

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

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


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QUALITY DRIVEN® SERVICE

**PRODUCT CAMPAIGN BULLETIN**

**APPLICABILITY:** 2020 MY Ascent

**NUMBER:** WRL-21R

**SUBJECT:** Front Axle Housings

**DATE:** 02/07/22

**REVISED:** 03/28/24

**NHTSA ID:** 21V-954

**INTRODUCTION**

Subaru of America, Inc. (Subaru) has initiated this safety recall for certain 2020 model year Ascent vehicles in which the front axle housings may have been manufactured with improperly tapered tie rod mounting holes.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE DEFECT AND SAFETY RISK**

The affected vehicles may be equipped with front axle housings that may have been manufactured with improperly tapered tie rod mounting holes. Over time, this condition may cause the tie rod end to separate from the axle housing, increasing the risk of a crash.

**AFFECTED VEHICLES**

The number of U.S. vehicles included in this recall is 1,305.

Model Year	Carline	Production date range
2020	Ascent	February 22, 2020 – March 5, 2020

Not all vehicles in the production date ranges listed above may be included in this recall. Coverage for all affected vehicles must be confirmed by using the Vehicle Coverage Inquiry function on subarunet.com, which is now available.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE REMEDY**

For all potentially affected vehicles, Subaru retailers will replace left front and right front housings, tie rod ends, and all related hardware with new parts at no cost to the customer.

**OWNER NOTIFICATION**

Subaru will notify affected vehicle owners by first class mail on February 7, 2022. A copy of the owner notification letter is included at the end of this bulletin.

<p><b>CAUTION: VEHICLE SERVICING PERFORMED BY UNTRAINED PERSONS COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY TO THOSE PERSONS OR TO OTHERS.</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Subaru of America, Inc. is ISO 14001 Compliant</b></p> <p>ISO 14001 is the international standard for excellence in Environmental Management Systems. Please recycle or dispose of automotive products in a manner that is friendly to our environment and in accordance with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.</p>
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## RETAILER RESPONSIBILITY

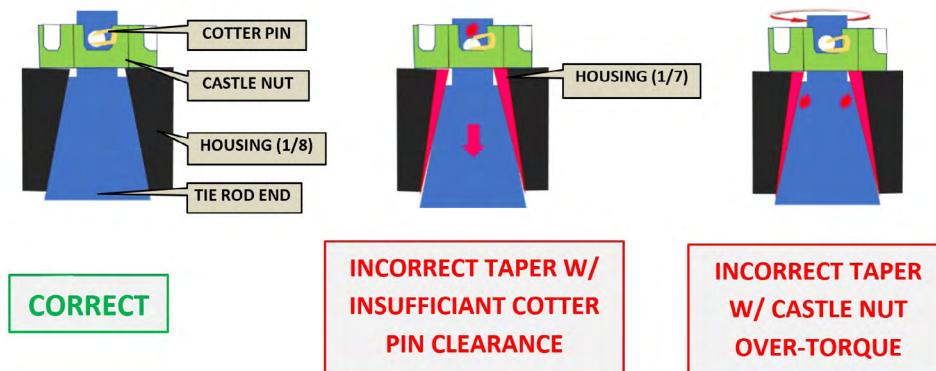
*Please be advised that it is a violation of Federal law for a dealer to deliver a new motor vehicle covered by a recall under a sale or lease until the defect is remedied. Therefore, any Authorized Subaru Retailer failing to perform the applicable service procedures to correct all affected vehicles in their inventory prior to the vehicle being placed in service may be subject to civil penalties of up to \$21,000 per violation (i.e., for each vehicle), as provided in 49 CFR §578.6 and will also be in breach of the Subaru Dealer Agreement.*

Any vehicles listed in any recall/campaign that are in retailer stock must be:

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

Retailers are to promptly perform the applicable service procedures, to correct all affected vehicles in their inventory (used, demo & SSLP). Whenever a vehicle subject to this recall is taken into retailer inventory necessary steps should be taken to ensure the recall correction has been made before selling or releasing the vehicle.

### Axle Housing/Tie rod End Mounting Description:



### PARTS INFORMATION:

Part Number	Part Description	Quantity
28313XC00A	HOUSING-FRONT AXLE,RIGHT	1
28313XC01A	HOUSING-FRONT AXLE,LEFT	1
34161SA001	TIE ROD END ASSEMBLY	2
901000468 ★	FLANGE BOLT	8
902170049 ★	NUT	2
902330007 ★	SELF LOCKING NUT	4
051030300 ★	COTTER PIN	2
023212010 ★	CASTLE NUT	2

**NOTE:** The Service Manual uses a **black star (★)** in the component breakdown illustration to indicate **one-time use** parts.

