Special deals or discounts

Be wary of repair facilities that offer to waive your insurance deductible or to do more work for no extra charge. Needed repairs could be short-cut to offset the added expense the repair facility will incur. Since the structural integrity of your unitized body vehicle is extremely dependent upon proper repairs being performed, never agree to something that could affect your safety and the safety of your passengers.

Paint repairs

Just as the Bureau of Automotive Regulation investigates complaints involving collision repairs, it also investigates complaints involving paint work done with collision repairs. If problems involving other types of paint work cannot be resolved with the repair facility, relief may be available through the Office of the Attorney General or through Small Claims Court.

In the event of an accident

No one wants to be in an accident. If we are, it is important that key facts be obtained for later use. The items below may help you obtain needed information. Keep this brochure in your glove compartment so that you can write down the information immediately in the event of an accident.

Date and time of accident: ____________________________

Names and addresses of others involved: ____________________________

Names and addresses of witnesses: ____________________________

Additional automotive brochures published by the Department of State:

- Auto Repair Rights and Repair Tips
- Consumer’s Automotive Information and Complaint Kit
- Consumer’s Guide to Automatic Transmission Service
- Consumer’s Guide to Brake Repair Service
- Consumer’s Guide to Buying a Vehicle from a Dealership
- Consumer’s Guide to Engine Replacement
- Consumer’s Guide to Private Vehicle Sales
- Consumer’s Guide to Vehicle Leasing
- Consumer’s Guide to Vehicle Restoration

If you have a complaint regarding collision repairs or other motor vehicle repairs that you cannot resolve with the repair facility, contact:

Bureau of Automotive Regulation
Michigan Department of State
P.O. Box 30046
Lansing, MI 48909-7546
Telephone: 800/292-4204
TTY: 517/485-5530
Fax: 517/373-8791
www.michigan.gov/sos

click on “Owning a Vehicle”
No vehicle owner expects to be involved in an accident. But, at some point, you may be faced with damage to your vehicle as the result of a collision. Vehicle repairs can be handled better by an informed consumer.

The Michigan Department of State wants you to know your rights before you authorize repairs to your vehicle. The department’s Bureau of Regulatory Services licenses and regulates automobile dealers, repair shops and mechanics, informs consumers of their rights and investigates related complaints.

This brochure describes what is involved when collision repairs are needed and details your rights as a consumer.

Vehicle design

Most vehicles manufactured since 1980 are of a design known as unitized body (commonly known as unibody) construction. This design is particularly good at absorbing collision impacts and minimizing injury to vehicle occupants. The ability to absorb collision impact is accomplished by creating “crush zones” in the vehicle that absorb and redirect the impact energy to other areas of the vehicle outside the passenger compartment.

Unitized body construction relies on a number of lightweight, high strength steel panels and parts, properly welded together, to provide structural strength. Due to the energy-absorbing nature of the design, even relatively minor appearing accidents can result in damage that may affect the structural integrity of the vehicle.

Proper training and equipment are necessary for the repair facility you choose to correctly diagnose and repair your vehicle. A poorly repaired vehicle may be unsafe and can cost you money.

Your right to choose

You are entitled to choose where your vehicle will be repaired. Your insurance company may provide you with a list of possible repair facilities.

Repairs to be performed

When you receive a written estimate for the work that will be done, be sure you understand the extent of repairs that will be performed and the type of parts that will be used. The abbreviation “LKQ” stands for “Like Kind and Quality” and is another way of saying the part is used and not new. Never allow a repair facility to install used safety items, such as a supplemental inflatable restraint system (an air bag).

Michigan law requires a collision repair facility to inform you in writing if the replacement parts used to repair your vehicle are not OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer, the company that manufactured your vehicle). Parts not produced by the vehicle manufacturer may be of a lesser quality and, if used, may void the manufacturer’s warranty. Before authorizing collision repairs, make sure you inform the repair facility and your insurance company if you only want the repair completed with OEM parts.

Will there be a warranty?

Before allowing the repair facility to begin repairs, find out if the facility provides a warranty on its work. A repair facility is not required to provide a warranty. If a warranty is provided, the terms and any exclusions must be in writing. If you are told the repair to your vehicle will be warranted, make sure you receive a written copy of the warranty.
Special deals or discounts

Be wary of repair facilities that offer to waive your insurance deductible or to do more work for no extra charge. Needed repairs could be short-cut to offset the added expense the repair facility will incur. Since the structural integrity of your unitized body vehicle is extremely dependent upon proper repairs being performed, never agree to something that could affect your safety and the safety of your passengers.

Paint repairs

Just as the Bureau of Regulatory Services investigates complaints involving collision repairs, it also investigates complaints involving paint work done with collision repairs. If problems involving other types of paint work cannot be resolved with the repair facility, relief may be available through the Office of the Attorney General or through Small Claims Court.

In the event of an accident

No one wants to be in an accident. If we are, it is important that key facts be obtained for later use. The items below may help you obtain needed information. Keep this brochure in your glove compartment so that you can write down the information immediately in the event of an accident.

Date and time of accident:

Names and addresses of others involved:

Names and addresses of witnesses:

Name of other party’s insurance company and agent:

Other party’s policy number:

Investigating police department:

Police report number:

Additional automotive brochures published by the Department of State:

Auto Repair Rights and Repair Tips
Consumer’s Automotive Information and Complaint Kit
Consumer’s Guide to Automatic Transmission Service
Consumer’s Guide to Brake Repair Service
Consumer’s Guide to Buying a Vehicle from a Dealership
Consumer’s Guide to Engine Replacement
Consumer’s Guide to Vehicle Leasing
Consumer’s Guide to Vehicle Restoration

If you have a complaint regarding collision repairs or other motor vehicle repairs that you cannot resolve with the repair facility, contact:

Bureau of Regulatory Services
Michigan Department of State
P.O. Box 30046
Lansing, MI 48909-7546
Telephone: 1-888-SOS-MICH
(1-888-767-6424)
Fax: 517/373-8791
www.michigan.gov/sos
click on “Owning a Vehicle”