



NEWS

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Contact: Deborah G. Klouser
Phone: (202) 737-2212
Email: debbie@CAPAcertified.org

Honda's Bumper Test Demonstrates the Importance of CAPA Quality Certification and Continuing Inequality between CAPA Certified and Other AM Parts

Washington, D.C. – Problems uncovered by Honda on the quality and safety of *non*-CAPA Certified aftermarket bumper parts are not new to CAPA. “In fact, this is the reason why CAPA’s 501 bumper standard is so important—you simply don’t know if a part is truly equivalent to a car company brand part unless it has met CAPA’s rigorous comparability tests,” said Jack Gillis, Executive Director, of the Certified Automotive Parts Association.

The good news is that the CAPA 501 Bumper Standards allows the market to identify parts that are comparable to much more expensive car company brand parts. The Honda test points to the critical need for CAPA’s truly independent, fully transparent, legitimate, non-profit, third-party quality certification program. CAPA has no vested interest in the sales and manufacturing of parts.

The development of the CAPA 501 Bumper Standard included extensive examination of various bumper parts, comparative testing, consultation with leading industry experts, and input from CAPA’s Technical Committee. The standard was developed in accordance with CAPA’s ANSI Approved standard development process which includes full transparency and public comment. Most importantly, CAPA turned to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), the nation’s preeminent crash and auto safety testing organization, to conduct a series of low and high speed demonstration tests in 2010. Their work has led to numerous improvements in vehicle safety and are an important resource for governments, auto companies (including Honda), and the national media for unbiased safety analysis.

Due to the safety features built into today's vehicles, bumper systems designed to protect the vehicle may also have an impact on the operation of some of the safety items in a car. As a result of this potential, CAPA asked the IIHS to evaluate both the crashworthiness and damageability of a vehicle equipped with bumper systems that met key features of the CAPA Standard.

Upon reviewing the 2010 tests of CAPA Certified parts, Joe Nolan, Chief Administrative Officer of IIHS issued the following statement: "Competition in the parts area helps keep insurance costs down. But substandard or poor quality structural parts that don't match original equipment can undermine the cost savings and affect vehicle safety. We commend CAPA for pursuing a certification standard for aftermarket bumpers. In tests we conducted, bumper parts meeting CAPA's specifications performed the same as their car company brand counterparts."

IIHS High Speed Crash Test Results: CAPA Certified vs. Car Company Brand Parts

Two vehicles were selected by IIHS for high-speed testing—one with a car company brand service part and the other with a part that met all of the key structural and dimensional elements of CAPA's bumper standard. Both tests were in accordance with IIHS Crashworthiness Evaluation Offset Barrier Crash Test Protocol (Version XIII). The result: "The two vehicles had similar crashworthiness measures in the 40 mph offset frontal test, and both would receive an overall 'Good' rating for frontal crash protection," said Nolan.

IIHS 40 MPH Offset Barrier Test

Car Company Brand Bumper



Source: IIHS

AM Bumper Meeting Key CAPA Requirements



Source: IIHS

Car Company Brand Service Bumper



Source: IIHS

AM Bumper Meeting Key CAPA Requirements



Source: IIHS

To see CAPA’s crash test video and a full copy of the IIHS Status report on the testing go to <http://www.capacertified.org/>

IIHS Low Speed Comparative Damageability Tests: CAPA Certified vs. Car Company Brand

The most important role of the bumper is to protect the vehicle in low speed accidents, so CAPA also asked the IIHS to conduct low speed (5 mph) tests using its standard bumper testing protocol (Version V) with two Dodge Ram pickup trucks. Following the test, IIHS prepared repair estimates for each vehicle. The result: the aftermarket bumper meeting key CAPA 501 Bumper Standard requirements performed the same as the car company brand part. The damage and repair costs totaled \$1,120 for each vehicle. “In low speed tests, the car-company and CAPA-

Certified bumpers provided nearly identical damage protection to the vehicle,” said IIHS’s Nolan.

The total repair cost would drop to \$1,053, if the estimate called for the equal performing CAPA Certified aftermarket part.

“The repairs resulting from low speed collisions come directly out of the consumers’ pockets or contribute to the cost of their insurance. That’s why it is important to CAPA that a CAPA Certified part protects the vehicle the same as the car company brand part,” said CAPA’s Director of Operations, Debbie Klouser.

IIHS Low Speed (5 MPH) Crash Test: Damage and Repair Cost Results

Car Company Brand Service Bumper



Damage and Repair Cost: \$1,120

AM Bumper Meeting CAPA Requirements



Damage and Repair Cost: \$1,120
\$1,053 if CAPA Certified part used.

As the market becomes flooded with various marketing and other types of programs, all claiming quality, independent CAPA Certification has become even more important as a credible resource to protect consumers and market participants from poor quality, unsafe parts. It also provides a legitimate mechanism for manufacturers to demonstrate their commitment to quality.

The CAPA concept is simple: The car company service part undergoes a comprehensive testing process with the results becoming the “standard” to which the aftermarket part will be compared. After undergoing the same comprehensive testing, if the AM test results show true comparability to the car company brand part, then the AM part meets CAPA’s certification requirements and can bear the CAPA Quality Seal.

“The CAPA Quality Seal is crucial because as the Honda bumper test proves, it is virtually impossible for even the vendors of aftermarket parts to determine if an aftermarket part will perform in a comparable manner to its car company brand counterpart,” said Gillis. For those further removed from the manufacturing and distribution process, such as insurers and body shops, looking for the CAPA Seal is the only independent way they can be assured of product quality.

CAPA provides periodic Quality Watch Reports which keep an eye on the part quality in the market and an opportunity for insurers, distributors, and shops concerned about quality to avoid potential problem parts. CAPA Quality Watch Reports 1 and 2 are available on the CAPA website. In addition all CAPA Certification Standards are publically available, at no charge, via the CAPA website. “For CAPA, providing complete transparency has always been a critically important element of our program,” said Gillis.

For further information or a copy of the IIHS Status Report or Crash test video, 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 repair 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.