

Auto Recall System: Recall to Repair

Drivers across the country recently have been forced to deal with an unprecedented number of manufacturer recalls. It is an issue that deserves all of our attention. This is how the recall process works.

RECALL ISSUED

OWNER NOTIFICATION:

After notifying the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the manufacturer has 60 days to issue notices to registered owners and the manufacturer's dealers that a safety defect exists in their vehicle and describes the issue, the remedy (if available), and instructions to the owners

NHTSA maintains a VIN look-up website with detailed VIN-specific open safety recall information on virtually every make and model. The NHTSA VIN look-up does not provide direct notification and does not replace other notifications

IF THE VEHICLE IS REGISTERED,

the consumer is notified about the recall by the manufacturer via mail. The manufacturer's dealers are also informed about the recall

Only a manufacturer's dealers and registered owners receive direct recall notifications

IF THE VEHICLE IS NOT REGISTERED,

there is no way for the manufacturer to directly contact and notify the consumer

EITHER WAY, there may not be a solution to the issue at this point. There is just a notification that an issue exists

To get the recall fixed, the vehicle owner must bring the car to a manufacturer-authorized repair facility

Once a solution has been identified and the parts for the recall are available, owners can get their recalls fixed

This can take anywhere from a few days to several months, but repairs are required to be done within 60 days after the owner presents the vehicle for repair. If there is a good reason, NHTSA may extend this time for the manufacturer

Used car retailers are not authorized to fix or close out open recalls

The current recall system is based on the manufacturers relationship with its dealers and registered vehicle owners. Manufacturers use state vehicle registration data to issue recall notices. If you do not maintain your state registration information, a future recall notice may not be sent to you. Vehicle owners should also register their vehicle with the manufacturer to receive information on open recalls, as well as other important information.