

# NHTSA adds four car models to Takata air bag recalls

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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has added four new models to the airbag recalls from Takata -- Honda CR-Vs, Mazda6s and Subaru Legacy and Outback.

The latest additions are part of the Takata recalls that dominated the automotive world last year, involving 23 million air bag inflators in 19 million cars from 11 automakers.

NHTSA spokesman Gordon Trowbridge said he anticipates the latest group will add "a few hundred thousand vehicles" to the total but cautioned that "the math here is fairly complicated. Some of these vehicles have been covered by previous recalls. Some of them may be covered by previous driver's-side recalls. ... In some of these cases we're going to be asking them to take action twice."

The actual total could be considerably higher than Trowbridge's estimate. In a separate statement, Honda said the CR-V addition accounted for 127,000 new inflators, and

Subaru spokesman Michael McHale says that Subaru's expansion amounts to 340,000 new cars.

All four recalls involve passenger-side airbags. Subaru had not yet previously involved the 2006-2008 Legacy or Outback under its Takata recalls, but the CR-V and Mazda6 were already under other Takata recalls.

It's all part of the massive crisis for Japan's Takata, a major automotive supplier. When exposed to high heat and humidity for long periods, Takata's ammonium nitrate airbag inflators can cause a reaction that propels metal shrapnel into occupants as the airbags deploy.

Explosions involving the air-bag inflators have been blamed for eight deaths in the U.S. and one overseas.

NHTSA says it has found five new passenger-side inflators that ruptured under testing for cars under recall and adds the following model years and models to the recall list:

- 2005-2008 Mazda6
- 2002-2004 Honda CR-V
- 2005-2008 Subaru Legacy
- 2005-2008 Subaru Outback

Experts say the risk of an inflator rupture is highest in regions of high absolute humidity, but recalled cars can still carry the risk long after moving away.

As of Dec. 4, 27.3 percent of recalled Takata driver's-side airbag inflators and 25.8 percent of Takata passenger inflators had been repaired, Trowbridge said.

By March, NHTSA will require all automakers to have enough parts on hand to repair inflators in high-humidity regions. NHTSA anticipates automakers will be on track to meet that target, and about 70 percent of the replacement inflators come from non-Takata suppliers.