



BUYER BEWARE – Hurricane/Flood Vehicles

If you are in the market to purchase a vehicle, there are several things that you can do to help detect flood damage in a vehicle.

First and foremost, rely on your senses:

SMELL – Does the vehicle have a musty odor?

- If unsure, try closing the doors and roll up the windows to help diagnose a musty smell
- Strong air fresheners can sometimes be used to mask a musty odor

TOUCH – Feel for wet or damp carpet:

- Under the seats
- Under the floor mats
- In the trunk

SIGHT – Look for mud or silt in areas that are not typically affected by the elements:

- Under the carpet
- Spare tire cavity
- Glove compartment
- Under the seats
- On and around the engine

Secondly, do your research:

- Take the vehicle for a test drive
- Be sure to test the instruments: Radio, Interior and Exterior Lighting, AC and Heat
- Run a vehicle history report – see “Resources” below
- Have the vehicle checked by a certified mechanic

Resources:

National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) – Full vehicle history reports provide data concerning state title issuance and brand history, odometer reading, and vehicle total loss and salvage history. Vehicle history report providers can be found - <https://www.vehiclehistory.gov/index.html>

National Insurance Crime Bureau – Partners with consumers and others to combat insurance fraud and theft. Search vehicle history through a VIN# search or report fraud - <https://www.nicb.org/>

Federal Trade Commission – Protect yourself from scams/report fraud - <https://www.ftc.gov/>

Ohio BMV Title Services - Visit BMV Online Services, “Vehicle/Watercraft Title Search,” to view titles issued in the State of Ohio. <https://services.dps.ohio.gov/BMVOnlineServices/Search/Title>



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