

## **The Lasting Effects of Hurricane Katrina Flood Damaged Cars – Here's How to Protect Yourself**

- ✓ Check the vehicle's title history. It may disclose flood damage.
- ✓ Look for signs of water and grit in the interior and inspect the engine compartment for water lines.
- ✓ Check under the carpets for rust, water residue or water marks unrelated to air conditioning leaks.
- ✓ Check for rust by the door hinges.
- ✓ Check for rust in springs under the seats.
- ✓ Look for discolored or stained upholstery and carpeting. Replacement carpets may fit too loosely or fail to match the interior color.
- ✓ Test the lights, windshield wipers, turn signals, radio, heater and air conditioner several times. Flex some wires under the dashboard to see if they bend or crack; dried-out wires become brittle and often crack.
- ✓ Check under the dashboard for dried mud and residue and note any mold or musty odors in the upholstery, carpet or trunk.
- ✓ Check for rust on screws in areas where water wouldn't reach unless the car was submerged.
- ✓ Check for mud or grit in alternator crevices, behind wiring harnesses and around the small recesses of starter motors, power-steering pumps and relays.
- ✓ Pull out seat-belt retractors. Check for moisture, rust and mildew hidden deep inside.
- ✓ Check to be sure door speakers are working. If they do not, it could be due to water damage.
- ✓ Check spare tire nook. This is often overlooked when cleaning up flood damage.
- ✓ Check for new components in an older car.
- ✓ Check for excessive rust or flaking metal on the undercarriage that would not normally be associated with newer cars.

