



St. Johns River

Water Management District

Kirby B. Green III, Executive Director • David W. Fisk, Assistant Executive Director

2007 SEP 13 AM 8:05

• Palatka, FL

On the Internet at

CL-10203745 - 7710

August 31, 2007

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attention: Ms. Nicole Nason, Administrator
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, D. C. 20590

REGISTERED MAIL; RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dear

St. John's River Water Management District is an Agency of the State of Florida. We operate a large fleet of vehicles in support of our work for the citizens of our State.

Starting in February 2007 we discovered a severe corrosion problem present on the front frame substructure of a 1998 General Motors pickup truck undergoing maintenance in one of our repair facilities. The left front frame rail supports the steering box mounting, and the crossmember supports the brake reaction rods. Subsequently, we initiated a detailed inspection of all of our remaining vehicles.

These initial inspections revealed seven (7) vehicles deemed unsafe for continued operation and they were subsequently removed from service due to the possibility for the steering and/or braking failure should the frame or crossmember fracture and separate during operation. It is our observation that the design of the crossmember provided no exit point for accumulated water, allowing the buildup of sediment and the subsequent corrosion from within of the frame structure.

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ET
09/13/07
K5

Pg. (2)

These initial vehicles were reported to your Office of Defects Investigation via the internet.

The confirmation numbers received were:

10183316

10183526

10184015

10184019

10184021

10184023

10184025

To date we have received no follow-up communication from your agency regarding this problem.

Subsequent to these initial seven (7) vehicles, we discovered another six (6) vehicles exhibiting the same corrosion, which we have not previously reported. All of these vehicles are either Chevrolet or GMC, ¾ ton, 4 wheel drive pickup trucks in the 1998 through 2000 model year.

Besides the cost to the taxpayers of Florida to replace these unsafe vehicles, our concern is that we cannot be the only owners or operators of this genre of vehicles that exhibit this condition. We believe that this is an extremely dangerous condition that has the potential for serious accidents and/or loss of life sometime in the future.

We have also provided this information to a General Motors Corporation representative and have had no follow-up to date from the manufacturer.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ph: [REDACTED]