

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

National Intellectual Property Rights
Coordination Center

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COUNTERFEIT AUTOMOTIVE PARTS

SAFETY HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC

A Growing Problem. Law enforcement has identified a trend of counterfeited automotive parts growing at an alarming rate. A counterfeit automotive part is one that bears the trademark of a legitimate and trusted brand, but was produced by another party and is usually not made to the specifications of the original equipment manufacturer. These counterfeits are produced illegally and sold at a profit sometimes to support other criminal activities. At best, these parts will not perform as well as authentic parts; at worst, they can fail catastrophically with potentially fatal consequences.

Some of the most dangerous counterfeits involve explosive elements of air bags which can literally explode in the victim's face during an accident. Among the counterfeit parts seized by law enforcement include: seat belts; oil and air filters; brake pads; brake rotors; control arms; windshields; bearings; steering linkages; ignition coils; microchips; spark plugs; wheels; solenoids; clutch housing; crankshafts; diagnostic equipment; suspension parts; and, oil pumps.

How to Protect Yourself. Only conduct business with reputable repair shops or with the manufacturer's dealership repair network. Stay informed about the source of parts you are purchasing or having installed. Beware of "too good to be true" prices that are well below that of competitors. Also use caution when purchasing auto parts on the internet that are shipped from other countries or are sold at very low prices.

What to Do If You Suspect You Have Purchased Counterfeits. Consult an Original Equipment Manufacturer representative or a reputable mechanic for advice on identifying and replacing the counterfeit parts. If you believe you have been the victim of a crime, contact your local HSI or FBI field office to report the crime or submit an online complaint to the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center at www.iprcenter.gov.



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