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Identification of Automotive Air Bags

SAE Recommended Practice
Issued May 1989

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**HIGHWAY
VEHICLE
RECOMMENDED
PRACTICE**

SAE J1856

Issued May 16, 1989

Submitted for recognition as an American National Standard

IDENTIFICATION OF AUTOMOTIVE AIR BAGS

1. SCOPE:

This recommended practice describes a method for identification of air bag equipped vehicles requiring minimal knowledge of vehicle design or air bag system configuration.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this SAE Recommended Practice is to establish a uniform practice regarding the identification of automotive air bags during the vehicle disposal process. This recommended practice is intended as a guide toward standard practice and is subject to change to keep pace with experience and technical advances.

3. INTRODUCTION:

Interest has been expressed by groups in government and industry regarding the issue of safe disposal of automotive air bag systems. As a result, there have been numerous studies and meetings to address various methods for handling, identification, and disposal of air bag inflators. Several viable alternatives have been proposed, yet a standardized approach was still needed. For this reason, the Automotive Air Bag Disposal Study Group of the SAE Inflatable Restraints Subcommittee has prepared this recommended practice.

4. DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY:

Refer to SAE J1538 APR88, Glossary of Automotive Inflatable Restraint Terms.

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5. IDENTIFICATION OF AIR BAG EQUIPPED VEHICLES:

- 5.1 Vehicle Identification Number: The requirement for an identification code in the vehicle identification number (VIN) as specified in FMVSS 115 for all air bag equipped vehicles is recognized and adherence shall be maintained. The supplemental method of identifying air bag equipped vehicles will be in addition to the VIN requirement.
- 5.2 Identification Method: In addition to the air bag VIN identification code, it would be appropriate that all air bag equipped vehicles have readily visible AIR BAG identification. The recommended location for this identification is next to or part of the VIN tag. This supplemental identification may be on the same tag as the VIN, yet not decrease the legibility of the required VIN character. An acceptable alternate location would be on the underside of the vehicle in the vicinity of the fuel tank. The identification would be visible to the vehicle dismantler upon removal of the gas tank. The identification should contain the following as a minimum:
- A symbol representing the air bag (see Fig. 1).
 - A statement describing the system present (see examples, Fig. 1).

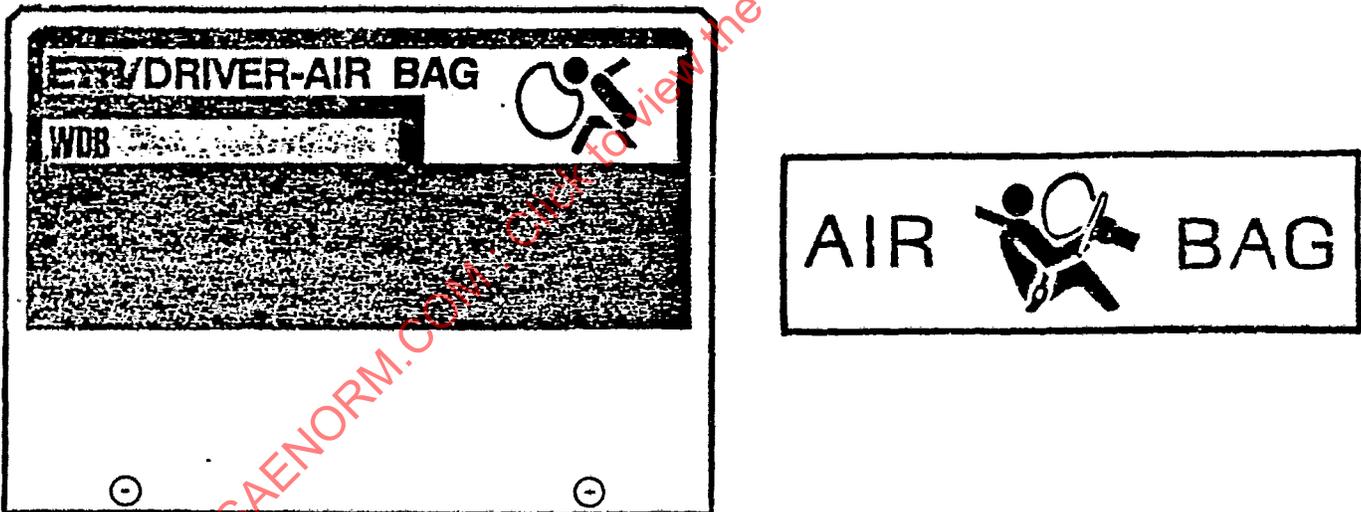


FIGURE 1 - Examples of Air Bag Equipped Vehicle Identification

6. IDENTIFICATION/DETECTION OF VEHICLES CONTAINING DEPLOYED VERSUS NON-DEPLOYED AIR BAG SYSTEMS:

A number of methods for identifying deployed versus non-deployed air bag systems have been suggested. It has been demonstrated that a deployed air bag is generally visible, even in a flattened vehicle.

7. REFERENCES:

SAE J1538 APR88, Glossary of Automotive Inflatable Restraint Terms

SAE J1855 DRAFT, Disposal of Electrically Activated Automotive Air Bags

"Summary of Observations of Crashed Cars Containing Deployed Air Bags," NHTSA report based on an August 30, 1984 scrapyard visit

FMVSS 115

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