

Follow these instructions¹ to download the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) Complaints data and import them into Microsoft Excel. ODI Complaints data are available in the compressed data (ZIP) format on the ODI web site. The large amount of data requires breaking the data up into two parts.

The system characteristics of the target machine will affect the speed and performance of the processing needed to accomplish the downloading and importing of the Complaints data. At least 2GB of available disk space is required. This space requirement will increase as more data are continually being added to the ODI database.

Detailed field descriptions of the data file are given in Appendix A.

Note: For consistency the original file name **FLAT_CMPL** is used throughout these instructions.

1. Go to the following URL:

<https://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/downloads/index.cfm>

Download Data from NHTSA/ODI Databases

Select the .zip file for the desired database to download and extract the data. See the corresponding .txt file for a description of the file layout. All times shown are Eastern Time (ET).

Complaints

Name	Last Modified	Size
<i>Single file of all Complaints</i>		
FLAT_CMPL.zip	05/10/2021 01:53:11 PM	264.8M
Import_Instructions_Excel_All.pdf	05/10/2021 12:24:59 PM	531K
<i>Five-year sets based on Received Date</i>		
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2020-2021.zip	05/10/2021 12:37:32 PM	17.5M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2015-2019.zip	05/10/2021 12:35:19 PM	78.0M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2010-2014.zip	05/10/2021 12:33:25 PM	69.2M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2005-2009.zip	05/10/2021 12:31:58 PM	43.6M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_2000-2004.zip	05/10/2021 12:31:05 PM	38.0M
COMPLAINTS_RECEIVED_1995-1999.zip	05/10/2021 12:30:41 PM	13.7M
Import_Instructions_Excel_5-year.pdf	05/10/2021 12:23:59 PM	315K
Import_Instructions_Access.pdf	05/10/2021 12:24:59 PM	1.2M
CMPL.txt	05/10/2021 12:24:57 PM	8K

Defect Investigations

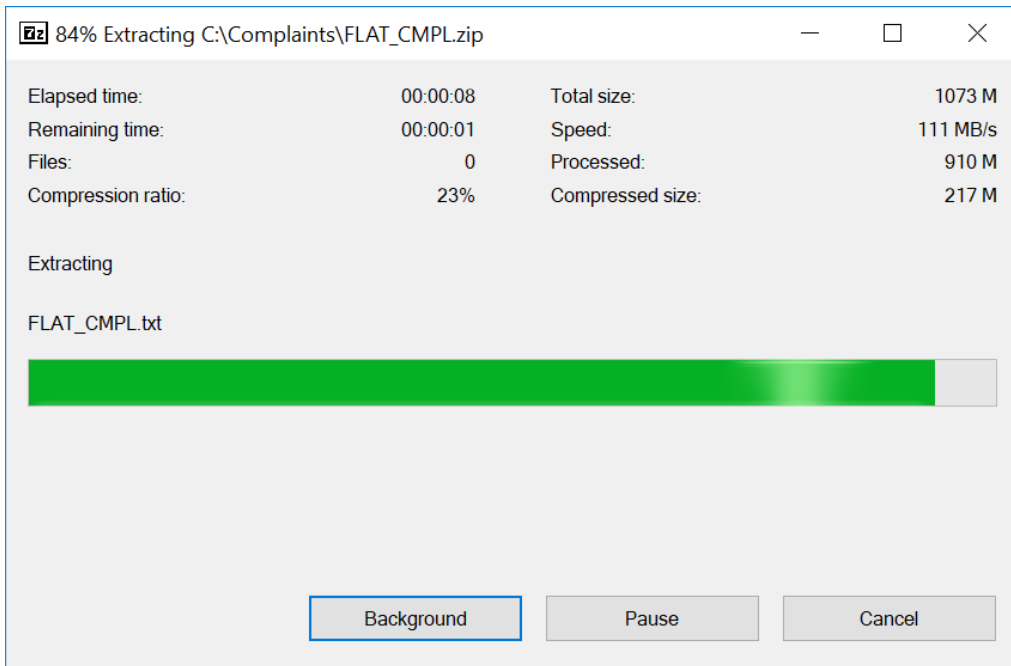
¹ The PDF version of this document is located at

http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/downloads/folders/Complaints/Import_Instructions_Excel_All.pdf

2. Select the **FLAT_CMPL.zip** file.
3. **Save** the file to your Downloads folder or another destination folder on your system.

