

The Great Fiero A/C Condenser Dilemma

If you haven't recently tried to fix a Fiero Air Conditioning (A/C) system you will likely not be aware that there is a parts and installation dilemma on the horizon.

Our Fieros, all years and models, use the same A/C components. These components were borrowed from the GM Citations series of automobiles and are grossly over specified for our small interior space. The Citations were all four passenger vehicles and also included a station wagon like vehicle.

The other part of this situation is the age of the parts and the resulting lack of availability for some of the components. About 11 years ago I converted my 1985 Fiero GT A/C system to R134 refrigerant. Since the parts were already 25 years old (at the time), I replaced virtually every component in the system just to be safe. The bill at the time was \$1,348 for a completely new system that I hoped would be trouble free for the next 25 years.

Great thought, but it was not to be! In June of 2020 my air conditioning system decided not to cool any more. I took the car to my local mechanic and found out that the part that had failed was my condenser and new ones were not to be found anywhere. There are three part numbers that cover the GM Fiero A/C condenser. One is the original GM Fiero / Citation part number 3050988 from condenser group 9.190. Later on this number was replaced by a revised G.M. part number: 8895.9053; this is a universal GM part number that applies to all GM vehicles. A.C. Delco also had a matching part no #15-6509. All this info is basically useless because no one has any of these parts; all attempts came back as **“out-of-stock ... no longer manufactured.”**

I used two different parts guys that I trust and each came back with the same answer ... no parts! I also did my own search and again came up empty handed. My search included Pennocks FIERO Form which also came up empty. After much frustration I started a new google search this spring; I tried a whole bunch of search phrases and finally hit pay dirt in the spring of this year (2021). The phrase that brought up a hit was **“fiero ac condenser”**; this phrase got me to an E-Bay listed company called **Auto AC Solutions**.

This company claims to be Texas owned, American made, and has parts remanufactured from GM Factory Tooling that they procured from GM. Some telephone numbers were listed but I could never get a phone connection to work. Their E-Bay ratings were good and they claimed to have 8 Fiero A/C condensers ready to ship. The cost including tax and shipping was just under \$350. They accepted “Pay Pal” so I took a great leap of faith and ordered one!

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It arrived in about two weeks and looked to be as advertised ... namely a brand new remanufactured Fiero A/C condenser.

Now for part two of the story. The repair book estimate for a Fiero A/C condenser removal, replacement and recharging the system is \$595. The shop I use charges \$100 per hour of labor and if they beat the book estimate they only charge the labor they use.

You may think this is the end of the story but there is one chapter left. The condenser mounting brackets were part of the reason the 2010 condenser failed! My mechanic would not install my new condenser over the old mounting brackets and bought \$25 worth of materials at Home Depot and designed and built new rubber insulated, shock resistant brackets for my new condenser. He stayed with the \$595 max estimate and proudly stated that his brackets were much better designed and fabricated than the original GM brackets.

Now the story is over. The Condenser was deemed excellent by my mechanic; well-built and all the fittings and mounting points were as specified for the original part. This whole process took a year from start to finish and much of this time was spent in frustration hunting parts. \$945 later I have a fully functioning A/C system with a reasonable expectation that the condenser will not spring a leak due to vibration wear.

I hope this helps any of you in a similar situation. The rest of the A/C system seems to be available in part form but beware of old mounting system / parts that could lead to a second expensive repair.

Please feel free to distribute this info to others that may find it useful and remember this came from the **Michigan Fiero Club**. If you live close, please consider joining us for a lot a Fiero comradery and technical help with your prized Fiero.

Best ... Roger Fagnani