SACRAMENTO - The California Air Resources Board (ARB) announced today that General Motors (GM) has been required to extend fuel injector warranty coverage on approximately 700,000 1996 through 2001 model year light- and medium-duty SUVs, trucks and vans.

Warranties on the vehicles' fuel injector systems will be extended to 10 years/200,000 miles. GM will soon begin notifying vehicle owners of the extended warranty coverage. Repairs under the extended warranty could ultimately cost GM more than $100 million dollars.

"Malfunctioning fuel injection systems can cause significant increases in air pollution," said Catherine Witherspoon, ARB executive officer. "We are pleased that GM will fix the problem at no cost to the vehicle owners," she added.

The trouble-prone Sequential Central Port Injector (SCPI) fuel system was installed on GM's popular SUVs, pickup trucks and vans with 4.3L, 5.0L, and 5.7 liter engines. The defective fuel injection systems cause GM owners to experience a "Service Engine Soon" light, misfires, rough idle, and hard start problems due to deposit build-up that cause poppet valves to stick and fail.

According to ARB data, the fuel injector failures were brought to GM's attention four years ago. At that time, an extension from the original three years/50,000 miles warranty to 10 years/100,000 miles for fuel injector cleaning was negotiated. ARB then negotiated with GM to expand the scope of the warranty to allow for total replacement of the fuel injection system rather than just cleaning and to increase the warranty period to 10 years/200,000 miles.

The agreement for the expanded warranty was reached in December. However, GM asked ARB to delay making an announcement to allow time to correct a production problem on a new fuel injection system that will replace the SCPI system. The new system, called Multiport Flexible Injection (MFI), can be installed on the affected vehicles.

Under the warranty agreement, if an owner experiences an SCPI problem for the first time, GM will provide a free fuel injection system cleaning. Should an owner experience a second failure, GM will replace the SCPI system with the new MFI unit. The cost of cleaning the fuel injection system is estimated at about $115 per vehicle while replacement costs range between $300 and $350. GM will cover all of these costs.
Owners who had a previous fuel injection repair under warranty or a customer-paid repair and who then experience another fuel injector problem will receive free a new MFI unit installed by GM. GM has also agreed to reimburse any owners who have paid to have the SCPI problem repaired on their own.

The Air Resources Board is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. ARB's mission is to promote and protect public health, welfare, and ecological resources through effective reduction of air pollutants while recognizing and considering effects on the economy. The ARB oversees all air pollution control efforts in California to attain and maintain health based air quality standards.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy cost, see our web site at http://www.arb.ca.gov

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