(This is a large file and may take a few minutes to download.)

4. Extract the zipped file (**FLAT_CMPL.txt**) to the desired folder.



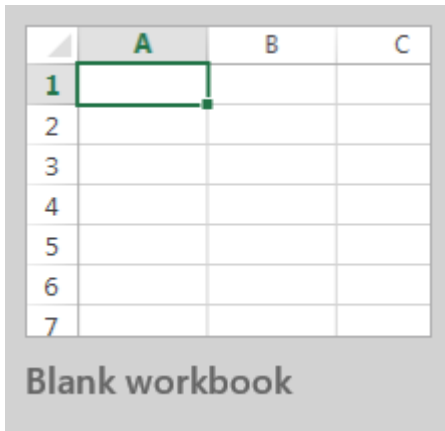
Note: The unzipped text file of Complaints data is now ready to be imported into a Microsoft Excel workbook.

5. Open Microsoft Excel.

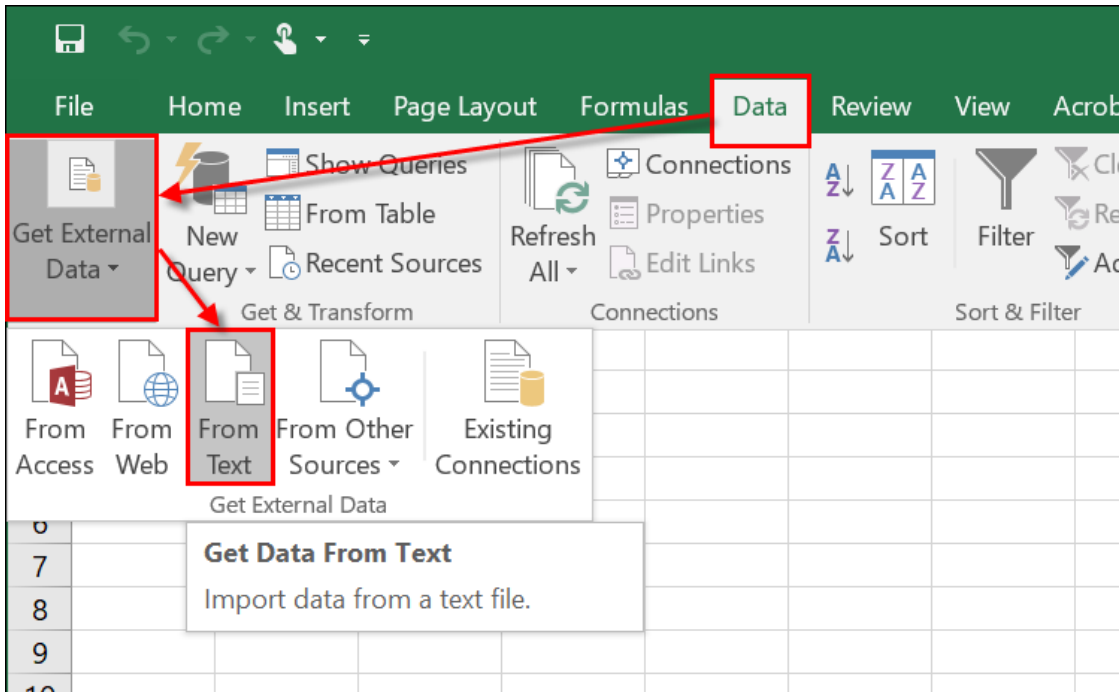


Note: The following screenshots are from the Microsoft Excel 2016. Other versions will have similar views and functionality, but may have differing features and limitations. Use the toolbars or help feature if you have difficulty locating or using a function.

