



NHTSA 42-12

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Contact: Lynda Tran

Tel: 202-366-9550

Traffic safety agency urges vehicle owners and repair professionals to use only certified, original equipment replacement parts

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has issued a consumer safety advisory to alert vehicle owners and repair professionals to the dangers of counterfeit air bags. NHTSA has become aware of a problem involving the sale of counterfeit air bags for use as replacement parts in vehicles that have been involved in a crash. While these air bags look nearly identical to certified, original equipment parts—including bearing the insignia and branding of major automakers — [NHTSA testing](#) showed consistent malfunctioning ranging from non-deployment of the air bag to the expulsion of metal shrapnel during deployment. NHTSA is not aware of any deaths or injuries connected to counterfeit air bags.

While the full scope and scale of the problem of counterfeit air bags is uncertain from currently available data, NHTSA has identified certain vehicle makes and models for which these air bags may be available and believes this issue affects less than 0.1 percent of the U.S. vehicle fleet. Only vehicles which have had an air bag replaced within the past three years by a repair shop that is not part of a new car dealership may be at risk.

Consumers whose vehicles have been in a crash and had their air bags replaced by a repair shop that is not part of a new car dealership within the past three years or who have purchased a replacement air bag online should contact the call center that has been established by

their auto manufacturer to have their vehicle inspected at their own expense and their air bag replaced if necessary. The full list of call centers and additional information are available at www.SaferCar.gov.

“Anytime equipment that is critical to protecting drivers and passengers fails to operate properly, it is a serious safety concern,” said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. “We want consumers to be immediately aware of this problem and to review our safety information to see if their vehicle could be in need of inspection.”

“We expect all motor vehicle equipment to meet federal safety standards—and air bags in particular play a central role in keeping drivers and passengers safe in the event of a crash,” said NHTSA Administrator David Strickland. “That’s why it’s critical that vehicle owners work with their automotive dealers and repair professionals to ensure they use the appropriate, original equipment parts in the event they need to replace their air bag.”

NHTSA has been working with a number of government agencies—including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the U.S. Department of Justice—to better understand the issue of counterfeit air bags and how to prevent them from being purchased and installed in vehicles.

“Organized criminals are selling dangerous counterfeit and substandard airbags to consumers and suppliers with little to no regard to hazardous health and safety consequences,” said ICE Director John Morton. “We will continue to aggressively investigate criminal supply chains with our law enforcement and private industry partners and bring these criminals to justice.”

NHTSA is currently gathering information from automakers about their systems for verifying the authenticity of replacement parts and is working with the industry to make the driving public aware of the potential safety risk posed by counterfeit air bags. Moving forward, the agency will continue to monitor consumer complaints, police accident reports, and other sources for additional information.

CONSUMERS THAT SHOULD NOT BE AT RISK:

Consumers who purchased their vehicle new and have not had their air bags replaced

Consumers who have full knowledge of the entire history of their used vehicle (including knowing whether the vehicle had been in a crash in the last three years and being certain that the air bag was replaced at a new car dealership)

CONSUMERS THAT MAY BE AT RISK AND SHOULD CONTACT THE CALL CENTER ESTABLISHED BY THEIR AUTO MANUFACTURER:

- Consumers who have had air bags replaced within the past three years at a repair shop that is not part of a new car dealership
- Consumers who have purchased a used car that may have sustained an air bag deployment before their purchase
- Consumers who own a car with a title branded salvage, rebuilt, or reconstructed
- Consumers who have purchased replacement air bags from eBay or other non-certified sources—especially if they were purchased at unusually low prices (i.e. less than \$400)

VEHICLES FOR WHICH COUNTERFEIT AIR BAGS MAY BE AVAILABLE:

As of today, NHTSA is aware of counterfeit air bags available for the following vehicle makes and models:

Make	Model Year(s)	Model(s)
Acura	2009-2011	TSX
Audi	2006-2009	A3, A4, A6, A8, Q5, Q7
BMW	2007-2011	X5, E70, E60, E61
	2008-2010	5-series, 528i, 535i
	2004-2007	5-Series, 525i, 530, 535, E60, E61
	2007-2011	E90, E91
	Not listed	E92, E93
	2007-2011	X5, E70
	2004-2007	525i, 530, 535
	2011-2012	X3
Buick	2010-2011	Lacrosse
Chevrolet	2011-2012	Cruze
	2006-2010	Aveo
	2011-2012	Volt
	2012	Camaro
Ford	2012	Focus
	2005-2009	Mustang

Make	Model Year(s)	Model(s)
Honda	2003-2012	Accord
	2006-2011	Civic
	2002-2011	CRV
	2007-2011	Fit
	2009-2011	Pilot
	2009-2011	Insight
	2009-2011	Crosstour
	2011	Odyssey
Hyundai	2007-2011	Elantra
	Not listed	Genesis
	Not listed	Sonata
Infiniti	2007-2011	G35, EX35
Kia	2010-2011	Soul/Forte
	2004-2009	Spectra
Land Rover	2012	Range Rover Evoque
Lexus	2006-2011	IS250, IS350, IS-F
	2003-2008	GX470
	2007-2009	RX350
	Not listed	ES350
Mazda	2004	Mazda 3
	2010-2012	Mazda 3
Mercedes	2009-2011	C, GLK
	2010-2011	E350, E550
	2007-2008	S550
	2006-2009	ML
	2009-2010	GL, ML
Mitsubishi	Not listed	Outlander
Nissan	1992-2002	Quest
	2010-2011	Quest
	2009-2011	Cube

Make	Model Year(s)	Model(s)
	2007-2011	Versa
	2009-2010	Murano
	Not listed	Altima
Subaru	2008-2009	Forester
	2008-2009	Imprezza
	2008-2009	Outback
	2010-2011	Legacy
Suzuki	2007-2010	SX4
Toyota	2002-2006	Camry
	2012	Camry
	2009-2011	Corolla, Matrix
	2007-2011	Yaris
	2004-2011	Highlander
	2004-2011	Sienna
	2004-2011	Tacoma
	2010-2012	Prius
	2003-2006	Tundra
	2007-2011	Tundra
	2003-2006	Sequoia
	2003-2010	Land Cruiser
	2004-2007	Highlander
	2008-2010	Highlander
	2004-2009	4Runner
	2007-2009	Solara
2005-2011	RAV4	
Volkswagen	2006-2010	Jetta
Volvo	Not listed	XC60, XC70
	Not listed	V70, S60, S80

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[Click here](#) to see NHTSA's recommended dealer guidance for managing counterfeit air bags.

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, West Building, Washington, DC 20590 USA 1-888-327-4236 TTY:1-800-424-9153

