



# Service Bulletin

File in Section: 09 - Restraints

Bulletin No.: 12-09-41-001A

Date: October, 2012

## INFORMATION

**Subject:** Information on Counterfeit Airbag Modules

**Models:** 2010-2011 Buick LaCrosse  
2006-2010 Chevrolet Aveo  
2011-2012 Chevrolet Camaro, Cruze, Volt

**This bulletin is being revised to include customer assistance information for Canadian customers. Please discard Corporate Bulletin Number 12-09-41-001 (Section 09 – Restraints).**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a consumer safety advisory to announce that potentially “tens of thousands” of counterfeit airbags have entered the U. S. from China. Furthermore, NHTSA informed customers that if they believe that they are at risk, they should contact their car’s local dealer to have their vehicle inspected.

A unique GM customer assistance phone number has been established to answer owner questions. Concerned customers in the U.S. may call (866) 237-3601. Canadian customers should contact the GM Customer Care Centre (CCC) at (800) 263-3777 English or (800) 263-7854 French.

NHTSA also published recommended dealer guidance to help dealers identify counterfeit airbags.

As a companion to the NHTSA Guidance, General Motors has prepared this service bulletin to guide dealerships in the identification of counterfeit airbag modules for the GM vehicles identified by NHTSA.

- If the customer says they purchased the vehicle new and the air bags were never replaced, they are not at risk.
- If the customer says they purchased the vehicle new and the air bags were replaced with genuine GM airbags at an authorized dealer (new car sales), they are not at risk.

For all other scenarios, a physical inspection may be the best way to identify whether the airbag module installed is the proper OEM airbag.

The inspection procedure detailed below is to be performed at Customer pay. Airbag Module Inspection should not be considered a part of warranty, policy or dealer empowerment programs. If a counterfeit airbag is found, and the customer declines to have it repaired, the disclaimer attached at the end of this document should be provided to the customer.

### Counterfeit Airbag Identification

Based on the information provided to General Motors the counterfeit airbag modules are being manufactured from a collection of reclaimed components with some new or remanufactured parts. Due to this “piecing together” of available parts there may be a wide variety of appearance and functional differences between each individual counterfeit module.

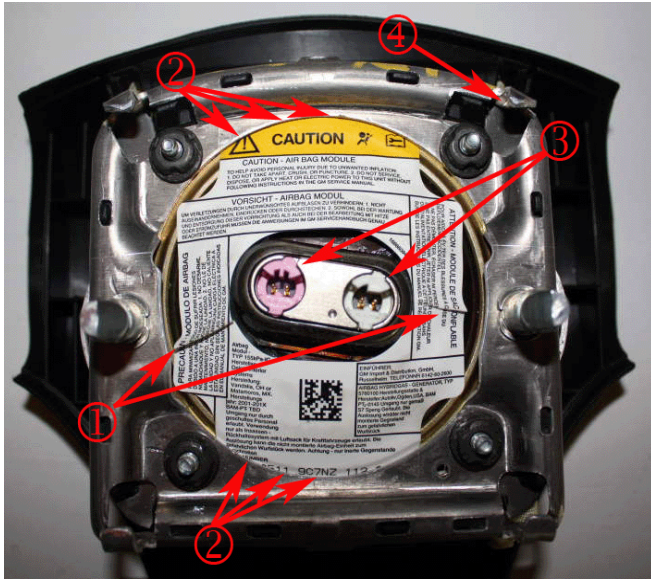
When a vehicle is presented for airbag module inspection you will be required to remove the module to evaluate whether it is an authentic GM part. The following are immediate telltale signs of a possible counterfeit module:

- The airbag light should illuminate during “key on” and turn off after the vehicle is started. A glowing airbag light indicates a functional problem with the airbag module. The lack of an airbag light during “key on” may indicate the bulb has been disabled to prevent the customer from being alerted to a problem with the module.
- The vehicle horn should function. A lack of a horn may indicate the air bag module horn contacts are incorrectly placed, or missing from the module.
- The emblem on the airbag cover may not match the size, shape, texture or color of a known genuine GM airbag module.
- The letters of the word “airbag”, which are embossed or molded into the vinyl trim cover may not be well-defined.
- When compared with an “in stock” vehicle, the texture of the vinyl material used for the counterfeit air bag trim cover varies from the OEM material.
- There may be evidence that the counterfeit air bag installer shaved or trimmed the vinyl trim cover for better fit into the steering wheel housing
- The inflator assembly is labeled with a different OEM name than the air bag’s emblem or intended vehicle brand.