6. Open a **Blank workbook**.



7. Open the **Text Import Wizard** by selecting **Data > Get External Data > From Text**.



8. Locate and select the **FLAT_CMPL.txt** file that was extracted from the downloaded .zip file.

- In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 1 of 3** select **Delimited** and make sure that **Start import at row** is set to 1 and then select **Next >**.

Text Import Wizard - Step 1 of 3

The Text Wizard has determined that your data is Delimited.
If this is correct, choose Next, or choose the data type that best describes your data.

Original data type

Choose the file type that best describes your data:

Delimited - Characters such as commas or tabs separate each field.

Fixed width - Fields are aligned in columns with spaces between each field.

Start import at row: 1 File origin: 437 : OEM United States

My data has headers.

Preview of file C:\Complaints\FLAT_CMPL\FLAT_CMPL.txt

1	1958156	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTAPASEO	1994Y19941226	N00	PARKING BRAK
2	2958164	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTALAND	CRUISER	199419941223	N00SERVIC
3	3958124	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTACOROLLA	1994Y19941128	N00	AIR BAGS:F
4	4958173	Ford Motor Company	LINCOLNTOWN	CAR	1994Y19941222	N00SERVICE BRAKES
5	5958146	General Motors LLC	GMCSONOMA	199519941215	N00	SERVICE BRAKES, HYDRA
6	6958127	Ford Motor Company	FORDRANGER	1994N00		ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING:EX
7	7958170	Ford Motor Company	MERCURYCOUGAR	199519950101	N00	SERVICE BRAKES, H

Buttons: Cancel, < Back, **Next >**, Finish

- In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 2 of 3** make sure that only **Tab** is selected under **Delimiters** and then select **Next >**.

Text Import Wizard - Step 2 of 3

This screen lets you set the delimiters your data contains. You can see how your text is affected in the preview below.

Delimiters

Tab

Semicolon

Comma

Space

Other:

