



CL-10212791-6962

U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION  
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY  
BETHESDA, MD 20814-4408

Alberta E. Mills  
Freedom of Information Officer • Division of Information and Technology

Tel: 301-504-7923  
Fax: 301-504-0127 • Email: amills@cpsc.gov

September 27, 2007

[Redacted]  
Alexandria, LA [Redacted]

**RE:** Cequent Towing Products

Dear [Redacted]

NHTSA  
WASHINGTON, DC 20590  
2007 OCT 15 P 4: 31  
OFFICE OF CHIEF  
COUNSEL

Thank you for your inquiry to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (Commission). The matter about which you are corresponding does not fall within our jurisdiction. As a result, we do not maintain any records responsive to your inquiries and cannot respond to your concerns. The NHTSA may maintain the information you are seeking.

You can contact them at their website, [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov), or at this address:

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION  
Department of Transportation / Office of General Counsel  
400 7th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

The Commission is an independent regulatory agency of the federal government. Its mission is to protect the consumer from unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products, such as home appliances, clothing and toys. It has jurisdiction over more than 15,000 consumer products, and administers the following safety laws: the Consumer Product Safety Act, the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, the Flammable Fabrics Act, the Poison Prevention Packaging Act, the Refrigerator Safety Act and the Cigarette Safety Act. Our records usually concern issues of safety and compliance with existing regulations for specific manufacturers and their consumer products.

Sincerely,

Alberta E. Mills

Enclosure – Your complaint letter

mc  
12/19/07  
BF

September 5, 2007

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
4330 East WEST Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814

CPSC/OFC OF THE SECRETARY  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
2007 SEP 11 A 10:05

RE: Consumer Complaint

Dear Product Safety Commission

My name is [REDACTED]. My mailing address is [REDACTED] in Alexandria Louisiana [REDACTED]. My home phone is [REDACTED]. My work number is [REDACTED] and my cell phone is [REDACTED]. I wish to file a formal complaint against Cequent Towing Products whose address is 47774 Anchor Court West in Plymouth, Michigan 48170 – Attention – Mr. John Kroll.

I filed a complaint to the company in the attached letter, with documentation, dated June 30, 2007. I filed the complaint because of a towing product that I purchased from a local store that was made by Cequent. In my opinion the hitch that I purchased that was manufactured by Cequent is totally unsafe and I incurred over [REDACTED] in damages to my vehicle to prove this fact. The clip that is supposed to hold the hitch pin in place is so designed to fit over the pin to hold it in place. A safer design for the pin and clip would be to have a hole drilled into the pin whereby the clip could be inserted into the hole thereby alleviating the possibility of the clip being jarred loose from the pin. Pictures of the pin and clip as well as the photos of the damages to my vehicle and trailer is enclosed. A copy of the repair bill from Hixson Ford is enclosed also. My June 30, 2007 letter was mailed to the attention of:

John Kroll  
Cequent Towing Products  
47774 Anchor Court West  
Plymouth, MI 48170

I filed my complaint with Cequent asking them for reimbursement and damages in the amount of [REDACTED]

On August 13, 2007, a Cequent employee named John called me at around 12:55 PM and stated that John Kroll was away but that he was calling me to let me know that Cequent was not going to honor my request because essentially their product was safe because there was no stress on the clip and that they had not had any other complaints. I stated to Mr. John that I had proof to the contrary that the product was unsafe.

Therefore I am sending my complaint to your commission so that you can investigate this matter. The resolution that I am seeking is payment from Cequent in the amount of [REDACTED] and that said company would change their design of this product so that no

one would have to endure what happened to me which could be much worst and costlier the next time. My father has had a Reese tow package on his 1995 truck since he bought the truck new. However the pin that he has on the hitch has a hole in it by which the clip can be inserted into the hole of the pin and not over it. I am sure that Cequent probably stopped boring the holes into the pins as perhaps some type of cost saving measure but this was a mistake to do

If you need any additional information my cell phone is [REDACTED] and my E-mail address is [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

June 30, 2007

Cequent Towing Products  
47774 Anchor Court West  
Plymouth, MI 48170

RE: Consumer Complaint

Dear Cequent Complaint Department:

On the morning of 6/18/07, I purchased a Reese Towpower 3 ¼ Drop – 2” Ball Mount from Home Depot in Alexandria, Louisiana. The towing implement had a barcode of 016118049091. A copy of the receipt for the implement is enclosed. The implement was purchased to attach to my wife’s 2004 GMC Envoy for the purpose of towing my 4’ x 8’ utility trailer.

Prior to my 1 ½ hour drive, I hooked my trailer, which contained my push lawnmower, a ladder, gas can, to the vehicle. I was concerned about the slack when I inserted the Towpower into the trailer housing on my vehicle. At any rate we embarked on the 1 ½ trip via Interstate 49 whereby I pulled the trailer at speeds up to 70 miles per hour.

