

2003-05 Multi-Model Passenger Airbag Inflator Safety Recall Q&A

<p>The reason for the recall?</p>	<p>The airbag inflator supplier, Takata, has tested both driver’s and passenger’s frontal airbag inflators removed from vehicles repaired under the regional safety improvement campaigns. Takata has informed us that tests of the passenger airbag inflators returned from areas with consistently high absolute humidity resulted in abnormal deployments. In consultation with Takata and the NHTSA, we have decided to transition from an investigatory effort to a formal recall of the passenger frontal airbag inflators in states and territories that consistently experience high absolute humidity while the investigation continues.</p>
<p>What are the affected areas?</p>	<p>Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Hawaii, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Saipan and American Samoa. We have added U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Saipan and American Samoa because they regularly experience similar climatic conditions to the Gulf states.</p>
<p>Acura’s investigational campaigns covered driver’s airbags as well? Why only passenger for the formal recall?</p>	<p>The airbag inflator supplier, Takata, has tested both driver’s and passenger’s frontal airbag inflators removed from vehicles repaired under the special investigational campaigns. Takata has informed us that tests of some of the passenger airbag inflators returned from areas that consistently experience high absolute humidity indicate that enough risk exists in those areas to warrant transitioning to a formal regional recall. In consultation with Takata and the NHTSA, we have decided to transition from an investigatory effort to a formal regional recall of the passenger frontal airbag inflators in states and territories that consistently experience high absolute humidity.</p> <p>Tests of driver’s frontal inflators recovered through the regional inflator investigation campaign have not resulted in any abnormal deployments. Our investigative efforts continue for the driver’s frontal airbag inflator as the design of the driver’s and passenger’s airbag inflators differ, and therefore environmental conditions may have different effects.</p>
<p>What’s the impact on owners whose vehicles were previously included in the two regional special investigation campaigns?</p>	<p>From a practical point of view, there will be no difference for those owners. Vehicles subject to either campaign remain subject to the same repair, replacement of one or both frontal airbag inflators. Owners of vehicles in the earlier investigative campaign and the new recall receive notification that their vehicle is subject to a recall. That means that there is no practical difference for vehicle owners.</p> <p>For example, for a vehicle with both driver’s and passenger’s frontal airbag inflator covered by the regional investigation campaign, we will replace both frontal airbag inflators even though the formal recall is applied on the front passenger side only.</p>
<p>Why is Acura’s area wider than Toyota?</p>	<p>In June when we started the regional investigation campaign, we voluntarily added some states to the four areas designated by the NHTSA, i.e. Southern Florida, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. Our new passenger’s airbag inflator recall area is defined by state boundaries, while we believe others have defined their areas differently.</p>
<p>Why do you exclude CA?</p>	<p>The regional investigation in California will continue uninterrupted. As a result, vehicles included in that campaign will have their passenger airbag inflators replaced, the same repair as would have been performed had vehicles sold or ever registered in California been included in the formal recall. Acura voluntarily added California to the regional investigation campaigns after there was a single abnormal deployment of a driver’s frontal airbag inflator in a vehicle not covered under an existing inflator recall. We added California to investigate potential causes of that single event.</p> <p>We did not include California in the formal passenger’s frontal airbag inflator recall because it does not consistently experience high absolute humidity, unlike the states and territories that are covered by the formal recall.</p>
<p>Why do you limit the area? Isn’t it safer to do a national recall?</p>	<p>Takata’s testing of passenger frontal airbag inflators uncovered a correlation between long term, consistent exposure to high absolute humidity and abnormal deployments of the passenger frontal airbag inflators. The regional inflator investigation campaigns that led to this discovery is being undertaken at the NHTSA’s and Takata’s request to determine whether there was a causal link.</p> <p>Takata has informed us that tests of the passenger inflators returned from areas that consistently experience high absolute humidity indicate that enough risk exists in those areas to warrant transitioning to a formal regional recall.</p> <p>It is our practice to repair vehicles outside of these regions at the request of concerned clients. Additionally, we have a client service procedure that addresses individual client needs and concerns and encompasses, as appropriate, the replacement of airbag inflators and the provision of or reimbursement for temporary alternative transportation.</p>
<p>What is the number of affected vehicles in this recall? You have already been conducting the investigation campaign in similar area. Why cannot you identify the number?</p>	<p>We are investigating the total number of affected vehicles. Due to the complexity of gathering the current registered owner information based on whether the vehicle was sold in or ever registered in one of the covered states or territories, it may take several weeks to determine the number of vehicles subject to this transition. We will not release estimates of the number of affected vehicles until we are confident that we have accurately identified the affected vehicle population.</p> <p>Please note that all vehicles included in this recall either were previously included in the safety improvement campaign or a prior passenger airbag inflator recall; as a result, the net number of affected Acura vehicles will not change, but the number of vehicles in the various recalls and campaigns will change within the same total number of affected vehicles.</p>
<p>What years and models are included in this new formal recall?</p>	<p>Affected models are certain 2003-2005 Acura MDX, and 2005 Acura RL.</p>
<p>Do you have enough parts?</p>	<p>We are working with Takata to help ensure that a sufficient quantity of replacement inflators is produced and available to cover vehicles that are brought in for repair. If we reach a point that a sufficient quantity of replacement inflators is not available, we will work with concerned clients to address their needs until parts are available, including the provision of or reimbursement for temporary alternative transportation.</p>
<p>Why did you add California to the investigation campaigns?</p>	<p>Acura voluntarily added California to the regional investigation campaigns after there was a single abnormal deployment of a driver’s frontal airbag inflator in a vehicle not covered under an existing inflator recall. We added California to investigate potential causes of that single event.</p>
<p>AutoNation stopped selling used vehicles with affected Takata airbags. Does Acura have a similar policy?</p>	<p>AutoNation’s action is consistent with Acura’s long-standing policy that requires each dealer to conduct the remedy required by any recall before they deliver a used Acura vehicle to a client.</p>