Treat consecutive delimiters as one

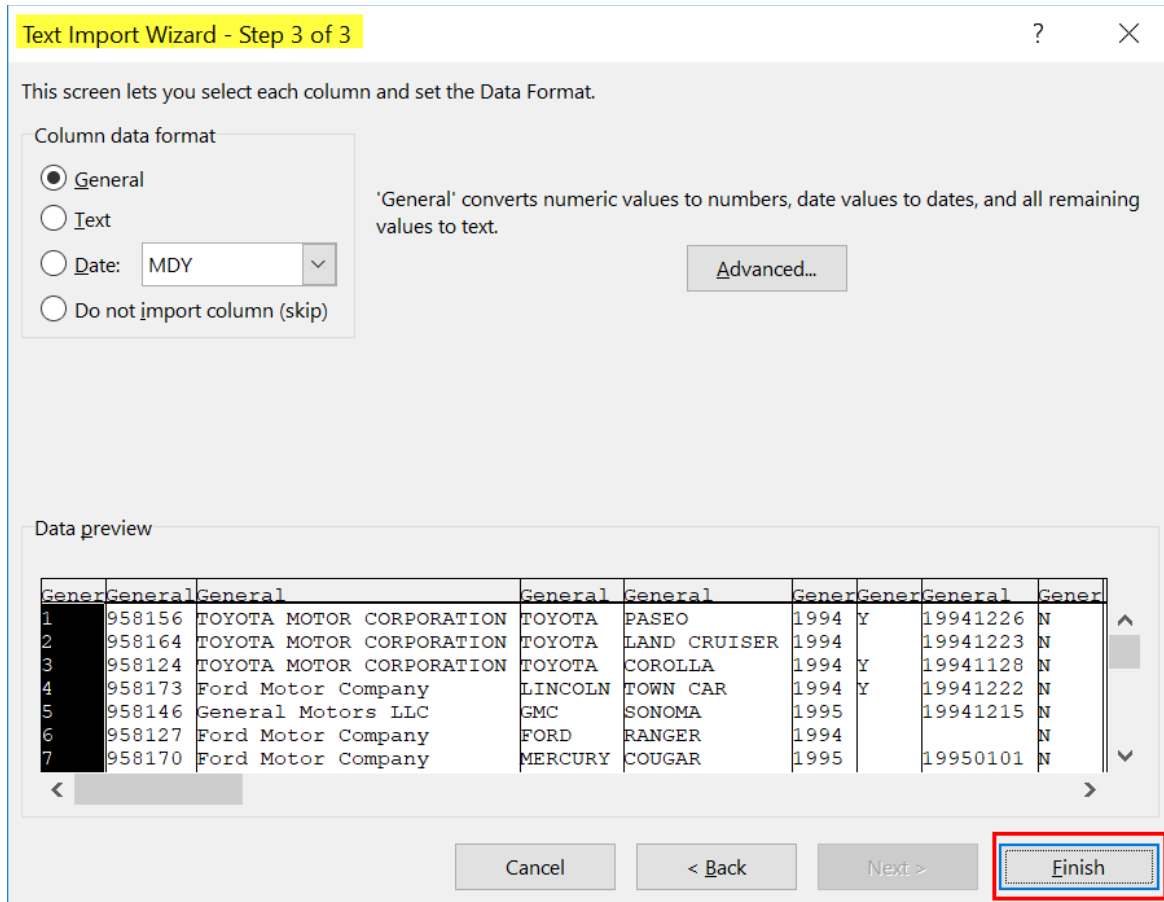
Text qualifier: " ▼

Data preview

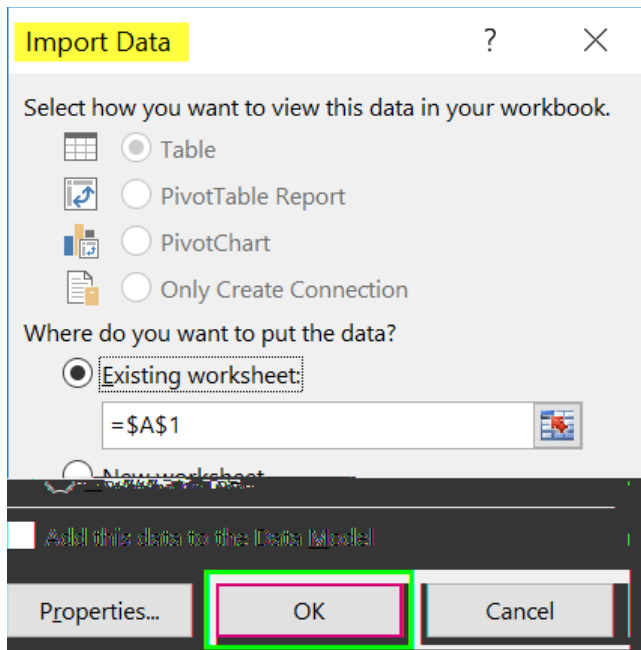
1	958156	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA	PASEO	1994	Y	19941226	N
2	958164	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA	LAND CRUISER	1994		19941223	N
3	958124	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA	COROLLA	1994	Y	19941128	N
4	958173	Ford Motor Company	LINCOLN	TOWN CAR	1994	Y	19941222	N
5	958146	General Motors LLC	GMC	SONOMA	1995		19941215	N
6	958127	Ford Motor Company	FORD	RANGER	1994			N
7	958170	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY	COUGAR	1995		19950101	N

Cancel < Back **Next >** Finish

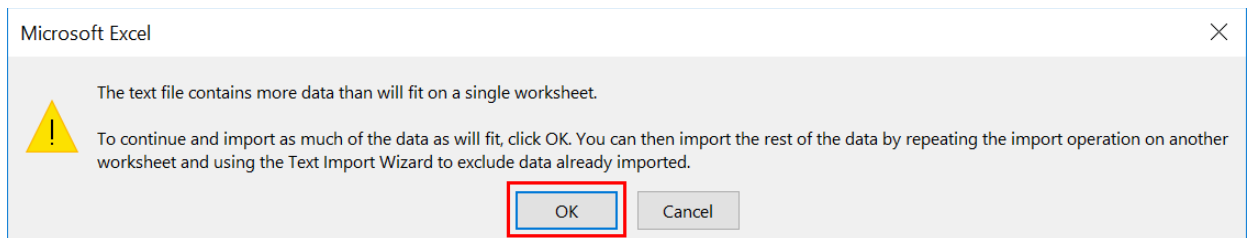
- In the **Text Import Wizard – Step 3 of 3** select **Finish** to import all of the data as is. If you wish to reformat or skip importing any of the columns, make those changes before selecting **Finish**.



