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GM Includes Ion, HHR SUV, Sky, Solstice in Recall

DETROIT (AP) – General Motors on Feb. 25 doubled to 1.6 million the number of small cars it is recalling to fix faulty ignition switches linked to multiple fatal crashes.

Just three weeks ago, GM announced the recall of more than 780,000 Chevrolet Cobalts and Pontiac G5s. Last week, it added 842,000 Saturn Ion compacts, Chevrolet HHR SUVs and Pontiac Solstice and Saturn Sky sports cars.

The company was immediately lambasted by a well-known safety advocate who says GM knew of the problem for years and waited too long to recall the cars even though people were killed because of the problem.

GM says a heavy key ring or jarring from rough roads can cause the ignition switch to move out of the run position and shut off the engine and electrical power.

That can knock out power-assisted brakes and steering and disable the front air bags.

The problem has been linked to 31 crashes and 13 front-seat deaths. In the fatalities, the air bags did not inflate, but the engines did not shut off in all cases, GM said.

It was unclear whether the ignition switches caused the crashes, or whether people died because the air bags didn't inflate. The vehicles being recalled

Club GM Needs Raffle Donations

Club GM is hosting a raffle on "Take Your Kids to Work Day" April 24, said club president Katie Murphy.

"We are asking local businesses and individuals for donations for the raffles," Murphy said. "We will take the donations and make baskets of several items that people can win. In this difficult economy, we must offer assistance to the less fortunate."

To learn more about the event and how to help, contact Murphy at 586-441-8670.

Chrysler's Hemi Became a Legend on The Racetrack, in Dealer Showrooms

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"At the time, there was no street edition of the Hemi. The upshot was that Petty's team and other teams sponsored by Chrysler couldn't race using Hemi engines in the 1965 NASCAR racing season."

Because of that new rule, Chrysler executives, in order to get back on top of the NASCAR circuit, decided to develop a street version of the 426 Hemi. So, while the Hemi wasn't allowed in the 1965 season, it was back in action for the 1966 racing season, Jewett said.

Chrysler was able to achieve great success on the NASCAR circuit and the public had the opportunity to enjoy the 426 Hemi,



From left: Mark Chernoby, Mike Nemeth, Pete Jarzyna, Joe Kubina, Don Schmanski and Bob Lee

Chrysler Engineers Honored for 4WD System Innovation

This year's Walter P. Chrysler Technology Award was presented last week to four engineers whose patented innovation inspired the breakthrough four-wheel-drive system featured on the all-new 2014 Jeep Cherokee.

The four Chrysler engineers – Don Schmanski, Mike Nemeth, Joe Kubina and Pete Jarzyna – hold the patent that covers the power transfer unit and associated components that contribute to no-compromise 4WD performance in a vehicle with a transverse engine and front-wheel-drive architecture.

The innovation was among 44 patented technologies considered for the award.

"This PTU technology exemplifies true problem-solving creativity that is a hallmark of Chrysler Group engineering," said Ed Smith, assistant general counsel – Intellectual Property.

"It mitigates the vehicle-efficiency penalty historically associated with on-demand 4WD without diminishing 4WD capability, a feature that is fundamental to the Jeep brand and critical to so many customers.

"This invention allowed Chrysler to offer a 4WD package that achieves optimal functionality and efficiency."

The patent describes a reduction hub controlled by a range selector with high, low and neutral settings. It's used to engage a planetary gear assembly that drives a transaxle's output shaft.

The resulting technology enables the 2014 Jeep Cherokee to boast crawl ratios up to 56:1, while also contributing to a 2.5 percent fuel-economy improvement, compared with conventional on-demand systems, said Chrysler spokesperson Eric Mayne.

Judging for the annual Walter P. Chrysler Technology Award – first bestowed in 1994 – is performed by a panel of more than 40 Chrysler Group subject experts, along with previous award

winners. The panel reviews every Chrysler Group patent approved during the previous year and identifies a group of finalists, from which senior management selects a winner.

Schmanski, an engine systems engineer who joined Chrysler in 1998, also was among the runners-up, Mayne said. Along with Brian Beechie, Daniel Brown, Donald Hughes, Charles Bienenstein, Mark Azzaretti and the late James Savage, Schmanski co-holds the patent for a method and system that accommodates the distinctive function of Chrysler Group's all-wheel-drive system for rear-wheel-drive cars.

Featuring a segment-exclusive transfer case and front-axle-disconnect capability, the system continuously monitors driving conditions and accordingly locks or unlocks the disconnect mechanism – without driver intervention. This boosts efficiency by

limiting all-wheel-drive activation to situations when it would most benefit the driver.

Also among this year's four finalists are:

- Ron Kaip, Dave Bargiel and Steve Swales for a patent for a seat assembly that is easily manipulated to accommodate a forward-facing position or one that faces the rear, and

- Jerald P. Roach, Jeffery L. Geill, David F. Hirschmann, Richard Kleinhoffer, Richard Holland Jr. and Claude Bou-Waked for a patent for an apparatus for setting the door and quarter-glass in a convertible vehicle body prior to the assembly of the convertible top.

Chrysler Group gives an honorarium to all employees whose patents are approved by the U.S. Patent Office, Mayne said. They also receive a commemorative plaque from the automaker.

Winners of the Walter P.

Chrysler Technology Award receive a commemorative medalion and have ribbons affixed to their plaques. Their names also are etched on a trophy displayed at Chrysler Group headquarters.

Mark Chernoby, senior vice president of Engineering, and Bob Lee, vice president and head of Engine, Powertrain and Electrified Propulsion Systems, presented the award.

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