

July 28, 2008

CL-10238170-3030

Dometic Corporation
 Mr. Anders Almquist
 Executive Vice President of Technology and Production
 2320 Industrial Parkway
 Elkhart, Indiana 46515

EXECUTIVE SEC 2008 AUG -6 PM 3:29

2008 AUG -5 P 3:22

RE: Dometic Refrigerator Heat Tube Malfunction

Dear Mr. Almquist:

I am writing this letter because of a situation that occurred with our Dometic refrigerator on July 26, 2008.

Before I get into the specifics of the events, I would like to provide you with a little background information about my husband and me, and our RV's. In 2002, my the company where I was employed, filed bankruptcy and because of this bankruptcy, my husbands business was also slowing down, forcing us to go in search of new jobs. My husband and I found new jobs in North Carolina and purchased a 2002 Challenger 5th wheel to live in until we could find an affordable home. We sold everything that we owned and moved the 5th wheel to North Carolina. We currently reside in that same 5th wheel. We also have a 1999 Elkhorn truck camper that we use for our vacations. Both camper models are, or should I say were, equipped with Dometic refrigerators. We were very pleased with the performance of the Dometic refrigerator in the truck camper and we were happy to see that the 5th wheel had one as well.

We then received the notification stating that there could be a recall on our refrigerator, which provided the specifics of the manufacturing problem. We found that the 5th wheel had the matching numbers in reference to the recall. Our model number is RM2852. We called to find a dealership within our area that was providing recall services and that could come to our location to perform the recall repair, rather than us taking the 5th wheel out of the park. Because we live, year around, in our 5th wheel, it is not easily moved. A service repair technician from "Family RV" came to our home and performed the recall work. We were obligated to pay \$95 dollars for the service call because he had to come to our home, which was not covered under the recall work. It took him less than 20 minutes.

July 26, 2008, I defrosted the freezer and refrigerator as I have done approximately every six months for the last 5-1/2 years. I then switched the control to gas, because the refrigerator will cool quicker on gas, than electric. I then proceeded to wipe off everything before returning it to the refrigerator. When I opened the door to return the food to the refrigerator, there was a strong ammonia odor, so strong that it burnt my eyes and took my breath away. I quickly switched the refrigerator off, closed the door and ran outside to inform my husband. He and a neighbor came in to see what was wrong. They then went to examine the refrigerator components from the outside of the camper, shutting off the electric and the gas to it. When they opened the outside ventilation door, the odor was pungent within the compartment and there were pieces of insulation that were crystallized, it had gotten so hot. The ammonia was leaking from the boiler tube and was saturating the plywood and the insulation around the tube. This was in a matter of minutes; I would hate to think what would have happened after several hours, had I not noticed the odor.

When I hear the word "recall", I think of a product malfunction, soon to be corrected. We have had several vehicles in which recalls were conducted. Always, they repair or replace the defected part.

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When they performed the recall repair on our 5th wheel, I expected the same type of service. I had no idea that the only thing that the recall for the refrigerator entailed, was to place a guard and a small portion of insulation around the boiler tube, in case the products boiler tube failed. Isn't that like placing a drip pan under a leaking gas tank? Of course, that is exactly what happened. The boiler tube cracked, it sprayed hot solution from the crack and omitted the odor into our entire 5th wheel (home). The boiler tube was extremely hot (boiling). It continued leaking until the pressure released. As earlier stated, it was hot enough that it was crystallizing the insulation placed around the tube. The fact that the gas line is right there is extremely frightening to me.

Once the tube stopped leaking the hot ammonia, and it was cool enough to work with, my husband and the neighbor removed the refrigerator. We had no choice but to remove the refrigerator unit from the 5th wheel, once the boiler system cooled. The odor was so strong inside the home, it was burning our eyes and it actually hurt to breathe it. We put fans up to push out the odor and I had to clean up the balance of the ammonia solution that had leaked from the tube onto the plywood.

We truly believe that the recall should have been a complete replacement of the boiler tube system and not just a simple heat shield and small amount of insulation. We also believe that this situation should have been foreseen as a much higher danger than it was.

We were told that to repair the unit, it would cost approximately \$400 dollars, just for the part alone. A new unit would be approximately \$1800 dollars, for the unit alone. Along with these estimates, we would be without the refrigerator for whatever time it took to retrieve parts or wait for a new unit. Times are hard right now and we did not have the money to do any of the above listed scenarios. We went the easiest way out and we are not very happy about having to do it. We went to Lowe's and purchased a refrigerator for \$353 dollars. It runs on electric only. This was not what we wanted to do, but did not have the funds to do anything more.

We believe that this situation could have escalated into a much bigger problem, had we not been there. If for some reason our power would have gone off during the day, while we were working and the refrigerator automatically switched over to gas, we could have after work, arrived to a home of ashes. At some point in our lives, my husband and I would like to purchase a home once again and not reside in a 5th wheel, but for now, it is all we have. This is our home!

We are extremely upset about the entire ordeal and thought someone should know of the situation. Why was a "boiler tube", obviously suspected of defects at the manufacturing level, not entirely replaced?

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted address line 1]

[Redacted address line 2]

Denver, NC [Redacted address line 3]

cc: Mr. Lars Johansson, CEO and President
National Hwy Traffic Safety Administration