Upon entering the city limits of Lafayette, Louisiana, the speed limit dropped to 45 miles per hour. As I crossed a railroad track on Evangeline Thruway, one of the main thoroughfares within Lafayette, the trailer went slightly airborne, flipped on the passenger side, then on the driver’s side, and the tongue of the trailer started hitting the back of the Envoy. I did not immediately slam on my brakes for fear of the tongue of the trailer might burst out my back glass of the vehicle. Also I was afraid that if I stopped immediately I might have caused chain vehicle wreck. The safety chains finally came loose from the vehicle and the trailer stopped upright in the left hand lane of traffic. I immediately jumped out of my vehicle whereby I heard a siren. I thought to myself that the police were really on their job. As I was walking back to my trailer I noticed that the traffic in all three lanes had stopped. Also the policeman, that I thought was coming to my rescue, just waved at me and passed by with his siren blaring. Since there were no other vehicles involved he kept going to a more urgent call.

At any rate, I discovered that the safety chains had held the trailer intact for a while before coming loose. The towpower with the ball was still attached to the trailer but the pin and the clip that was supposed to hold the implement in place to the vehicle, was nowhere to be found.

I have been towing trailers for 35 years hauling livestock, tractors, hay, vehicles, etc., but this was the first time that I have ever had a trailer to come unhitched from my vehicle. When I first glanced at the Envoy, I saw only minor damage to the back of the Envoy and the trailer received minor damage as well. This accident could have been disastrous but I thank God that it was not.

Wondering how I was going to tow my trailer back home, I took what was left of the Towpower Hitch back to the Home Depot Store in Lafayette, Louisiana and the exact same hitch again. However I purchased some additional clamps to secure the clamp on the pin so as not to have a repeat performance.

I have enclosed pictures of the implement that I got at the Home Depot in Lafayette. It is exactly like the one I purchased in Alexandria. Since my accident I have looked at numerous towing implements. Your company should have never made the clamp, which is supposed to hold the pin in place, to fit over the pin. The pin should have had a hole drilled through it which will allow the clamp to be inserted through the pin. This is more secure. Having the clamp so design so that it fits over the end of the pin is risky as I have experienced first-hand. Your company should do an immediate recall of this implement and start drilling a hole through the pin for safety purposes. Having been raised on a farm and utilizing farm implements, especially 3-point hitches on tractors, the pins that I have been associated with have holes in them whereby clamps are inserted through them. Also enclosed you will find photos depicting the damages sustained to my vehicle when the trailer came loose. Hixson Autoplex of Alexandria did the repairs on my vehicle. The total cost was [REDACTED]. We had a [REDACTED] deductible however we only paid [REDACTED] because Hixson missed a spot during the repairs. A copy of the Hixson estimate is enclosed as well. My insurance company paid [REDACTED] on this claim.

Since your implement was at fault for my accident, I am asking for the following:

- [REDACTED] which is the amount my insurance company paid to Hixson
- [REDACTED] which is the deductible amount that we paid out of pocket
- [REDACTED] which is the amount that I paid for flawed hitch
- [REDACTED] which is my estimate of what it will cost to repair my trailer

**Total** [REDACTED]

Considering what could have happen when my trailer came loose, possible chain car accident resulting in bodily and property injuries, attorneys, etc., the aforementioned [REDACTED] is a small price to pay. I will reimburse my insurance company so that I will not be charged with a claim. I was inclined to file a complaint with the Consumer Protection Commission or either the State Attorney General Consumer Protection Division in Minnesota. however I thought that I would give your company a chance to resolve this issue. However if the issue is not resolved I will pursue another course of action.

If you have any further questions my cell phone is [REDACTED] and my e-mail address is [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 27, 2007

006417

Mr. Charles C. Foti  
Attorney General  
Louisiana Department of Justice  
Consumer Protection Section  
P.O. Box 94005  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

RE: Consumer Complaint

Dear Mr. Foti:

My name is [REDACTED]. My mailing address is [REDACTED] in Alexandria, Louisiana [REDACTED]. My home phone is [REDACTED]. My work number is [REDACTED] and my cell phone is [REDACTED]. I wish to file a formal complaint against Cequent Towing Products whose address is 47774 Anchor Court West in Plymouth, Michigan 48170 – Attention – Mr. John Kroll.

