



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
2006 FEB 27 PM 4:26
31-JAN-2006

Repository
Reference No.
10148131

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name [Redacted]
Address [Redacted]
City PATTERSON State CA Zip Code [Redacted]

Daytime Telephone Number [Redacted]
Evening Telephone Number
SAME

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner _____ Date 1/1

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number (found at bottom of windshield on driver's side) 2FAFP74W63X [Redacted] Make FORD Model CROWN VICTORIA Model Year 2005
Date Purchased 01-JAN-05 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number MCAULEY FORD 209-892-3341 Engine: No. Cylinders 8 Fuel Type: Gas
Original Owner Dealer's City PATTERSON State CA Zip Code 95363
Transmission Type AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes Cruise Control Powertrain REAR WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code 071100 FUEL SYSTEM, GASOLINE:STORAGE:TANK ASSEMBLY Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 29-JAN-2006 Failure Mileage 48000 Failure Speed

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make _____ Tire Model (Name or Number) _____ Tire Size (Example P215/65R15) _____
DOT No. (Example: DOTMALSABC036) Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location: _____
Tire Component Code _____ Tire Failure Type _____

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

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

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

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

Crash Yes No Fire Yes No Number of Persons Injured _____ Number of Deaths _____ 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*: THE CONTACT STATED NO FAILURE HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED WITH THE VEHICLE'S FUEL TANK. HOWEVER, THERE IS CONCERN FOR SAFETY DUE TO THE MANUFACTURER RECENTLY OFFERING A PROTECTIVE SHIELD. THE SHIELD WAS OFFERED TO VEHICLES THAT WERE AT A HIGHER RISK OF FIRE BASED ON THEIR USE. THE CONTACT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SHIELD NOT BEING OFFERED AS A STANDARD ON ALL VEHICLES REGARDLESS OF THEIR INTENDED USE.

I HAVE BEEN REAR-ENDED IN THE LAST 3 YRS TWICE. I HAVE BEEN LUCKY THIS STATE IS NOTORIOUS FOR MAJOR MULTI-CAR ACCIDENTS

Include, if available, Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 The information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

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

POLICE CARS, TAXI'S, LIMOUSINES, CARS ALL EXPLODE BECAUSE
OF THE GAS TANK WHICH IS NOT PROTECTED OR AT LEAST
WILL MIS-DIRECT AN EXPLOSION AND DISPERSION OF RAW GAS

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

STOCKTON/STKN

CA 952 2 1
07 FEB 2006 PM

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73179 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-210
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590



SafetyAlert

Crown Victoria • Lincoln Town Car • Grand Marquis

FORD TOWN CAR EXPLOSION

Site powered by a combination of Windows and Macintosh. Content powered by Crown Victoria SafetyAlert.com. All rights reserved.


[TIMELINE](#) | [VEHICLE RATES](#) | [FACTSHEET](#) | [ANIMATION](#) | [THE VICTIMS](#)

Latest News and Archives

[ONGOING REPORTS](#)
[SITE INDEX](#)
[News Archive](#)

Howell V. Ford Case Settles

The families of three women who burned to death in a Lincoln Town Car stretch limousine fuel tank fire settled their lawsuits against Ford Motor Co. around noon on Wednesday, January 18, 2006, in Mocksville, North Carolina. Routine motions in the trial started Tuesday morning.



The terms of the settlement are confidential.

The family today calls on Ford Motor Company to install life-saving fuel tank shields on all vehicles with the fuel system design that took the lives of their daughters.

Tara Howell Parker, 29, a former Miss Winston who lived in Charlotte, and her sisters Myssi Howell-Poplin, 28, and Magna Howell, 16, both of Mocksville, were killed September 10th, 2003, while returning home in a Lincoln Town Car stretch limousine from a concert in Greensboro. The Lincoln Town Car stretch limousine had been rented with a professional driver to provide an extra measure of safety for the young women on a special sister night out together. The Lincoln was stopped in heavy traffic when it was rear-ended by a drunk driver in a pickup truck. The women were trapped inside the vehicle when its fuel tank exploded, burning them alive. Estimates from experts on both sides concluded that the impact speed was less than 60 mph.