## Identification of Removed Counterfeit Airbag Module

Once the airbag module is removed there are several clues you can use to identify a counterfeit airbag module. It may be more useful to rely on the visual indications noted below as opposed to confirming part numbers or molded-in identifiers since the counterfeiter may have reproduced a correct part number or have correct molding marks because some portion of the module may be a reclaimed OEM component.

### Counterfeit Airbag Module



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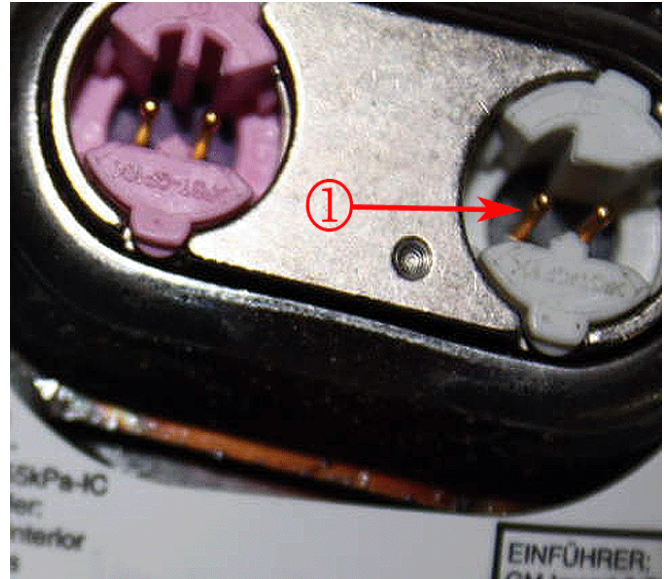
The pictured airbag module above is a confirmed counterfeit part. Please note the following:

- The caution label applied to the back of the module is the incorrect size and shape for the module. In order to place it in the intended location the label had to be folded over (1) in two places. Additionally, caution labels, will not be tucked under the backing plate (2) as shown.
- The electrical connectors (3) on the back of the airbag module will be color coded and match the connector color on the vehicle side. These connectors are keyed for each vehicle application and should not show any signs of being re-machined or tampered with.
- Examine the module for tool marks visible on the fasteners and/or grinder marks visible on the air bag backing plate. A counterfeit air bag may have numerous holes (4) drilled/cut into it, which allows the counterfeit air bag to be installed into a wider range of vehicles.

### Electrical Connector Shorting Bars

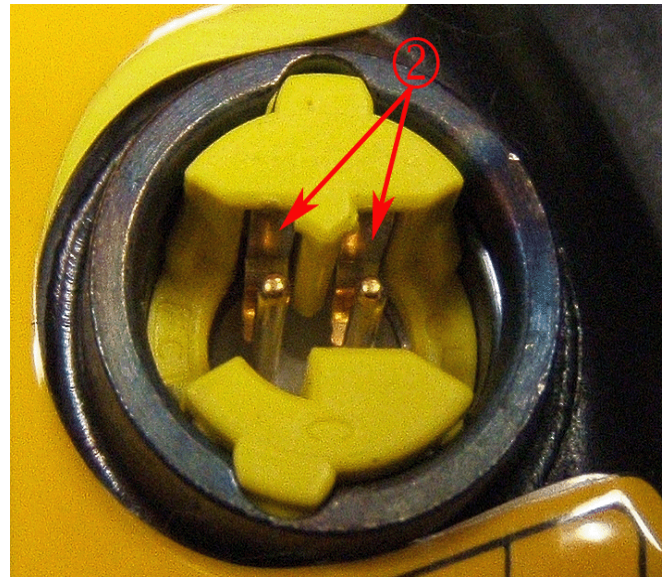
Vehicles that are the subject of this service information all have airbag modules equipped with "shorting bars" (2) incorporated in the electrical connectors. Grounding terminals or "shorting bars" on the inflator wire connectors prevent the air bag from deploying when disconnected from the vehicle system are missing this counterfeit airbag.

