nut Plate from the Stay RG Kit. Note: The vehicle's spare tire holder can be used as a substitute for an 8mm bolt.

(h) With the bolt attached, insert the Nut Plate (nut facing inward) inside the 22mm hole.

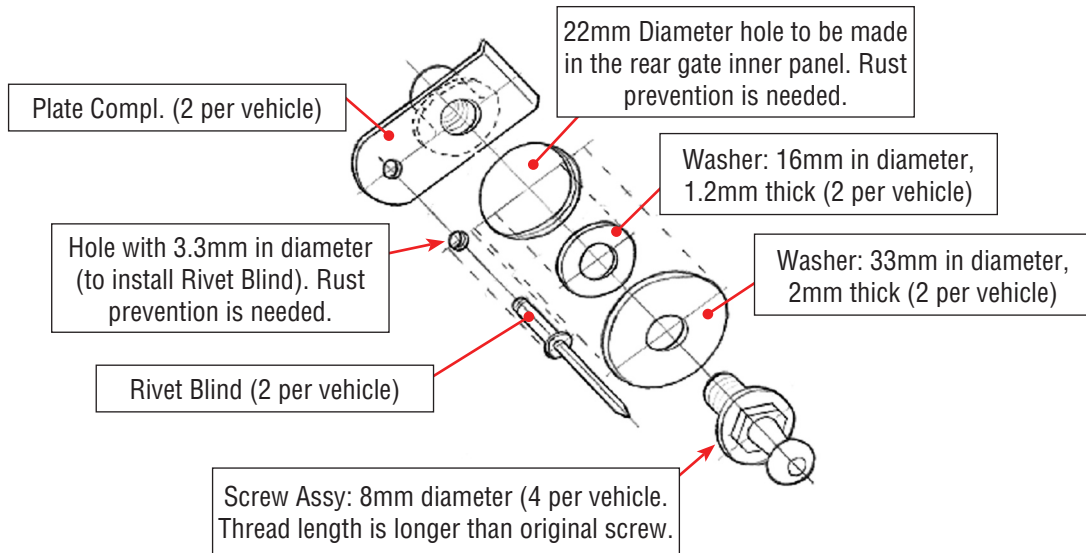


(i) Align the rivet hole in the Nut Plate with the 3.3mm hole in the tailgate. Insert the blind rivet through the tailgate and into the plate. Align and center the hole in the Nut Plate within the 22mm hole. Be sure the Nut Plate is flush against the inner wall of the tailgate. Using a rivet gun, permanently fasten the rivet.

*continued...*



(j) Remove the holding bolt from the Nut Plate.



(k) Take 2 Washers (16mm and 33mm in diameter) from the kit and combine them with a new Stud Bolt. The 2 washers should be installed in proper order, as indicated in the illustration above. Tighten the stud bolt to the plate. (Torque spec 4.5+0.5 ft.lb. (19.6 ± 6 Nm or 2.0 ± 0.6 kgf-m))



(l) Install and tighten the lower stud bolt to the body. Reinstall the lower stud bolt trim panel.

(m) If the welded nut on the opposite side is found to be normal, replace the rear gate stay with a new one from the kit using the remaining new stud bolts. Add the 33mm washer from the kit during installation to unify the appearance. The 16mm washer included in the Stay RG Kit should not be used. It will only be necessary when a 22mm hole was drilled, and the Nut Plate installed. Otherwise, repeat the replacement procedure previously described to correct the opposite side.



## SERVICE PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION LABEL

Type or print the necessary information on a recall identification label. The completed label should be attached to the vehicle's upper radiator support.

Additional labels are available through the Customer Dealer Services Department (CDS) at 1-866- 782-2782.

<b>SUBARU</b>	
Campaign Code	
WVD-14	
COMPLETED	
DIST./DEALER NO.	
SERIAL NO.	
<b>DO NOT REMOVE</b>	

## CLAIM REIMBURSEMENT AND ENTRY PROCEDURES

Credit to perform this Service Program will be based on the submission of properly completed repair order information. Dealers may enter the applicable claim information through their Dealer Communications System.

**Inspection Only of Rear Gate Stay Stud Bolts and Welded Nuts** - Use the applicable claim submission information for inspection with no replacement of rear gate stay components. Includes tightening both rear gate stay stud bolts to the proper torque. Enter labor operation A915-388 for 0.2 labor hours.

**Inspection and Replacement of One or Both Rear Gate Stay Welded Nuts including both Rear Gate Stays and Stud Bolts** - Use the applicable claim submission information for inspection and replacement of one or both rear gate stay welded nuts including both rear gate stays and stud bolts. Enter labor operation A915-398 for 0.9 labor hours.