I filed a complaint to the company in the attached letter, with documentation, dated June 30, 2007. I filed the complaint because of a towing product that I purchased from a local store that was made by Cequent. In my opinion the hitch that I purchased that was manufactured by Cequent is totally unsafe and I incurred over [REDACTED] in damages to my vehicle to prove this fact. The clip that is supposed to hold the hitch pin in place is so designed to fit over the pin to hold it in place. A safer design for the pin and clip would be to have a hole drilled into the pin whereby the clip could be inserted into the hole thereby alleviating the possibility of the clip being jarred loose from the pin. Pictures of the pin and clip as well as the photos of the damages to my vehicle and trailer is enclosed. A copy of the repair bill from Hixson Ford is enclosed also. My June 30, 2007 letter was mailed to the attention of:

John Kroll  
Cequent Towing Products  
47774 Anchor Court West  
Plymouth, MI 48170

I filed my complaint with Cequent asking them for reimbursement and damages in the amount of [REDACTED].

On August 13, 2007, a Cequent employee named John called me at around 12:55 PM and stated that John Kroll was away but that he was calling me to let me know that Cequent was not going to honor my request because essentially their product was safe because there was no stress on the clip and that they had not had any other complaints. I stated to Mr. John that I had proof to the contrary that the product was unsafe.

Therefore I am sending my complaint to your department so that you can investigate this matter. The resolution that I am seeking is payment from Cequent in the amount of [REDACTED] and that said company would change their design of this product so that no one would have to endure what happened to me which could be much worst and costlier the next time.

If you need any additional information my cell phone [REDACTED] and my E-mail address is [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

June 30, 2007

Cequent Towing Products  
47774 Anchor Court West  
Plymouth, MI 48170

RE: Consumer Complaint

Dear Cequent Complaint Department:

On the morning of 6/18/07, I purchased a Reese Towpower 3 ¼ Drop – 2” Ball Mount from Home Depot in Alexandria, Louisiana. The towing implement had a barcode of [REDACTED]. A copy of the receipt for the implement is enclosed. The implement was purchased to attach to my wife’s 2004 GMC Envoy for the purpose of towing my 4’ x 8’ utility trailer.

Prior to my 1 ½ hour drive, I hooked my trailer, which contained my push lawnmower, a ladder, gas can, to the vehicle. I was concerned about the slack when I inserted the Towpower into the trailer housing on my vehicle. At any rate we embarked on the 1 ½ trip via Interstate 49 whereby I pulled the trailer at speeds up to 70 miles per hour.

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At any rate, I discovered that the safety chains had held the trailer intact for a while before coming loose. The towpower with the ball was still attached to the trailer but the pin and the clip that was supposed to hold the implement in place to the vehicle, was nowhere to be found.

I have been towing trailers for 35 years hauling livestock, tractors, hay, vehicles, etc., but this was the first time that I have ever had a trailer to come unhitched from my vehicle. When I first glanced at the Envoy, I saw only minor damage to the back of the Envoy and the trailer received minor damage as well. This accident could have been disastrous but I thank God that it was not.

Wondering how I was going to tow my trailer back home, I took what was left of the Towpower Hitch back to the Home Depot Store in Lafayette, Louisiana and the exact same hitch again. However I purchased some additional clamps to secure the clamp on the pin so as not to have a repeat performance.

I have enclosed pictures of the implement that I got at the Home Depot in Lafayette. It is exactly like the one I purchased in Alexandria. Since my accident I have looked at numerous towing implements. Your company should have never made the clamp, which is supposed to hold the pin in place, to fit over the pin. The pin should have had a hole drilled through it which will allow the clamp to be inserted through the pin. This is more secure. Having the clamp so design so that it fits over the end of the pin is risky as I have experienced first-hand. Your company should do an immediate recall of this implement and start drilling a hole through the pin for safety purposes. Having been raised on a farm and utilizing farm implements, especially 3-point hitches on tractors, the pins that I have been associated with have holes in them whereby clamps are inserted through them. Also enclosed you will find photos depicting the damages sustained to my vehicle when the trailer came loose. Hixson Autoplex of Alexandria did the repairs on my vehicle. The total cost was [REDACTED]. We had a [REDACTED] deductible however we only paid [REDACTED] because Hixson missed a spot during the repairs. A copy of the Hixson estimate is enclosed as well. My insurance company paid [REDACTED] on this claim.

Since your implement was at fault for my accident, I am asking for the following:

- [REDACTED] which is the amount my insurance company paid to Hixson
  - [REDACTED] which is the deductible amount that we paid out of pocket
  - [REDACTED] which is the amount that I paid for flawed hitch
  - [REDACTED] which is my estimate of what it will cost to repair my trailer
- Total** [REDACTED]

Considering what could have happen when my trailer came loose, possible chain car accident resulting in bodily and property injuries, attorneys, etc., the aforementioned [REDACTED] is a small price to pay. I will reimburse my insurance company so that I will not be charged with a claim. I was inclined to file a complaint with the Consumer Protection Commission or either the State Attorney General Consumer Protection Division in ~~Mississippi~~ <sup>Michigan</sup>. however I thought that I would give your company a chance to resolve this issue. However if the issue is not resolved I will pursue another course of action.

