



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 09-019
Prompted by: PE09-036
Date Opened: 12/18/2009
Investigator: Ali Motamedamin
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Rear Lamp Illumination

Date Closed: 09/28/2011
Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: BMW OF NORTH AMERICA, LLC
Products: 2002-2005 BMW 3 Series Sedans (Except M3) (E46)
Population: 231,717

Problem Description: Rear lamps fail to illuminate due to a malfunctioning electrical connection in the ground circuit.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	80	1,030	1,110
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	32,311	32,311

*Description of Other: Warranty claims related to the alleged defect.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This Engineering Analysis is closed, BMW is conducting a safety recall (11V-438).

Summary:

In a letter submitted to the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) dated August 25, 2011, BMW indicated that it will conduct a voluntary recall campaign to remedy the subject vehicles. The issue involves the rear lamps in the vehicles body panel. Through normal vehicle use over time, the rear lamps ground wiring and associated 8-pin connector can experience an increase of the resistance at the electrical contact points. This can lead to intermittent or permanent loss of the rear lamp functions which include tail, brake, and turn signal operation.

The recall consists of modifying the rear lamps in the vehicles body panel by adding a secondary ground connection in parallel to the existing primary ground connection. An 8-pin connector that attaches the primary ground wiring to the rear lamp assembly will also be inspected and replaced if necessary.

BMW will complete dealer notification in September 2011 and will begin owner notification in October 2011. All 3 series sedans (except for the M3 sedan which utilized a different rear lamp assembly) that were built between September 1, 2001 and March 1, 2005 are included in this recall, totalling approximately 241,000 vehicles. The action taken by BMW is sufficient to resolve the issues raised by this investigation. Accordingly, this investigation is closed.