### Shorting Bars Missing



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### Shorting Bars Present



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In the photos above you can identify the grounding terminals or shorting bars (2). In all cases the shorting bars appear as a gold plated U-shaped piece of metal on genuine GM airbags. Counterfeit modules (1) often omit these secondary contacts.

### Air Bag Module Inspection and Identification by Model

The section below provides photos and details to evaluate whether a genuine OEM airbag module is installed in each identified model. The modules pictured below are verified OEM modules. All of the tips and inspection methods described above should be employed when inspecting the airbag modules out of vehicle.

**2006-2010 Chevrolet Aveo**

The Chevrolet Aveo uses a metal backed airbag module that is painted black. The physical appearance of the module should exactly match the picture below.

**Genuine Aveo Airbag Module**

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Look for inconsistent materials, stickers, additional holes in the module, or any signs of tampering.

**2011-2012 Chevrolet Camaro**

The Chevrolet Camaro uses a plastic backed airbag module black in color. The physical appearance of the module should exactly match the picture below.

## Genuine Camaro Airbag Module



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Look for inconsistent materials used, variation in the caution sticker, additional holes in the module, or any signs of tampering. The paper label (1) may be present, removed or placed at a different location on the module. This paper label should not be considered critical in validating the authenticity of this module.

### 2011-2012 Chevrolet Cruze / Volt

The Chevrolet Cruze / Volt uses a plastic backed airbag module black in color. The physical appearance of the module should exactly match the picture below. One

example is shown for both vehicles. Various part numbers are used for each application but the physical appearance is the same.

**Important:** This example shows corrosion on the bare metal near the electrical contacts. This is a normal condition you may encounter, and is not an indication of counterfeit, remanufactured or reclaimed parts. The corrosion does not affect operation of the airbag module.

## Genuine Cruze / Volt Airbag Module



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Look for inconsistent materials, stickers, additional holes in the module, or any signs of tampering.

### 2011-2012 Buick LaCrosse

The Buick LaCrosse uses an unpainted metal backed airbag module. The physical appearance of the module should exactly match the picture below. Various part numbers are used for each application but the physical appearance is the same.

**Important:** This type of module allows the airbag (1) to be visible at several points around the edge of the module. Confirm the module has an airbag installed.

## Genuine LaCrosse Airbag Module



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Look for inconsistent materials, stickers, additional holes in the module, or any signs of tampering.

As NHTSA provides more information, additional inspection procedures may be provided.

### Customer Acknowledgement

If the dealer finds a suspected counterfeit airbag and the customer does not want it replaced, the dealer should have the customer sign the following acknowledgement, before reinstalling the suspected counterfeit airbag.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a consumer safety advisory to alert vehicle owners and repair professionals to the dangers of counterfeit air bags. The NHTSA has also provided consumers with criteria and risk factors to help them evaluate whether their vehicles may be at risk.

We have completed an inspection of your vehicle's air bags to try to determine if any of your air bags may be counterfeit airbags. Your vehicle was inspected consistent with the NHTSA dealer guidance and consistent with air bag inspection procedures provided by General Motors. We have determined from our inspection that one or more of your air bags may be counterfeit and have recommended that the suspected counterfeit air bags be replaced with GM replacement air bags. You have elected not to replace the air bags at this time and have directed us to reinstall the suspected counterfeit air bags into your vehicle.

#### **Before we reinstall the suspected counterfeit air bags please acknowledge the following:**

1. Counterfeit air bags may not deploy or perform in the same manner as GM supplied replacement air bags.
2. Failure of the counterfeit air bags to deploy or to perform in the same manner as GM supplied air bags can lead to serious bodily injury or death to vehicle occupants in a crash.
3. We strongly recommend that you limit the driving of your vehicle until you are in a position to replace the suspected air bags.

4. You assume all responsibility for the risks associated with the operation of your vehicle with the suspected counterfeit air bags.

5. You can return to this dealership or to any authorized GM dealership if you later decide to have the suspect air bags replaced. The dealer will provide a cost estimate for the replacement air bags before any work is performed.

Customer Signature:

Date:

