

ALERT

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SUBROGATION AND RECOVERY

News Concerning
Recent Subrogation and Recovery Issues



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Jeep Grand Cherokees and Dodge Ram 1500s – Investigation by NHTSA

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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has opened two preliminary investigations into the 2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee SUV and the 2009-2012 Dodge Ram 1500 pickup.

The Grand Cherokee investigation affects about 106,803 vehicles and is related to leaking power steering fluid hoses that may cause a fire when power steering drips on hot surfaces. NHTSA has received reports of two fires in Grand Cherokees since May and a third report of leaking power steering fluid that led to loss of power steering. The Jeep Grand Cherokee in one of the reported fires only had 35 miles on the odometer. NHTSA's summary of the incident report stated that "While driving approximately 50 mph, the (owner) glanced into the rearview mirror and noticed smoke outside of the vehicle. Immediately the vehicle was maneuvered to the side of the road" and after the driver got out, "suddenly massive flames erupted from under the hood."

The Dodge Ram investigation affects 230,000 trucks and is related to complaints about the Ram's rear differential failing. The differential failure causes the rear wheels to lock up, which can result in a loss of control of the vehicle. This potential failure has been blamed for at least one crash and one incident of the fuel tank being punctured.

Not all investigations by NHTSA lead to recalls. A preliminary investigation usually takes NHTSA six months to a year before deciding whether to proceed to the next step, an engineering analysis, which is a necessary step before NHTSA can ask an automaker to recall vehicles it deems unsafe.

To discuss any questions you may have regarding this investigation by NHTSA discussed in this Alert, or how it may apply to your particular circumstances, please contact Blanca Quintero at bquintero@cozen.com or 619.685.1715.

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