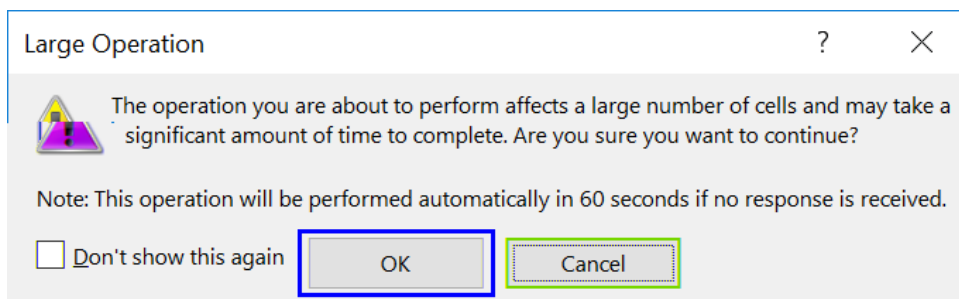
- In the **Import Data** window select **OK** to import the data at the beginning of the current worksheet. If a different location is desired, make that selection before selecting **OK**.



- If the data being imported will not fit on a single worksheet, a message box will be shown, as below. Select **OK** to continue the import. The remaining data can be imported separately as described further in these instructions.



- Select **OK** on the displayed warning about the time it will take to import the data to continue with the import.



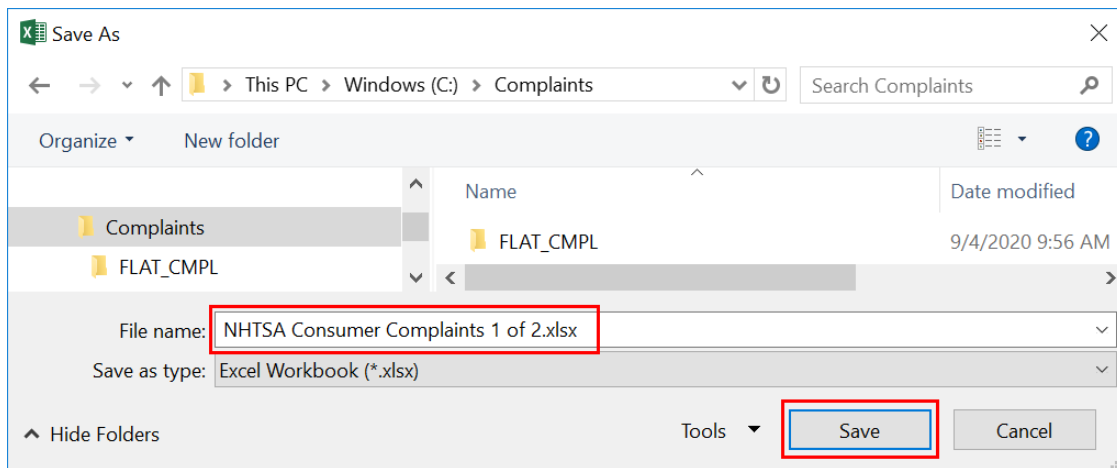
15. Importing the data can take several minutes, depending on system characteristics. A portion of the worksheet is shown below.

	A	B	C	D
1	1	958156	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA PASEO
2	2	958164	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA LAND CRUISER
3	3	958124	TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION	TOYOTA COROLLA
4	4	958173	Ford Motor Company	LINCOLN TOWN CAR
5	5	958146	General Motors LLC	GMC SONOMA
6	6	958127	Ford Motor Company	FORD RANGER
7	7	958170	Ford Motor Company	MERCURY COUGAR
8	8	958149	Nissan North America, Inc.	NISSAN MAXIMA

16. Scroll to the bottom of the worksheet and note the **Row Number** of the last row imported (**1048576** in this case for Excel 2016). This **Row Number** will be used for importing the remainder of the data.

