



NEWS

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CAPA Releases New Report on Non-CAPA Certified Part Quality

CAPA Quality Watch Reveals Non-Galvanized Steel, Weak Hood Strikers and Hinge Fasteners, and Incorrect Material Usage

Washington, D.C. - An estimated 75-80% of the CAPA Certifiable parts used by collision repairers are not CAPA Certified. CAPA, the nation's premier independent, non-profit certification program for crash parts took a look at 15 popular non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts. "The bottom line: nearly 90%, (13 of 15) parts, exhibited significant differences and most contained serious deficiencies, when compared to car company brand parts," said Jack Gillis, CAPA's Executive Director. "What is particularly problematic for both insurers and collision repairers is that many of these non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts look just like the car company brand part."

CAPA was created in 1987 solely to provide an independent means to identify high quality alternative crash parts in the marketplace. "The industry knew then that you cannot determine quality by looking at the part or by depending on marketing programs. Today, given the increased focus on the quality and safety of aftermarket parts, it's even more important to be able to identify true quality and truly safe parts," said Gillis. Each and every part number Certified by CAPA goes through extensive testing which covers everything from material content to corrosion resistance to vehicle fit. The CAPA program also includes demonstrated compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 108 for lights, and dynamic crash testing where applicable. In addition, CAPA has a comprehensive re-inspection program designed to confirm that the part number that initially met the requirements of the standard, continues to do so.

In order to illustrate the benefits of CAPA Certification, CAPA has initiated the CAPA Quality Watch (CQW). The results of CAPA Quality Watch Report 1 show how critically important it is for repairers and insurers to look for the

CAPA Quality Seal on the parts they put on their customers' vehicles. For an aftermarket part to become CAPA Certified, it **MUST** exhibit demonstrated comparability to the car company brand service part it replaces. CQW #1 reports on 15 popular non-CAPA Certified parts that were purchased to test their comparability to car company brand service parts. The selection of these parts was based on parts for newer vehicles, parts for a variety of vehicles, and parts available for immediate purchase. For hoods, parts with strikers were selected.

The results of this first CQW demonstrate the extraordinary need for CAPA Certification. "If there was no difference between parts that met CAPA's Standards for comparability, and those that don't, then there would be no need for CAPA. This series of tests prove unquestionably that there is an incredible need for CAPA in today's market," said Gillis. Following is a snapshot of the CQW results in some critical categories.

Non-Galvanized Metal Parts: Of the six hoods and one fender in CQW #1, only one of the non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts was galvanized. Not only does CAPA require that certified parts match the galvanization properties of the car company brand part, but if the car company is selling non-galvanized parts, as in the case of the 1999-2001 Hyundai Sonata hood, the CAPA Certified part must still be galvanized. "While it was remarkable that Hyundai puts non-galvanized parts in the market, it was absolutely shocking that we found 6 aftermarket parts, available through standard distribution outlets, that were not even galvanized," said Gillis. Neither shops nor insurers have the ability to assess galvanization, which is why CAPA provides such a valuable service.

Missing Hood Reinforcement Plate: One of the six non-CAPA Certified aftermarket hoods was totally missing the critical reinforcement plate located between the hood striker and the outer skin of the hood. CAPA Certification requires that all aftermarket parts match the construction of the car company brand part, which is especially important for internal components that cannot readily be seen.

Inadequate Material Strength: Six of the seven non-CAPA Certified metal body aftermarket parts did not meet CAPA's requirement for matching the yield and the tensile strengths of the car company brand parts. In fact, yield strength in the non-CAPA Certified parts was up to 31% less and tensile strength up to 18% less than the car company brand parts. Lower strength materials will increase the likelihood of the part denting.

Three of the five non-CAPA Certified metal structural aftermarket parts did not meet CAPA's requirements for matching the yield and the tensile strengths of the

car company brand parts. In the case of a reinforcement bar for the 2006-2009 Ford Fusion, the yield strength was 89% less and the tensile strength 80% less than the car company brand part. Variations in materials and material strength are significant because bumper systems both protect the vehicle and may affect the operation of safety items in a vehicle.

All three of the non-CAPA Certified structural plastic and foam aftermarket parts reviewed did not meet CAPA's requirements for strength. In the case of a plastic energy absorber for the 2006-09 Ford Fusion, the flexural strength was 53% less than the car company brand part. To see how these differences affect part performance during a crash test, go to <http://www.capacertified.org/crash> and click "Watch the Video." Not only was the non-CAPA Certified part made of a completely different material causing it to shatter on impact, but it was falsely identified as being the same material as the Ford part.

Non-Hardened Hood Strikers: In the six car company brand hoods we examined, five of the strikers were made of heat treated steel to make the striker more resistant to wear. None of the non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts had heat treated strikers. CAPA Certification requires the striker on the aftermarket part to match the material properties of the car company brand part.

Weaker Hood Striker Retention: Three of the six non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts failed to match the hood striker retention strength of the car company brand parts. CAPA Certification requires the striker retention strength on the aftermarket part to be comparable to the car company brand part. In addition, once a part becomes certified, striker retention testing must be performed on each CAPA Certified lot manufactured to ensure ongoing compliance.

Inadequate Welds: Spot weld location and size were tested on six hoods with spot welds in the striker area and one reinforcement bar. All of the non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts failed to have weld sizes that were comparable to those of the car company brand parts, and all were missing welds, had different welds, or used a different welding method. CAPA Certification requires that the welds on the aftermarket part must match those of the car company brand part in location, size, strength, and type.

Weaker Hood Hinge Fastener Retention: Fastener retention testing was performed on six hoods with fasteners in the hood hinge. Four of the six of the non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts failed to match the retention strength of the car company brand parts. CAPA Certification not only requires that the type of fastener

on the aftermarket part match the car company brand part, but the retention strength must also be comparable.

The CAPA Difference

The four of five times that shops use non-CAPA Certified aftermarket parts means that they are increasing their chances of getting a part that is made of improper materials, will not fit, has welds that do not match the car company brand part or is not galvanized. These serious shortcomings can easily be avoided by insisting on the use of CAPA Certified parts.

Right now, compliance with CAPA Standards is purely voluntary and the vast majority of parts used by collision repairers have never even been submitted for CAPA Certification. “By insisting on parts that meet the CAPA Standards for demonstrated comparability, repairers and insurers can dramatically reduce the chances of problems associated with the repair part,” stated Gillis. “It is critically important to note that the only way to ensure that an aftermarket parts is, in fact, CAPA Certified, is to look for the CAPA Seal.” Regardless of what is indicated in catalogues, on the internet, on estimates, or invoices, if the CAPA Seal is not on the part, it’s not CAPA Certified.

CAPA Quality Watch Report 1 is available on the CAPA website. CAPA will issue CAPA Quality Watch Reports on a periodic basis. In addition, all of the CAPA Certification Standards are publically available at no charge via the CAPA website. CAPA proudly discloses its Standards.

For further information, contact debbie@CAPAcertified.org.

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The Certified Automotive Parts Association, founded in 1987, is the nation’s only independent, non-profit, certification organization for automotive crash parts whose sole purpose it to ensure that both consumers and the industry have the means to identify high quality parts via the CAPA Quality Seal. CAPA is an ANSI accredited standards developer for competitive crash repair parts. For more information see CAPAcertified.org.