



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received: 26-MAY-2005
Repository:
Reference No.: 10122189

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name: [Redacted]
Address: [Redacted]
City: HANOVER State: PA Zip Code: [Redacted]
Daytime Telephone Number: [Redacted] E-mail Address: [Redacted]
Evening Telephone Number: [Redacted]
Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?
In the absence of a signature, provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer. YES NO
Signature of Owner: [Redacted] Date: 07/06/2005

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: ZHKYF18563H [Redacted]
Make: HONDA Model: PILOT Model Year: 2003
Date Purchased: 15-APR-03 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: APPLE HONDA Engine: No. Cylinders: 6 Fuel Type: Gas
Original Owner: Dealer's City: YORK State: PA Zip Code: [Redacted]
Transmission Type: AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes Cruise Control Powertrain: UNKNOWN
Vehicle Component Code: 16251D STRUCTURE:BODY:TAILGATE:HINGE AND ATTACHMENTS (Hyd Struts)
Multiple Failures: 1
Front Wheel Drive

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s): 14-MAY-2005 Failure Mileage: 32981 Failure Speed: [Redacted]

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make: [Redacted] Tire Model (Name or Number): [Redacted] Tire Size (Example P215/65R15): [Redacted]
DOT No. (Example: DOTMABAC036): [Redacted] Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location: [Redacted]
Tire Component Code: [Redacted] Tire Failure Type: [Redacted]

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make: [Redacted] Date Manufactured: [Redacted] Model No./Name: [Redacted]
Seat Type: [Redacted] Installation System: [Redacted]
Child Seat Component Code: [Redacted] Failed Part: [Redacted]

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), condition(s), and injury(ies).)

Crash: Yes No Fire: Yes No
Number of Persons Injured: 2 Number of Deaths: 0 Reported to Police: N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).
Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure;
i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available):

DT: WHEN OPENING THE TAILGATE THE HINGE FAILED, AND THE HATCHBACK FELL DOWN ON CONSUMER. IT APPEARED THAT PISTON WAS TOO SMALL FOR THE WEIGHT OF THE DOOR, AND THE ATTACHMENT SHOULD BE PLACED IN A POSITION WHERE IT COULD SUPPORT THE WEIGHT OF DOOR. NO INJURIES OCCURRED. CURRENTLY, THE HINGES COMPLETELY FAILED. *AK
Hyd Struts

SEE ATTACHED Paperwork
1. Copy of LETTER sent To Honda, describing narrative description of incident.
2. Copy of Honda repair order

Narrative Description of Incident(s) (Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies))

NOTE: Spoke To Hankwen Honda Service Rep. WAS Told, They would keep damaged Hyd Struts, while Honda INVESTIGATES THIS problem.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business Penalty for Private Use \$300



NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NATL. HWY. TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation, NVS-216
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590



VEHICLE OWNER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE

TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS COMPLETE THIS FORM OR

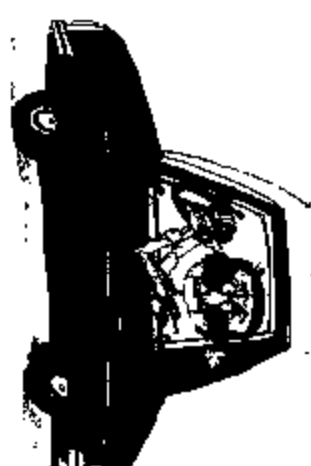
DASH2DOT

and dial toll free at

1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

DOT Auto Safety Hotline (DASH) 2 DOT



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Sir

01 June 2005

While packing my 2003 Honda Pilot, for vacation on 14 June 2005, I opened the rear hatch door to its open position. The door opened with the assistance of the Hyd. struts. When the door reached FULL open and stopped, it suddenly and without warning collapsed and struck me on the back of my neck and shoulders. At 6'5" and 250 Lbs, the door fell a short distance and caused no serious injury, but definitely caught my attention. I raised the hatch door to FULL open position, stood off to the side of the vehicle and released the hatch door, the hatch door alarmed shut immediately.

The failure of these Hyd struts, has caused me great concern for two different reasons.

First: If my wife (5'3") had been packing our Pilot instead of me, the failure of the door would have caused very serious, possible fatal injuries. Working for the United States Air Force for 30 yrs, as a Aircraft Mechanic, I believe I have a good mechanical background to state the following: The physical design of the Hyd struts (diameter) and attaching points on the vehicle body at the top of the hatch door, create a serious, weight and balance problem; that I believe could cause the complete Hyd strut failure on these 2003 Pilots, at any time, with future unknown injuries. A suggestion, would be to increase the capacity of the Hyd struts, by increasing the diameter of the Hyd struts, which will increase internal parts and Hyd fluid capacity, and consider moving the hatch door attachment points, to the middle of the door, for a proper weight and balance, and eliminate the present design, that appears to have caused a complete failure of these Hyd struts, by putting the entire weight, of the hatch door, on these undersized Hyd struts, that could fail at any time.

Second: A second concern, is personal, I have owned several Honda vehicles, and have come to rely on these vehicles for their quality and workmanship. If the above mentioned Hyd strut problem, is not corrected, a constant fear of these struts falling again, when being used by myself or other family members, and all owners of these 2003 Pilots is a real concern. The possibility of these struts failing, after the Honda warranty period, will result in repeated replacement costs, that will effect all 2003 Pilot owners.

Since this problem, I have contacted your customer service office, and my local Honda dealer (Hanover Honda, Hanover Pa), who have inspected my vehicle, and confirmed the failure of these struts, and ordered replacement parts.

Please contact me, if any additional information is needed,

Thank You

[REDACTED]
Hanover Pa [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**