



Used Car Roulette

CarMax Doubles Down on Selling Unsafe Recalled Vehicles

One in four vehicles surveyed at eight CarMax locations contain dangerous, unrepaired safety recalls.

CarMax Is Selling Used Cars with Dangerous, Unrepaired Safety Recalls

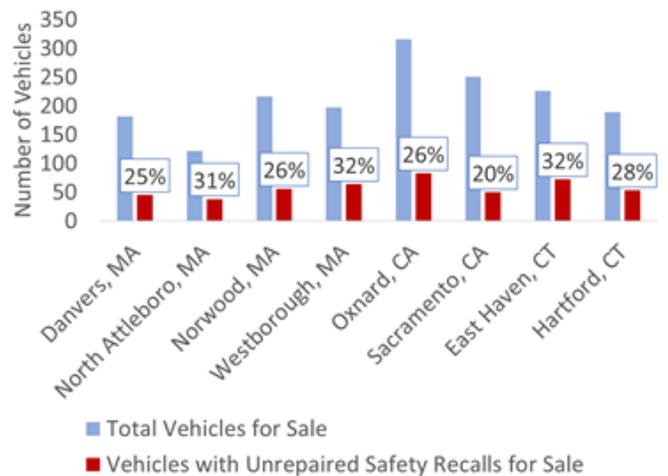
CarMax, the nation's largest retailers of used vehicles, is selling recalled vehicles that contain dangerous safety defects and endanger the lives of drivers, passengers and everyone else who shares the roads. A survey of 1,699 vehicles for sale at eight CarMax locations in Massachusetts, California and Connecticut found that:

- More than one in four vehicles (27 percent) contained unrepaired safety recalls.
- At every single location surveyed, at least 20 percent of vehicles contained at least one unrepaired safety recall.¹
- 45 vehicles contained recalled Takata airbags that have been linked to 16 deaths and 180 injuries globally from exploding shrapnel.²

The Number of Vehicles for Sale with Unrepaired Recalls Is on the Rise

The 2017 survey found a far higher percentage of recalled vehicles for sale at CarMax than similar surveys performed in 2015.

- At the five locations surveyed in both years, the average percentage of vehicles with unrepaired safety recalls more than doubled.
- The two locations with the highest percentage of recalled vehicles in 2015, North Attleboro, Mass., and Oxnard, Calif., also had the highest percentage of recalled vehicles in 2017.



All eight CarMax locations were found with numerous vehicles for sale containing unrepaired safety recalls.



Survey results show an increased percentage of CarMax vehicles containing open recalls between 2015 and 2017.

The CarMax Website Implies that Vehicles for Sale Are Safe

- CarMax's website uses language like "CarMax Quality Certified" and large text headers like "We select the best" and "We renew each car" to imply they sell high-quality vehicles.
- Although the website states that vehicles may contain unrepaired safety recalls, it does not differentiate them or indicate recalled vehicles' specific defects. Consumers must typically exit the website to find out whether a car contains an open recall.
- CarMax's "AutoCheck" report, which it tells customers they can "rely on . . . to help learn the history of a vehicle" does not always indicate whether a car contains a recall.

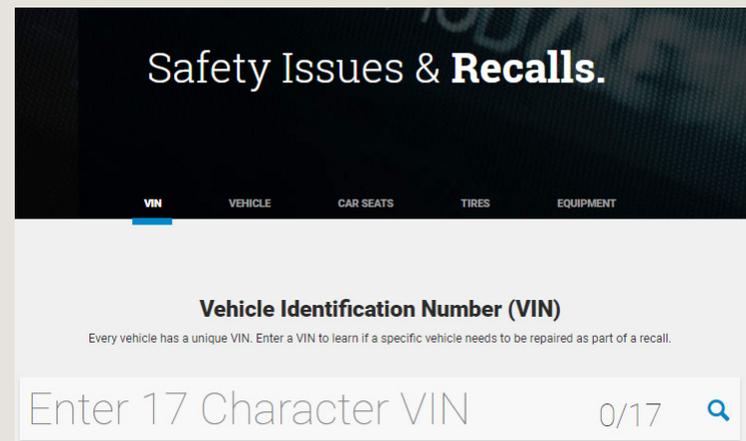
It's Time to End the Sale of Used Cars with Dangerous Recalls

Consumers should not be sold vehicles containing unrepaired safety recalls. To address the risks posed by CarMax's sales of unsafe recalled vehicles to consumers:

- The federal courts should overturn the Federal Trade Commission's consent orders with CarMax, GM, Lithia, Koons, West-Herr, and Asbury automotive dealership chains. As a result of the FTC's consent orders, dealers are now allowed to advertise that unsafe vehicles with unrepaired safety recalls are "safe", "subject to inspections", "repaired for safety", and "certified", as long as they merely disclose that the vehicles may have an open safety recall.³
- State attorneys general should investigate CarMax and other dealers who engage in such practices, and enforce existing state laws that prohibit them from selling unsafe, unrepaired recalled vehicles to the motoring public.

Consumer Tips: Avoiding Dangerous Recalls

1. To check the safety recall status, enter the 17-digit Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) into the "Search for Recalls by VIN" function on www.safercar.gov. If the recall notice says "incomplete," then the car has not been repaired.
2. Consumers can also call the manufacturer's toll-free number to find out the safety recall status, or contact a local dealership for that brand and ask them to check.
3. Get safety recall repairs done right away. If you are shopping for a car, insist that the repair is done before the sale is final. If you repair your own vehicle through a local new car dealer, insist on the manufacturers providing you with a safe loaner or rental car while you wait for the repairs.



Consumers can check for unrepaired safety recalls by using the vehicle search tool available at www.nhtsa.gov/recalls

For citations and the full report, please visit www.masspirgedfund.org

FRONTIER GROUP



MASSPIRG
Education Fund

Photos credit: Shutterstock photo by Anastasiya Aleksandrenko

Sources:

1. NHTSA, Takata Recall Expansion: What Consumers Need to Know, archived at web.archive.org/web/20170912155402/https://www.nhtsa.gov/takata-air-bags/takata-recall-expansion-what-consumers-need-know.
2. "VW, China partners to recall 4.86 million vehicles over Takata airbags," Reuters, 13 September 2017, available at uk.reuters.com/article/uk-volkswagen-china-recall/vw-china-partners-to-recall-4-86-million-vehicles-over-takata-airbags-idUKKCN1BP0A8.
3. For more information, see the FTC's decision and order to CarMax: Federal Trade Commission, Decision and Order - Docket No. C-4605, 31 March 2017, available at www.ftc.gov/enforcement/cases-proceedings/142-3202/carmax-inc-matter.