1048572	1048572	10573373	Isuzu Manufacturing Services of America	ISUZU	RODEO SPORT
1048573	1048573	10573374	Chrysler Group LLC	CHRYSLER	PACIFICA AWD
1048574	1048574	10573375	Nissan North America, Inc.	NISSAN	MAXIMA
1048575	1048575	10573376	General Motors LLC	GMC	SAVANA
1048576	1048576	10573376	General Motors LLC	GMC	SAVANA

17. Use the Excel **Save As** function to **Save** this first part of the import with a meaningful filename, such as **NHTSA Consumer Complaints 1 of 2.xlsx**, in the desired folder.



18. Close Excel after saving the data and then re-open Excel. Perform Steps 6 through 17 above with the following **exceptions** to save the remaining data in a second workbook:
- In Step 9 change the **Start import at row** from 1 to **one more than the Row Number** noted at the bottom of the earlier worksheet – in this case, **1048577**. This will start the import at the row following the last row saved in the first file.
 - If any of the columns were previously reformatted or skipped in Step 11, perform the same changes for the second workbook for consistency between the two files.
 - Step 16 can be skipped.
 - In Step 17 enter a filename that is different from the earlier one, such as **NHTSA Consumer Complaints 2 of 2.xlsx**.

This concludes the import process. You can now view all the data in the two Excel workbooks. If system resources permit it, two worksheets in the same workbook may be used instead of two separate workbooks.

Appendix A. Complaints File Characteristics

Field#	Name	Type/Size	Description
1	CMPLID	CHAR (9)	NHTSA'S INTERNAL UNIQUE SEQUENCE NUMBER. IS AN UPDATEABLE FIELD, THUS DATA FOR A GIVEN RECORD POTENTIALLY COULD CHANGE FROM ONE DATA OUTPUT FILE TO THE NEXT.
2	ODINO	CHAR (9)	NHTSA'S INTERNAL REFERENCE NUMBER. THIS NUMBER MAY BE REPEATED FOR MULTIPLE COMPONENTS. ALSO, IF LDATE IS PRIOR TO DEC 15, 2002, THIS NUMBER MAY BE REPEATED FOR MULTIPLE PRODUCTS OWNED BY THE SAME COMPLAINANT.
3	MFR_NAME	CHAR (40)	MANUFACTURER'S NAME
4	MAKETXT	CHAR (25)	VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT MAKE
5	MODELTXT	CHAR (256)	VEHICLE/EQUIPMENT MODEL
6	YEARTXT	CHAR (4)	MODEL YEAR, 9999 IF UNKNOWN or N/A
7	CRASH	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE INVOLVED IN A CRASH, 'Y' OR 'N'
8	FAILDATE	CHAR (8)	DATE OF INCIDENT (YYYYMMDD)
9	FIRE	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE INVOLVED IN A FIRE 'Y' OR 'N'
10	INJURED	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED
11	DEATHS	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF FATALITIES
12	COMPDESC	CHAR (128)	SPECIFIC COMPONENT'S DESCRIPTION
13	CITY	CHAR (30)	CONSUMER'S CITY
14	STATE	CHAR (2)	CONSUMER'S STATE CODE
15	VIN	CHAR (11)	VEHICLE'S VIN#
16	DATEA	CHAR (8)	DATE ADDED TO FILE (YYYYMMDD)
17	LDATE	CHAR (8)	DATE COMPLAINT RECEIVED BY NHTSA (YYYYMMDD)
18	MILES	NUMBER (7)	VEHICLE MILEAGE AT FAILURE
19	OCCURENCES	NUMBER (4)	NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES
20	CDESCR	CHAR (2048)	DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT
21	CMPL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	SOURCE OF COMPLAINT CODE: CAG =CONSUMER ACTION GROUP CON =FORWARDED FROM A CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE DP =DEFECT PETITION, RESULT OF A DEFECT PETITION EVOQ =HOTLINE VOQ EWR =EARLY WARNING REPORTING INS =INSURANCE COMPANY IVOQ =NHTSA WEB SITE LETR =CONSUMER LETTER MAVQ =NHTSA MOBILE APP MIVQ =NHTSA MOBILE APP MVOQ =OPTICAL MARKED VOQ RC =RECALL COMPLAINT, RESULT OF A RECALL INVESTIGATION RP =RECALL PETITION, RESULT OF A RECALL PETITION SVOQ =PORTABLE SAFETY COMPLAINT FORM (PDF) VOQ =NHTSA VEHICLE OWNERS QUESTIONNAIRE
22	POLICE_RPT_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS INCIDENT REPORTED TO POLICE 'Y' OR 'N'
23	PURCH_DT	CHAR (8)	DATE PURCHASED (YYYYMMDD)
24	ORIG_OWNER_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS ORIGINAL OWNER 'Y' OR 'N'
25	ANTI_BRAKES_YN	CHAR (1)	ANTI-LOCK BRAKES 'Y' OR 'N'
26	CRUISE_CONT_YN	CHAR (1)	CRUISE CONTROL 'Y' OR 'N'
27	NUM_CYLS	NUMBER (2)	NUMBER OF CYLINDERS
28	DRIVE_TRAIN	CHAR (4)	DRIVE TRAIN TYPE [AWD, 4WD, FWD, RWD]

