



MAZDA DEALER EMAIL

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Attention Mazda Service Managers:

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has announced a consumer advisory regarding counterfeit air bags. NHTSA, along with law enforcement, has taken action against some people who were importing and selling counterfeit airbags that were manufactured in China. Internet searches on sites like eBay have also uncovered thousands of air bags for sale that are of unknown origin. NHTSA advises that thousands of counterfeit air bags may have been sold in the US over the past three years. There is no indication that counterfeit air bags were installed by Mazda dealers.

The 2004 and 2010-2012 MAZDA3 have been identified as models that may have had these counterfeit air bags installed, although NHTSA advises that the potentially affected makes and models is not completely known. Any make/model/model year could be affected.

NHTSA recommends that consumers who are unsure about the air bags in their vehicles contact their dealers or manufacturers for guidance.

To assist customers with their air bag concerns, please refer to the attached flowchart and to this NHTSA website:

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/About+NHTSA/Press+Releases/2012/Safety+Advisory:+NHTSA+Alerting+Consumers+to+Dangers+of+Counterfeit+Air+Bags>

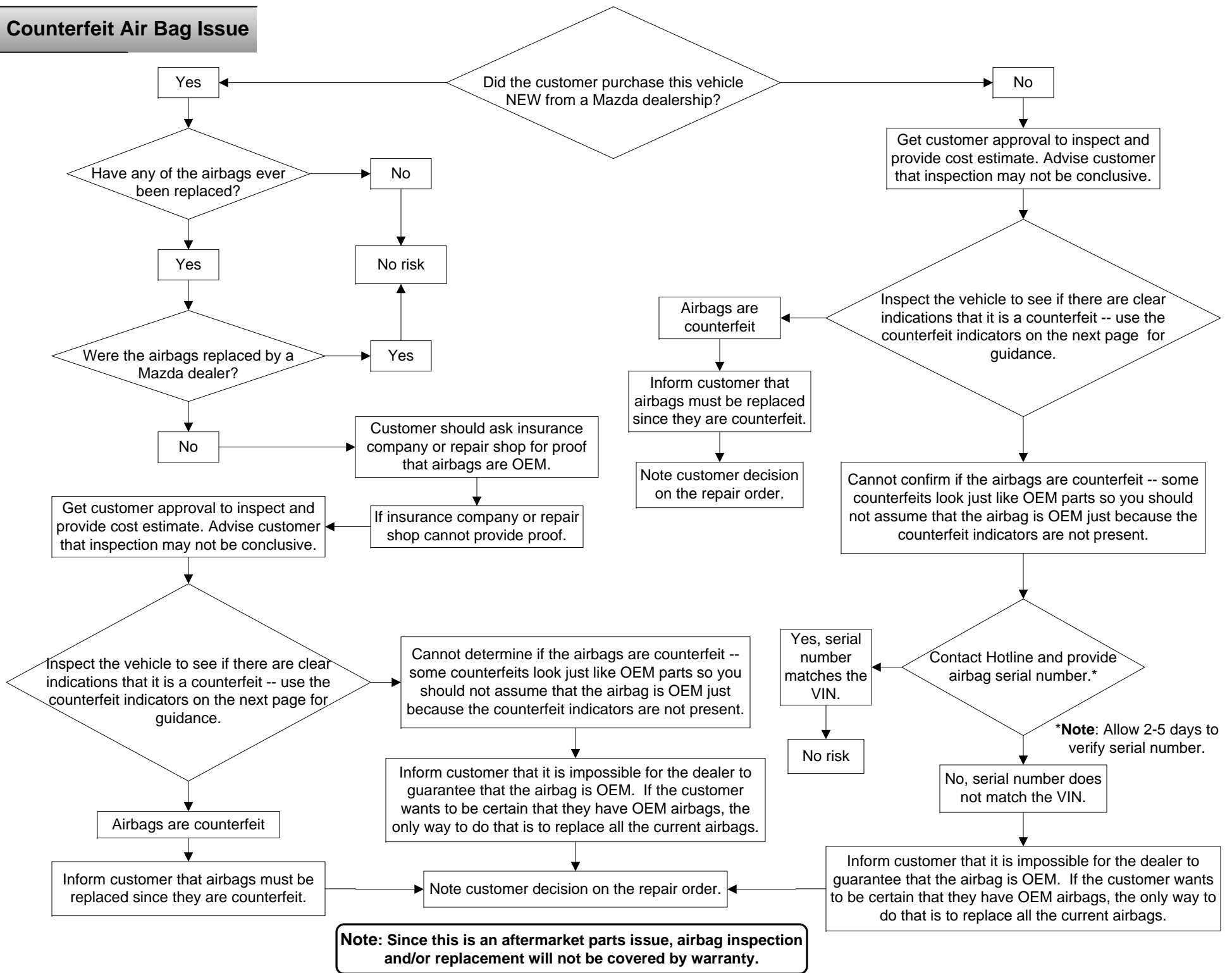
Important Points:

- Air bags replaced in the past three years at an independent repair shop are at most risk of being counterfeit.
- It is impossible for a dealer to guarantee that an airbag is OEM unless it is factory or dealer-installed. Do not assume that an airbag is OEM because counterfeit indicators are not present.
- This is not a recall. If a customer requests their airbag to be inspected and/or replaced, it is at customer cost.

If you have any questions, please contact your DSM.

Technical Services Division

Counterfeit Air Bag Issue



Counterfeit Air Bag Indicators

Counterfeit air bags are difficult to identify when installed in the vehicle, so you should never assume that an airbag is genuine OEM equipment even if it looks authentic since some counterfeit air bags are rebuilt from a previously deployed air bag. To help determine if an airbag is counterfeit, you can examine the airbag for the visual clues below:

For air bag still installed in vehicle

- The texture of the vinyl material used for the counterfeit air bag trim cover is different from the OEM material.
- The color of the counterfeit air bag trim cover may be slightly different from the OEM parts.
- The vinyl trim cover may not have “tear seams” or slight depressions in the vinyl material that determines where the flap doors will open during deployment (typically an “H” pattern). The trim cover emblem is generally affixed to one flap of the trim cover door so it remains intact when the flaps open during deployment.
- The letters “SRS” (Supplemental Restraint System), which are embossed or molded into the vinyl trim cover are not well-defined.
- 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 SRS light may not illuminate during “key on”.

For after air bag is removed

- The counterfeit air bag module labeling may not match OEM quality and quantity.
- There may be no serial number or if present, the same serial number is repeated on different or multiple counterfeit bags. OEM serial numbers are unique to each air bag.
- The inflator assembly is labeled with a different OEM name than the air bag’s emblem or intended fitment.
- The model number designation on the label does not match the OEM part number for that model vehicle.
- Barcode labels are repeated on different or multiple counterfeit bag modules.
- Tool marks are visible on the fasteners and/or grind marks are visible on the air bag.
- Rivets appear to be tightened by a hand tool and do not show a consistent ring pattern. OEM rivets are machine compressed and show a consistent ring pattern.
- The “warning” labeling normally found on an OEM air bag is missing.
- The colors of the inflator wire connectors do not match the OEM colors.
- Grounding terminals or “shorting bars” of the inflator wire connectors that prevent the air bag from deploying when disconnected from the vehicle system are missing.
- The backing plate of the counterfeit air bag has numerous holes drilled into it, which allows the counterfeit air bag to be installed into a wider range of vehicles.
- Look for signs that the metal parts have been weakened by pyrotechnics, including burn marks or metals that have been stretched or expanded by the gases.
- The supplemental restraint system fault detection system/warning lamp may have been deceived/deactivated using resistors or diodes.

Warning to Dealers: NHTSA strongly advises technicians NOT to electrically probe counterfeit air bag connecting terminals because of the risk of detonation and possible serious injury.