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## SERVICE PROCEDURE / INFORMATION:

**REMINDER:** Customer satisfaction and retention starts with performing quality repairs.

The service procedures for front axle housing and the tie rod end replacement remain unchanged, however there are **TWO TIPS** described below that with help provide a more streamline process when replacing this part combination. Always refer to the applicable Service Manual and review the full requirements of the repair being performed. The Service Manual procedures contain information critical to performing an effective repair the first time, every time. This includes but is not limited to important **SAFETY** precautions, proper inspection criteria, necessary special tools, required processes and related one-time-use parts needed for a complete and lasting repair.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The tie rod end and axle housing on **BOTH** left and right sides require replacement.

**Tip 1:** The stabilizer link mounting nut (902380003) **DOES NOT** require removal during this procedure. This nut is a one-time use only part and if removed it **MUST** be replaced with a new one. See the photos listed below for examples.



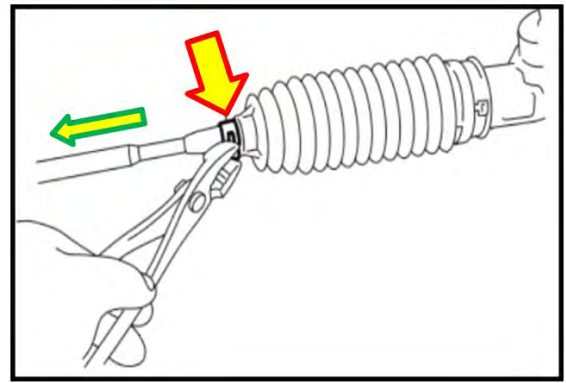
**Tip 2:** Even with usage of a recommended ball joint separator tool (shown below), there can be difficulty separating the tie rod end from the axle housing. This is caused by possible deformation of housing/tie rod from exceeded torque limits during installation. **ALWAYS** use eye protection when attempting to apply this method. If there is difficulty found when removing/separating the tie rod end with the axle housing, follow the procedures outlined on the next page.



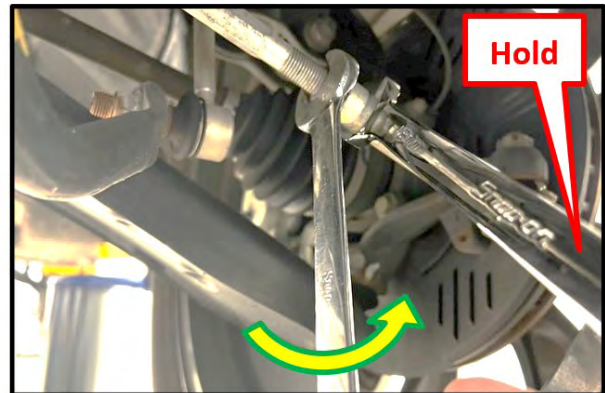
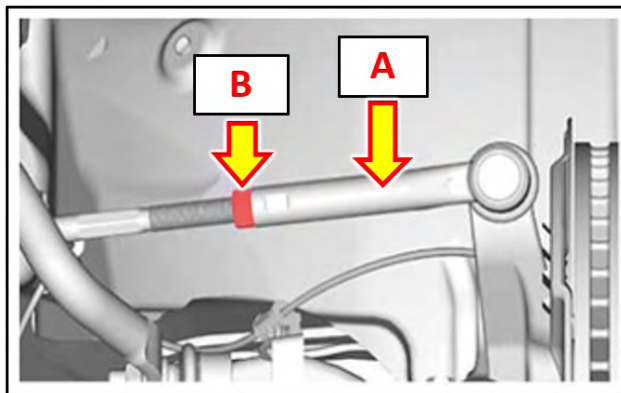
OTC Ball Joint Separator **16-6297**  
shown above is available through the  
Subaru Dealer Equipment website:  
[subaruretailersolutions.com](http://subaruretailersolutions.com)

