|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **https://lh3.googleusercontent.com/xJx-mkA_KQHICsco_yqsfB9cEnuGXQ0ZFyl2w7IJrRJo-Oa-FKc2wmI_oJiyhEFN9AK8_-HoljqxpUvRqELr32II9INicHEcrCmLTDGZQ-GgaLxfAQ9YmUTyZ4jVVG8Dw-gdyvd7** |

**For Immediate Release:**

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

**For More Information:**

Bill Newton, Deputy Director, Florida Consumer Action Network
Adam Garber, U.S. PIRG Education Fund, (267) 515-1220, adam@pirg.org

Rosemary Shahan, Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety, (530) 759-9440, rs@carconsumers.org

**Investigation finds 1 in 9 used cars at AutoNation**

**have unrepaired safety recalls**

**St. Petersburg –** One ofAmerica’s largest auto retailer, is selling used vehicles with unrepaired safety recalls including explosive Takata airbags, faulty GM ignition switches and defects with no fix available. *Unsafe Used Cars for Sale*, a new report f*rom U.S. Public Interest Research Group* Education Fund and the Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety (CARS) Foundation, found that 1 in 9 cars for sale at AutoNation dealerships across the country are dangerous to drivers, passengers and others who share the roads, including some in Florida.

“Selling recalled cars with safety defects, AutoNation endangers customers’ lives before they even reach home,” said Adam Garber, U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund’s Consumer Watchdog. “The only way that AutoNation can ensure a ‘worry-free’ purchase is to repair every recalled vehicle before selling it.”

The survey found numerous unsafe cars among more than 2,400 vehicles analyzed at 25 dealerships in 11 states. The vehicles included recalls that could cause vehicles to stall in traffic, seat belts to fail, Takata air bags to propel metal fragments at passengers, cars to catch on fire, accelerator pedals to stick, brakes to fail, and steering to malfunction.

Other findings include:

* More than 1 in 5 used vehicles at the former Mitsubishi Houston dealership had unrepaired recalls, the highest rate in the nation. At four other dealerships, more than 1 in 6 used vehicles contained an unrepaired safety recall.
* Dealers charge extra for rigorous inspections on “certified” pre-owned vehicles, but we found 14 of those vehicles still had unfixed recall hazards.
* At the time of the analysis, 47 vehicles for sale were under recalls for which automakers indicated that no fix was available.

U.S. PIRG Education Fund has a new guide to help you determine if the used car you’re looking at has unrepaired recalls. If it has an unrepaired recall, the consumer organization recommends not purchasing the vehicle.

“Whenever you buy a car from a duly licensed car dealership, whether it’s new or used, you shouldn’t have to worry that they’re deliberately selling you a car they know has a killer safety recall defect they failed to get repaired for free,” said Rosemary Shahan, President of Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety.

In 2015, AutoNation’s then-CEO pledged not to sell any used car with an unresolved safety recall stating "These are not that the wrong tire-pressure sticker is on the car or some other little minor item...These are significant safety recalls, and we feel the time has passed that it's appropriate to take a vehicle in trade with a significant safety recall and turn around the next day and sell it to consumers." That pledge lasted less than a year and a half when in 2016 the company announced the Trump Administration would not address this issue, so AutoNation would start selling unsafe recalled used vehicles to consumers.

Mary Barzee Flores, Deputy Commissioner for Consumer Services at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, offered the following: “Florida’s consumers should be able to trust what they buy from businesses, including that pre-owned cars are free from potentially dangerous recalls,” said Deputy Commissioner Mary Barzee Flores. “We encourage auto retailers to do right by Floridians and clear recalls before putting cars on the street. While we don’t regulate the auto industry, we do recommend that consumers with concerns about businesses contact us for assistance, so we can advocate on their behalf.”

Consumers can file a complaint with the Division of Consumer Services by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA, 1-800-FL-AYUDA (in Spanish), or by visiting FloridaConsumerHelp.com.

By selling used vehicles with unfixed recalls, AutoNation and other dealerships may be violating state laws designed to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive practices, fraud or false advertising.

*# # #*

*Florida PIRG (Public Interest Research Group) Education Fund is an independent, non-partisan group that works for consumers and the public interest. Through research, public education and outreach, we serve as counterweights to the influence of powerful interests that threaten our health, safety, and wellbeing.  Florida PIRG (Public Interest Research Group) Education Fund is part of The Public Interest Network, which runs organizations committed to our vision of a better world, a set of core values, and a strategic approach to getting things done.*

*The Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety (CARS) Foundation  is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to preventing motor vehicle-related fatalities, injuries and economic losses through research, public education, outreach, aid to victims, and related activities.*

FCAN Foundation provides needed consumer resources on health care, transportation, environment, utilities, and insurance along with partners at Fair Share Education Fund and Consumer Federation of America. FCAN Foundation is a non-profit education and research organization under IRS Code 501(c)(3).