

TO: Ford Motor Company  
Customer Relationship Center  
PO Box 6248  
Dearborn MI 48121

DATE: 8/21/08

CL-10240408-6144

2008 AUG 26 PM 12: 42

FROM:

[REDACTED]  
Rochester NY [REDACTED]

2008 AUG 25 A 2: 12

RE: Safety Concern

In April, 2005, I purchased a Ford Focus ZX4 at Fairport Ford, 71 Marsh Road, Fairport NY 14445. All major maintenance has been done at the dealership there.

October 4, 2007 - Service at Fairport Ford included replacement of front brakes and rotors, stabilizer links (steering), LOF and tire rotation.

Following this service, several people told me that they heard "noises" when the car was approaching. With the front window lowered, I could hear a "ticking sound".

When questioning about the noises, I was told that it was related to the wheel covers. Until the October 4 service, there had been no noise or ticking sound.

The service personnel addressed the noise problem at subsequent appointments but the noise and ticking sound persisted.

On May 8, 2008, tape was attached to the contact points of the wheel covers and lubricant was sprayed on the front passenger side when a ticking sound could still be heard.

On July 27, 2008, the front passenger side tire went flat on a busy street that fortunately had a place for me to pull out of traffic. AAA replaced the flat tire with the "donut" and I took the tire on July 28 to Goodyear to be repaired. At that time, the Goodyear technician showed me the cause of the flat tire: all four wheel covers were rotating on the wheels so that they bent the valve stems underneath the cover. The one on the front passenger side had split and caused the flat tire. After assuring that all four covers were correctly installed, I drove home and discovered that they had rotated again and the valve stems were again under the covers.

I immediately went to Fairport Ford and reported the problem with the wheel covers. The service personnel used epoxy glue to fasten the wheel covers to the wheels. Three of the covers "stuck" but the fourth continued to rotate. Aware of the serious hazard of the situation, I removed all the wheel covers and have left them off the car.

Since July 28 I have continued to leave the wheel covers off the car, preferring the unfinished appearance of the vehicle to the possibility of a flat tire in busy traffic at high speed.

The covers that pose the risk to drivers and their passengers and others on the highway are Parts 5543-1130-AA in the USA. (VIN 1FAFP34N85W [REDACTED])

I am enclosing photos of the wheel covers which were attached to wheels of my 2005 Ford Focus ZX4.

CC: NHTSA, Fairport Ford

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8/24/08  
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