

Recall to Fix VW Headlamp Bug

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Volkswagen are recalling about 25,000 new 2015 Jetta sedans in the United States to fix a software misconfiguration affecting the headlamps. The software in the lighting control module turns off the low-beam headlamps when high beam is selected, causing the high beams to put out insufficient light.



The affected cars were manufactured between 11 July and 13 November, and VW say they fail to comply with the requirements of FMVSS N^o. 108. Volkswagen will notify owners, and dealers will update the headlight control module software without cost to the vehicle owner. The recall begins this month.

FMVSS 108 contains provisions that variously permit, prohibit, and require the low beams to remain lit with the high beams. If the low beams would cause the overall high beam to produce more than the allowable amount of foreground light, for example, the low beams must extinguish when high beam is selected. But if the low beams are HIDs, they must remain lit when high beam is selected, otherwise there would be a dangerous "black hole" for the driver to negotiate after switching back to low beam while the HID burners warm up to operating temperature and output. In the case of the 2015 Jettas, it seems the high beam lamps are intended to work together with the low beams to produce a composite beam complying with the high beam requirements in FMVSS N^o. 108—hence the recall.