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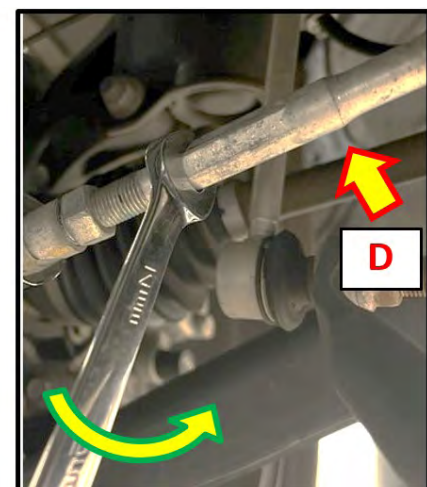
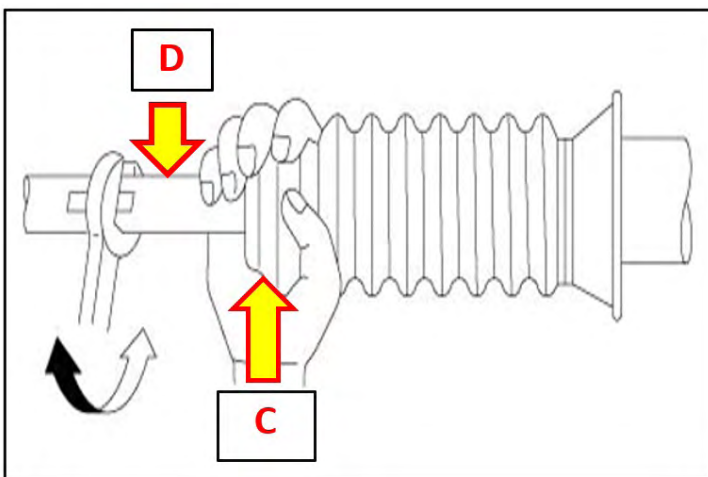
**STEP 1:** Release the clamp on the outside of the steering rack boot with pliers and slide the clamp toward the tie rod end.



**STEP 2:** While holding the tie rod end (A) with an 18mm wrench, loosen the 19mm locking nut (B).

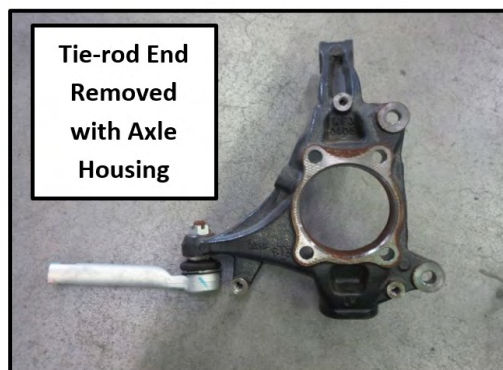
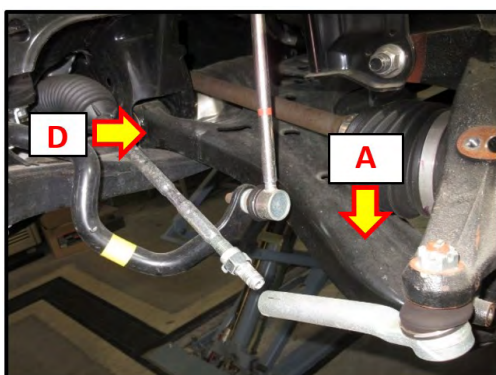


**STEP 3:** While holding the steering gear box boot (C) and **CAREFULLY** preventing it from turning, loosen the tie rod (D) with a 14mm wrench. Take note of the number of rotations during removal and apply the rotation number to the new part installation. This will help save time during the alignment. Use **CAUTION** when performing this STEP to ensure the steering gear box boot does not twist/and or rotate.

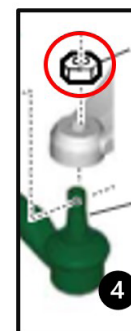
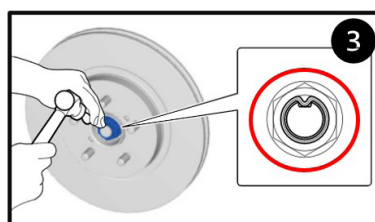
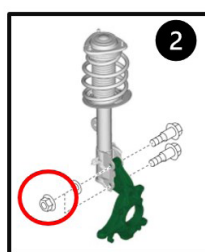
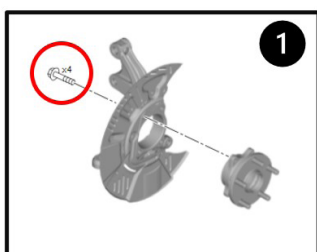


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Once the tie rod end is removed from the tie rod, proceed to further removing the axle carrier.