CLAIM TYPE CAMPAIGN CODE		LABOR	LABOR OPERATION	PART NUMBER
RC	WVD-14	A 915-388 0.2 hrs.	<b>Inspection Only</b> - Includes tightening stud bolts to proper torque.	N/A
		A 915-398 0.9 hrs.	<b>Inspect and Replace</b> one or both welded nuts including both rear gate stays and stud bolts.	63269FE210 Stay RG Kit

*continued...*

## CUSTOMER LETTER

Subaru of America, Inc.  
Subaru Plaza  
P.O. Box 6000  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-6000  
www.subaru.com

Important Safety Recall Notice  
Subaru Recall Campaign WVD-14  
NHTSA Recall No. 08V-135  
June 2008

Dear Subaru Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC. has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain 2002 and 2003 model year Subaru Impreza station wagons.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFETY DEFECT

Subaru has determined that your vehicle may have been manufactured with tailgate stays (also known as tailgate struts) that were inadequately tightened during production. The left and right tailgate stays are designed to support the tailgate when it is placed in an upright position. Each is connected to the tailgate by means of a stud bolt that is attached directly to a welded nut located within the tailgate. If one or both of the stud bolts were inadequately tightened, the loose stud bolt may put unintended stress at the area around the welded nut. Over time and after repeated tailgate operation (opening and closing), this condition could result in the welded nut, along with the tailgate stay, separating and detaching from the tailgate causing the tailgate to close unexpectedly.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE SAFETY HAZARD

There is a safety risk associated with this condition. If an affected stud bolt attaching nut were to detach from the tailgate, the tailgate stay would separate from its mounting position and cause the tailgate to drop unexpectedly. For persons underneath or near the tailgate, there is a possibility that the quickly closing tailgate may hit them and potentially cause personal injury.

### REPAIRS

To correct this condition, Subaru will inspect the tailgate stay stud bolts for proper tightness. If it is determined that the stud bolts are properly tightened, no further action will be necessary. If it is determined that the stud bolts were not tightened sufficiently during production,

*continued...*

the tailgate welded nuts will be inspected for signs of stress cracks. If there are no signs of stress cracks, the stud bolts will be tightened to the proper specification with no further action necessary. If stress cracks are discovered, affected stud bolts and nuts along with both tailgate stays will be replaced. The inspection and any related repairs will be performed at no cost to you.

#### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO PROMPTLY

You should immediately contact your Subaru dealer for an appointment to have the tailgate stay mounting hardware inspected and, if necessary repaired, at no cost to you.

In the meantime, until the tailgate stay hardware has been inspected and, if necessary repaired, we recommend that you remain alert for the condition and safety hazard described in this letter and take appropriate precautions when operating the tailgate. If one or both of the tailgate stays is currently detached from the tailgate, it is recommended that you not operate the tailgate until it has been repaired by your Subaru dealer.

Please present this letter to your Subaru dealer on the day of your service appointment.

#### HOW LONG WILL THE REPAIR TAKE?

The actual time to inspect the tailgate stay mounting hardware is approximately 10 minutes. It may take an additional 45 minutes if the tailgate stays and related hardware require replacement. However, it may be necessary to leave your vehicle the full day of your scheduled appointment to allow your dealer flexibility in scheduling. Please present this letter to your Subaru dealer at the time this repair procedure is performed.

#### IF YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY PAID FOR A REPAIR

In the event that you have already paid for repairs associated with this condition, you may be eligible for reimbursement. The actual sum reimbursed will be equivalent to the amount Subaru of America would reimburse an authorized Subaru dealer in your area for replacement of the stud bolts, nuts and tailgate stays.

Please send the original service repair order, which has complete information including the name of the repair facility, date of repair, mileage at the time of repair, complete vehicle identification number (17 digits), and your name, with correct mailing address and telephone number to the address listed below.

Subaru of America, Inc.  
Customer Dealer Service Department  
Attention: WVD-14 Recall  
P.O. Box 6000  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-6000

Please send original receipts only and retain a photocopy for your records. Please be assured

*continued...*

that we will attempt to process your reimbursement request as quickly as possible, but may take up to 60 days for this process to be completed.

#### CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS OR SOLD YOUR SUBARU?

If you have moved or sold your vehicle, please complete the enclosed prepaid postcard and mail it to us.

#### IF YOU NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE:

To locate the nearest Subaru dealer you can access our website at [www.Subaru.com](http://www.Subaru.com) and select "Find a Dealer". Or, you may call us at 1-800-SUBARU3 (1-800-782-2783) during normal business hours for assistance. Please call us immediately if the dealer fails or is unable to make the necessary repairs free of charge or write to the address listed on the first page of this letter.

You may also contact the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, West Building, Washington, DC 20590 or call the toll free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY: 1-800-424-9153) or go to <http://www.safercar.gov> if you believe the dealer has failed or is unable to remedy your vehicle without charge within a reasonable amount of time.

Your continued satisfaction with your Subaru is important to us. Please understand that we have taken this action in the interest of your safety and your vehicle's proper operation. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this matter may cause and urge you to schedule an appointment as soon as possible to have this repair performed.

Sincerely,  
Subaru of America, Inc.

#### ***Notice to Lessors***

*Under Federal law the lessor of a vehicle who receives this letter must provide a copy of it to the vehicle lessee(s) within 10 business days from receipt. The lessor must also keep a record of the lessee(s) to whom this letter is sent, the date sent, and the applicable vehicle identification number (VIN). (For the purposes of this section, a lessor means a person or entity that in the last twelve months prior to the date of this notification has been the owner, as referenced on the vehicle's title, of any five or more leased vehicles. A leased vehicle is a vehicle leased to another person for a term of at least four months.)*