29	FUEL_SYS	CHAR (4)	FUEL SYSTEM CODE: FI =FUEL INJECTION TB =TURBO
30	FUEL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	FUEL TYPE CODE: BF =BIFUEL CN =CNG/LPG DS =DIESEL GS =GAS HE =HYBRID ELECTRIC
31	TRANS_TYPE	CHAR (4)	VEHICLE TRANSMISSION TYPE [AUTO, MAN]
32	VEH_SPEED	NUMBER (3)	VEHICLE SPEED
33	DOT	CHAR (20)	DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TIRE IDENTIFIER
34	TIRE_SIZE	CHAR (30)	TIRE SIZE
35	LOC_OF_TIRE	CHAR (4)	LOCATION OF TIRE CODE: FSW =DRIVER SIDE FRONT DSR =DRIVER SIDE REAR FTR =PASSENGER SIDE FRONT PSR =PASSENGER SIDE REAR SPR =SPARE
36	TIRE_FAIL_TYPE	CHAR (4)	TYPE OF TIRE FAILURE CODE: BST =BLISTER BLW =BLOWOUT TTL =CRACK OFR =OUT OF ROUND TSW =PUNCTURE TTR =ROAD HAZARD TSP =TREAD SEPARATION
37	ORIG_EQUIP_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS PART ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT 'Y' OR 'N'
38	MANUF_DT	CHAR (8)	DATE OF MANUFACTURE (YYYYMMDD)
39	SEAT_TYPE	CHAR (4)	TYPE OF CHILD SEAT CODE: B =BOOSTER C =CONVERTIBLE I =INFANT IN =INTEGRATED TD =TODDLER
40	RESTRAINT_TYPE	CHAR (4)	INSTALLATION SYSTEM CODE; A =VEHICLE SAFETY BELT B =LATCH SYSTEM
41	DEALER_NAME	CHAR (40)	DEALER'S NAME
42	DEALER_TEL	CHAR (20)	DEALER'S TELEPHONE NUMBER
43	DEALER_CITY	CHAR (30)	DEALER'S CITY
44	DEALER_STATE	CHAR (2)	DEALER'S STATE CODE
45	DEALER_ZIP	CHAR (10)	DEALER'S ZIPCODE
46	PROD_TYPE	CHAR (4)	PRODUCT TYPE CODE: V =VEHICLE T =TIRES E =EQUIPMENT C =CHILD RESTRAINT
47	REPAIRED_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS DEFECTIVE TIRE REPAIRED 'Y' OR 'N'
48	MEDICAL_ATTN	CHAR (1)	WAS MEDICAL ATTENTION REQUIRED 'Y' OR 'N'
49	VEHICLES_TOWED_YN	CHAR (1)	WAS VEHICLE TOWED 'Y' OR 'N'