

Vehicle safety recalls: Why drivers don't heed them

April 4 2017, by Nicole Casal Moore

A new national survey from the University of Michigan explores why many consumers don't heed vehicle safety recalls and what steps might boost compliance.

Safety recalls related to cars and light trucks are substantial. For example, in 2015 about 51 million vehicles and 34 million [vehicle](#)-related pieces of equipment were recalled, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"Compounding the problem of the large number of vehicle-related recalls is the relatively low response rate to recall notices," said Michael Sivak, research professor at the U-M Transportation Research Institute.

A full 20 percent of vehicle owners continue to skip the fixes, according to NHTSA.

The new analysis was based on data from 516 respondents to the online [survey](#), which was conducted by Sivak and UMTRI colleague Brandon Schoettle. While the survey also dealt with [safety](#) recalls for any products, it focused on recalls related to auto safety.

The three most frequently mentioned concerns preventing individuals from responding to vehicle-related safety recalls were:

- Worrying that the dealership will try to sell more repairs during the visit (38 percent)

- Difficulty giving up their vehicle for a [repair](#) (37 percent)
- The wait to get it fixed was too long (36 percent)
- Possible new options that could increase compliance with automakers' recalls included:
 - The ability to bundle a recall with regularly scheduled maintenance (52 percent)
 - Incentives like a free oil change or tank of gas (51 percent)

Other notable survey results:

- Consumers prefer to be notified of recalls by mail (74 percent) and email (64 percent), as opposed by text message, phone or public service announcement.
- Nearly 60 percent of respondents felt that states should require [consumers](#) to address safety recalls before renewing annual vehicle registration. And 61 percent believed vehicles should be required to have recalls corrected before they could be resold.
- Only 45 percent would definitely get a vehicle safety recall fixed when the nearest repair facility was more than 30 minutes away, as compared to 81 percent when the facility was less than 15 minutes away.
- The likelihood of repair decreases sharply as consumers have to wait longer for fixes. When drivers have to wait a week or less, 74 percent say they'd definitely get the recall addressed, as compared to just 27 percent for wait time longer than six months.

More information: [www.umich.edu/~umtriswt/PDF/SW...
Abstract_English.pdf](http://www.umich.edu/~umtriswt/PDF/SW...Abstract_English.pdf)

Provided by University of Michigan

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