Families of the three women had sued Ford, maker of the Lincoln Town Car, claiming that the Lincoln Town Car should have been equipped with fuel tank shields for protection against fuel tank rupture and catastrophic fires in these cars when rear-ended.

For more information contact [REDACTED]

01.18.06

Attorney: NC family reaches settlement with Ford over limo deaths

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) - A family has settled its lawsuit against Ford Motor Co. stemming from a rear-end collision where a limousine erupted into flames, killing the wife of a former NASCAR crew chief and her two sisters, lawyers for both sides said Wednesday. SOURCE:

01.17.06

FORD TRIAL IN SISTERS' DEATHS TO GET UNDERWAY

Mocksville, North Carolina - Ford Motor Co. goes to trial here January 17th in the General Court of Justice in Mocksville (about 40 miles southwest of Winston-Salem) in the fiery deaths of three young sisters who died when the Town Car limousine in which they were passengers erupted in flames after being rear-ended on Sept. 10, 2003. Killed were:

This site requires [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).



The video and animation clips on this site require [Real Quicktime](#) and [QuickTime for Windows](#) to view.

- Tara Howell Parker, 29, former Miss Winston and wife of then NASCAR crew chief [REDACTED]. The couple had adopted a son two months earlier.
- Myati Howell Poplin, 24, of Mocksville, N.C., who with her husband, [REDACTED], was raising 3-month-old daughter [REDACTED].
- Megan Elizabeth Howell, 16, of Mocksville, who, according to her boyfriend, was on her first big night on the town, now that she was mature enough to join her older siblings.

The sisters were returning home from a Fleetwood Mac concert in Greensboro, NC, when the limo, which had come to a halt in heavy traffic on I-40, was struck from behind by a drunk driver in a pickup truck. The impact trapped the girls inside the burning vehicle. The driver escaped. The women's families are suing Ford for continuing to offer for public use vehicles that burst into flames when struck at high speeds from behind.



At issue is Ford's Panther line of passenger cars -- the Town Car, Crown Victoria and Grand Marquis -- that continue to be manufactured with their fuel tanks outside the protection of the rear axle and within the vehicle's "crash zone." The location makes the fuel tanks vulnerable to puncture or rupture if the car is struck from behind at high speed. At least 18 law enforcement officers have died in fuel fed fires in Crown Victoria police cars, and scores of civilians have died in civilian versions of the cars, according to government reports.

A Florida couple was seriously burned in another Town Car limousine fire on May 1, 2003. [REDACTED] was severely burned and her husband, [REDACTED] was injured when the 2003 Lincoln Town Car limousine in which they were passengers was struck from behind and engulfed in flames. Both vehicles were traveling west on SR 93 near Naples, Florida, when the incident occurred. [REDACTED] was burned over 40% of her body and spent four months undergoing hospital treatment.

Ford began offering fuel tank safety shields to police agencies in 2003. Ford made a similar offer to Town Car limousine dealers and owners in 2005. However, the automaker has resisted calls to make the public aware of the cars' vulnerability to fire and the availability of the shields.

On April 20, 2004, a Missouri jury took Ford to task on this issue. The jury reached a \$43.7 million verdict against the automaker, claiming Ford should have notified Lincoln car owners of the car's fire risk. The case involved the death of John Jablonski, 73, who died in July 2003, when another car rear-ended his 1993 Lincoln and it burst into flames. According to jury foreman [REDACTED] [REDACTED] could have been saved by Ford for the price of a 37-cent stamp. The kicker for me and the other jurors was that the same design of gas tanks in that Town Car had caused fatal fires in police cars. Ford warned the police. They should have warned civilians."

FOR MORE INFORMATION contact [REDACTED]

A Safety Matter

Family of sisters who died in a fiery wreck is suing Ford Motor Co., saying it should have installed a shield sooner

By James Romoser, JOURNAL REPORTER

Sisters Megan Howell, Tara Howell Parker and Myati Howell-Poplin died in 2003 when their rented limo was hit in the rear and burned.

