



Filter Knowledge, Unfiltered

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Manufacturers' Warranty

Consumer purchasers of filters are sometimes told that an aftermarket brand of replacement filter cannot be used in the consumer's vehicle during the warranty period. The claim is made that use of an aftermarket brand will "void the warranty," with the statement or implication that only the original equipment brand of filters may be used. This tends to cast doubt on the quality of the aftermarket filter.

That claim is simply not true. If the consumer asks for the statement in writing, they will not receive it. Nevertheless, the consumer may feel uneasy about using replacement filters that are not original equipment. With the large number of consumers who prefer to use an aftermarket filter this misleading statement should be addressed.

Under the federal Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act, the Clean Air Act and general principles of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission Act, a manufacturer may not require the use of any brand of filter (or any other article) unless the manufacturer provides the item free of charge under the terms of the warranty.

If the consumer is told that only the original equipment filter will not void the warranty, they should request that the OE filter be supplied free of charge. If they are charged for the filter, the manufacturer may be violating the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act or other applicable law.

By providing this information to consumers, the members of the Filter Manufacturers Council (FMC) intend to combat the erroneous claim that the use of a brand of replacement filter other than original equipment will "void the warranty."

It should be noted that the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act is a U.S. federal law that applies to consumer products. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission has authority to enforce the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act, including obtaining injunctions and orders containing affirmative relief. In addition, a consumer can bring suit under the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act.

For additional information, contact:

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