

Stellantis says 276,000 autos still have deadly Takata airbags

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Stellantis urged consumers to immediately bring in recalled older vehicles with Takata airbags.

Automaker Stellantis said Thursday it is redoubling outreach to US owners of about 276,000 vehicles with dangerous Takata airbags that

have been recalled but were never repaired.

The autos in question were model year 2005-2010 model year Dodge Magnum station wagons, Dodge Challenger coupes, and Dodge Charger and Chrysler 300 sedans, according to a [press release](#) from FCA, a Stellantis brand.

The company said it has sent nearly 210 million standard and first-class letters, while also texting consumers and making phone calls and home visits.

"The longer these particular vehicles remain unrepaired, the greater the risk of an air-bag rupture, in event of a crash," the company said. "Free replacement driver-side air bags have been available for this population since 2015.

"Many owners say they don't have time to obtain the remedy. However, the repair procedure takes well under one hour."

The company is aware of three fatalities in the last seven months in the United States in warm-weather states involving these vehicles, a Stellantis spokesman said.

The unrepaired vehicles constitute about 20 percent of the total vehicle population. The rest have been successfully recalled and repaired, the spokesman said.

A 2017 survey by the University of Michigan's Transportation Research Institute cited three top reasons consumers ignore recalls: worry that a dealership will try to sell more repairs; difficulty giving up their vehicle for a repair; and perception the wait to get it fixed was too long.

The Takata brand disappeared in 2018 following a bankruptcy in the

wake of the airbag scandal, which affected almost every major global automaker, including Toyota and General Motors, and triggered the [auto industry](#)'s biggest-ever safety recall.

The airbag defect was linked to [ammonium nitrate](#), the chemical used as a propellant in Takata's airbag inflator canisters.

The chemical degraded, especially in [humid conditions](#), meaning that in some cases the airbag did not inflate properly and sometimes ruptured, firing metal shrapnel at the vehicle's occupants.

In the United States alone, there have been 19 deaths and at least 400 alleged injuries due to exploding Takata airbags.

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