Last month, Ford Motor Co. did something that it could have done at least three years ago. It began distributing a basic safety shield that reduces the risk of fire when a Lincoln Town Car limousine is hit from behind.

That shield might have saved the lives of three Mocksville sisters who burned to death on Sept. 10, 2003, on their way home from a rock concert.

SOURCE:

1.16.06

January 16, 2006 trial to focus Ford fuel-tank controversy on civilian deaths

WINSTON-SALEM, NC—A trial in the death of three sisters who burned to death in a Lincoln Town Car limousine, including the wife of former NASCAR crew chief [REDACTED] gets underway in the General Court of Justice in nearby Mocksville on January 16. The special trial date is not subject to change.

→

...

•

•

1.1.06

Ford Crown Victoria is under fire again

WASHINGTON — A U.S. senator has asked Ford Motor Co. to issue gas tank shields to all Crown Victoria sedans used as taxi cabs, following the burning death of a New York City cab driver.

In a Dec. 30 letter to Ford Chairman and CEO Bill Ford Jr., Sen. Charles Schumer, D-New York, urged a "major design overhaul" of the sedans, which are the most popular vehicle in the New York City taxi fleet.

The move is the latest twist in a continuing debate about the safety of the Crown Vic, a full-sized, rear-wheel drive sedan popular with older drivers, police departments and taxi services. Critics contend that the location of the gas tank, behind the rear axle, leaves it vulnerable to rupture and fire in a rear-end crash.

Beginning in 2003, Ford made a set of gas-tank shields available for police cruisers. It offered the kits to owners of Lincoln Town Car limousines in September.

In addition, the kits have been available for purchase by private owners of the Crown Vic, Lincoln Town Car and Mercury Grand Marquis for \$105, plus labor costs.

"For some time now, Crown Victorias have evinced an apparent design flaw that makes the fuel tank susceptible to rupture, leakage and explosion following crashes," Schumer wrote.

Schumer urged Ford to make gas-tank shields and an expected fire-suppression system standard on all future models of the Crown Victoria and related cars. The fixes should be made available to New York City yellow taxis for retrofit, the senator said.

Schumer's letter followed the death of New York cab driver Gurbaj Singh. According to press reports, Singh's cab was struck in the side Dec. 26 by a minivan and burst into flames.

Ford spokesman Dan Jarvis said he could not comment on Schumer's letter since company officials had not reviewed it.

But Ford tests the Crown Victoria at speeds well beyond requirements imposed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Jarvis said. The vehicle holds up well in the tests, he said.

"Certainly, the Crown Vic is a very safe car," Jarvis said. "The safety record of the car is among the best

in the industry."

Ford has been mired in questions about the Crown Victoria's gas-tank design since a series of police deaths. At least 18 police officers and state troopers have died in Crown Victoria Police Interceptor fires. Most of the deaths occurred when the cruisers were struck from behind at extremely high speeds.

In Oct. 2003, another New York cab driver, Mohammed Abu Yousef, was killed in a fire when his Crown Vic was rear-ended.

Sabaner previously wrote to Ford in 2003 after the death of a New York state trooper in a Crown Victoria Police Interceptor.

SOURCE: >

- [Interactive](#)
- [Quiz](#)
- [Gallery](#)

Police work can be dangerous, even deadly, and criminals are not the only danger. Lately, some say the threat to a number of police officers has come from their own police cars, hit from behind while they were stopped, as they so often are, by the side of the highway. **MORE >**

In the last 20 years, a dozen police officers around the United States have died in fiery rear end collisions of Ford Crown Victorias. **MORE >**

- [Members named to Crown Vic panel](#)
- [Hunting on Crown Victoria fires delayed by vague dispute](#)
- [Debate rages over Crown Victoria's role in officers' deaths](#)
- [12 tales of falling officers](#)
- [Rebuilding ██████████](#)

MORE >

TOP