**IMPORTANT NOTE:** ALWAYS use new wheel bearing mounting flange bolts, strut self-locking nuts, axle nuts, and tie rod end nuts during assembly. Be sure to torque these items to the correct specification.



Number	Part Description	Part #	Torque Specification
1	WHEEL BEARING FLANGE BOLT	901000468	126 N·m (12.8kgf-m, 92.9ft-lb)
2	STRUT SELF LOCKING NUT	902330007	155 N·m (15.8kgf-m, 114.3ft-lb)
3	AXLE NUT	902170049	220 N·m (22.4kgf-m, 162.3ft-lb)
4	TIE ROD END NUT	023212010	27 N·m (2.8kgf-m, 19.9ft-lb) + 60°

### CLAIM REIMBURSEMENT AND ENTRY PROCEDURES:

Credit to perform this recall will be based on properly completed repair order information. Retailers may submit claims through [Subarunet.com](http://Subarunet.com).

Labor Description	Labor Operation #	Labor Time	Fail Code
BOTH FRONT AXLE HOUSING R&R AND ALIGNMENT CHECK AND ADJUST	A611-100	2.5H	WRL-21

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- SOA strongly discourages the printing and/or local storage of service information as previously released information and electronic publications may be updated at any time.
- Always check for any open recalls or campaigns anytime a vehicle is in for servicing.
- Always refer to STIS for the latest service information before performing any repairs.

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**URGENT**  
**IMPORTANT SAFETY RECALL**

This notice applies to the VIN identified in the address section below

Subaru Safety Recall WRL-21  
NHTSA ID 21V-954  
February 2022

**Dear Subaru Owner:**

This notice is sent to you in accordance with 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 2020 model year Ascent vehicles.

You received this notice because our records indicate that you currently own one of these vehicles.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE DEFECT AND SAFETY RISK**

The front axle housings in your vehicle may have been manufactured with improperly tapered tie rod mounting holes. Over time, this condition may cause the tie rod end to separate from the axle housing, increasing the risk of a crash.

**WHAT SUBARU WILL DO**

For all potentially affected vehicles, Subaru will replace left front and right front housings, tie rod ends, and all related hardware with new parts at no cost to you.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD DO**

Please contact your Subaru retailer (dealer) immediately for an appointment to have this repair performed, at no cost to you.

**HOW LONG WILL THE REPAIR TAKE?**

The actual time for this repair is approximately two and a half hours. However, it may be necessary to leave your vehicle for a longer period of time on the day of your scheduled appointment to allow your Subaru retailer flexibility in scheduling.

**OWNER INFORMATION**

Government regulations require that recall notifications be sent to the last known owner of record. That information is based primarily on state registration and title data. If you are a lessor of this vehicle, federal regulations require you to forward this notice to your lessee within ten days.

If you have moved or sold your vehicle, please update this information online at [www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com), select 'Customer Support,' then select 'Address Update' or 'Ownership Update' from the "Quick Links" menu.

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

If you have already paid for repairs associated with this condition, you may be eligible for reimbursement. Reimbursement consideration will be based on the amount an authorized Subaru retailer in your area would charge for the same repair.

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

**Subaru of America, Inc.  
Customer Advocacy Department, Attention: WRL-21 Recall  
P.O. Box 9103, Camden, NJ 08101-9877**

Please send original receipts only and retain a photocopy for your records. Please be assured that we will attempt to process your reimbursement request as quickly as possible, but it may take up to 60 days for this process to be completed.

**IF YOU NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE:**

To locate the nearest Subaru retailer, you can access our website at [www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com) and select 'Find a Retailer.'

For additional information, please go to: <http://www.wrl21.service-campaign.com>.

If you need additional assistance, please contact us directly:

- By e-mail: Go to [www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com) and select "Customer Support"
- By telephone: 1-844-373-6614  
Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. ET
- By U.S. Postal mail: Write us at Subaru of America, Inc.  
Attn: Customer Advocacy Department  
P.O. Box 9103, Camden, NJ 08101-9877

To subscribe to the NHTSA Recall Notification email System, please go to: <https://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa/subscriptions>.

Please contact us immediately if the Subaru retailer fails or is unable to make the necessary repairs free of charge.

You may also contact the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590 or call the toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY: 1-800-424-9153) or go to <http://www.NHTSA.gov> if you believe the Subaru retailer 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.

Sincerely,  
Subaru of America, Inc.