If you have any further questions my cell phone is [REDACTED] and my e-mail address is [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]



CHARLES C. FOTI, JR.  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

State of Louisiana  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
P.O. BOX 94005  
BATON ROUGE  
70804-9005

September 10, 2007

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
4330 East West Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Re: Consumer Complaint filed by [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam:

Attached, please find an inquiry recently received by the Office of the Attorney General. Because it appears to fall within the purview of your agency, it is forwarded for disposition as you deem appropriate. The consumer has been notified of this referral.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES C. FOTI, JR  
Attorney General

By: *Trinicia Bryant*  
Trinicia Bryant *for*  
Isabel Wingerter, Director  
Public Protection

Enclosure

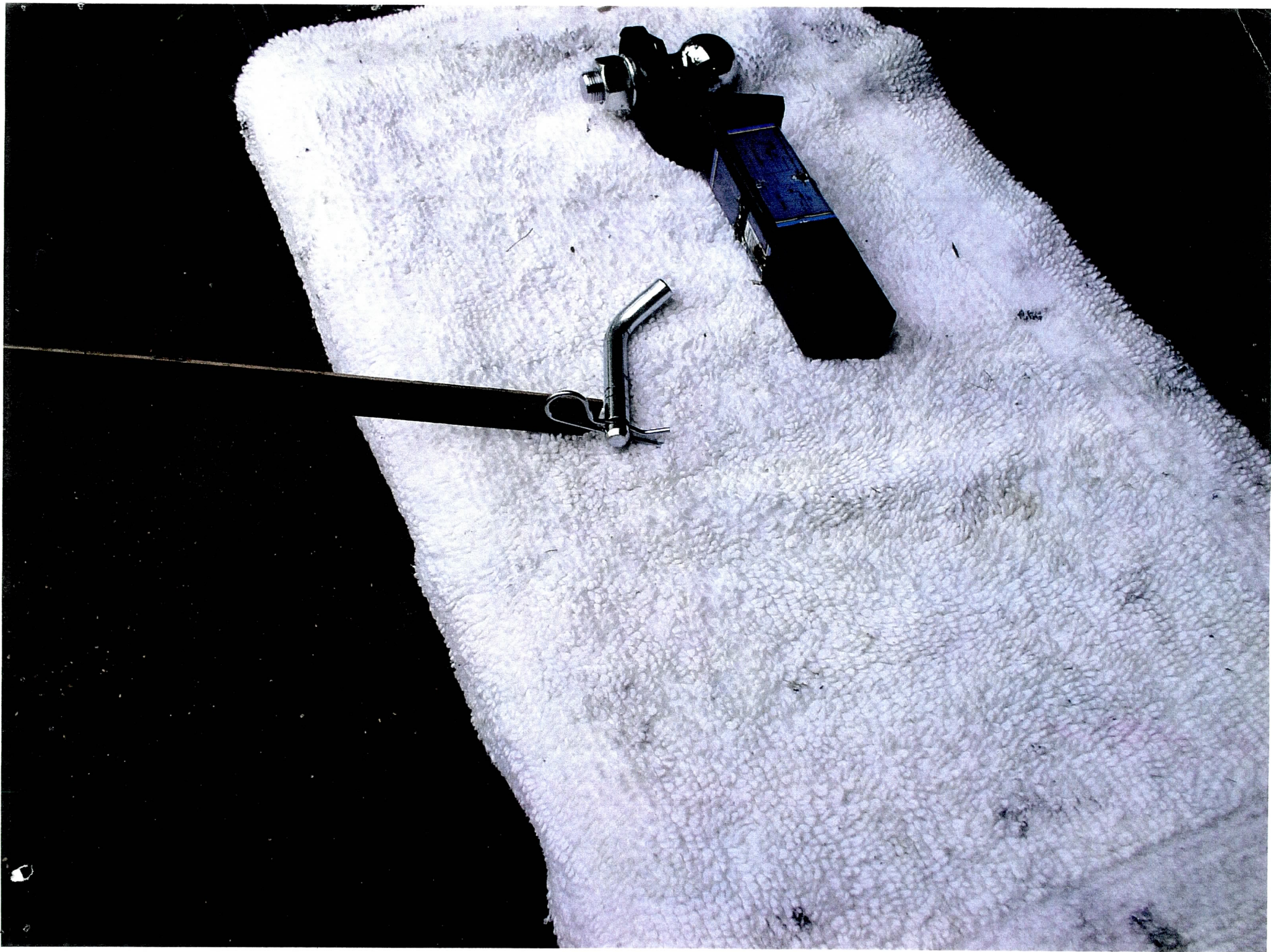
cc: [REDACTED]

Alexandria, LA [REDACTED]

CPSC/OPIC OF THE SECRETARY  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
2007 SEP 14 A 10: 30

Dexter Sauer













**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).**