

FINAL Q&A for 2011-2012 Chevrolet Cruze Underhood Fires and Potential Missing Rear Compartment Welds Safety Recalls. (Populations: U.S. 413,148; Canada 61,299; Export 701 [Israel only])

Q&A

Q1. What is the proposed fix for the underhood fires?

A1. The engine shield, also known as the belly pan, can “catch” oil or other hot fluids that might drip from the engine. This occurs most often if an oil change is done improperly or improper parts are used. If these fluids make contact with hot engine parts, such as a manifold or catalytic converter, and then contact the engine shield, a fire could start and spread. Modifying the shield will help prevent any liquids from being trapped in the engine compartment. In Cruzes with manual transmissions, continued driving with a worn clutch may cause extremely hot or burning hydraulic fluid to leak from the manual transmission vent. Modifying the shield should also help prevent the hydraulic fluid from becoming trapped in the engine compartment, where a fire could start and spread.

Q2. How many fires have occurred?

A2. GM engineers are aware of about 30 fires – most traced to improper oil change procedures and parts.

Q3. What about the missing welds? How did this happen?

A3. A welding process error in one body shop station created a condition in which up to 249 cars may be missing some welds in the rear of the vehicle.

Q4. So what will you do to cars found missing welds?

A4. The first step is to inspect. Corrections will be made with mechanical fasteners (bolts and rivets) if necessary.

Q5. What if a customer with a car missing welds doesn't want it anymore? Will GM repurchase the car?

A5. We are always happy to work with customers. We believe the repair more than adequately addresses the missing welds issue.

Q6. So are these Cruzes safe to drive?

A6. The Cruze meets or exceeds all federal safety standards. We ask owners to be sure that oil changes on the Cruze properly follow the procedure outlined in the GM Service Information (SI) system. We are communicating with dealers, aftermarket oil change shops and certain suppliers to urge careful following of oil change procedures.

Q7. How many cars are involved in the two recalls?

A7. The total population of Cruzes built in Lordstown, Ohio, from September 2010 through May 2012 is 475,179 vehicles. These cars were sold in the United States and Canada. There are up to 249 cars that may have missing or partially missing welds out of a population of 61,426.

Q8. Were any of these recalled cars exported?

A8. There were 701 cars were exported to Israel.

Q9. Are Cruzes in other markets involved in the underhood fire investigation?

A9. This action only pertains to U.S.-built Cruzes. The involved engine shield and engine combination is only used in U.S.-produced Cruze models. About 10,000 Cruzes with similar design were built by Holden in Australia, but there have been no reported fires there. Other Cruze markets have a different design and there are no reports of underhood fires in other markets for this condition.

Q10. How long will it take to modify the engine shield and inspect for missing welds and repair if necessary?

A10. About 30 minutes to modify the engine shield. However, wait times may be longer depending on the dealership scheduling. For most cars in the weld inspection, the time would be only a few minutes. For the up to 249 vehicles being sought, a repair would take about three hours.

Q11. Will dealers provide loaner cars for customer inconvenience?

A11. There are no specific plans for loaners but we'll try to minimize inconvenience to customers.

Q12. GM has talked about the engine shield helps aerodynamics and improves fuel economy. How does the engine shield modification affect Cruze fuel economy?

A12. There is no impact on current EPA fuel economy estimates. For 2013, additional air pressure to the tires will offset any aerodynamic/fuel economy changes.

Q13. Does this action close the NHTSA investigation on the underhood fires in Cruze?

A13. We have not had any discussion with the NHTSA about its plans for the investigation. You will need to ask NHTSA what their intent in this case.