

Takata Airbag Recall Worse Than Believed: 1 In 8 US Vehicles Affected, Report Finds

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Does your car have potentially deadly airbags? Are you sure?

Far more people in the U.S. are affected by a massive recall of Takata airbags than Americans believe, the Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday. Recalls of cars with the faulty Japanese airbags affect one in eight vehicles nationwide, a report from Kelley Blue Book found. The recall thus far has affected some 32 million vehicles from dozens of car brands, including major players Toyota, Honda, Nissan, General Motors, Mitsubishi and Ford, the report found. Yet very few people in the U.S. are aware their vehicle could be involved in the recall. "Consumer opinions on the Takata airbag recall seem to be another unfortunate case of people thinking 'it won't happen to me,' but this is easily the largest, most expensive automotive safety issue in U.S. history," said Karl Brauer, senior analyst for Kelley Blue Book, in a statement. "In fact, 1-in-8 vehicles on the road are affected by this massive recall, yet 33 percent of those surveyed don't know if they are impacted."

Just 52 percent of respondents had a general awareness of the airbag issue. Compare that to the Zika virus at 84 percent, Hillary Clinton's email issue at 87 percent and the presidential election at 95 percent. Just 31 percent of respondents described themselves as being "very" or "extremely concerned" about the Takata recall. The survey polled 1,000 respondents who were reflective of the U.S. general population between June 3 and June 6.

The defective airbags have accounted for 14 deaths and 100 injuries thus far, according to the L.A. Times. Ten of those deaths happened in the United States. The defective airbags use a chemical that can overheat

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and cause the device to explode with too much force and shoot shrapnel at drivers and passengers.

Drivers can check if their vehicle is affected by the recall at safercar.gov or they can check in with the car's manufacturer.