



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

29-DEC-2008

Repository ☐

Reference No.
10253070

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

AIKEN

State

SC

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

same

Do you authorize NHTSA to contact the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES
In the absence of a signature, provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner _____ Date 01/05/09

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

1TC2F4823

Travel Trailer

Make

COACHMEN

Model

CAPRI

Model Year

2005

Date Purchased

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine:

No: Cylinders

Fuel Type:

Original Owner

☐

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

☐ Antilock Brakes

Powertrain

Multiple Failure:

All Four(4) Wheels

Incident Date(s)

16-DEC-2007

☐ Cruise Control

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Vehicle Component Code: 031100 SERVICE BRAKES, ELECTRIC

Failure Mileage

less than
2,800

Failure Speed

coming to
a stop

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: DOTM19ABC036)

☐ 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

0

Number of Deaths

0

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).

TL*THE CONTACT OWNS A 2005 COACHMEN CAPRI, MODEL 27DS. WHILE DRIVING AT AN UNKNOWN SPEED, THE ELECTRIC BRAKE SWITCH DID NOT REGISTER A READING. THE CONTACT ASSUMED THAT THE ELECTRIC BRAKES FAILED. THE DEALER STATED THAT THE VEHICLE WOULD NOT BE REPAIRED UNDER WARRANTY BECAUSE IT DID NOT QUALIFY. HE TOOK THE VEHICLE TO ANOTHER REPAIR SHOP AND THEY DISCOVERED THAT THE ELECTRIC BRAKE WIRES WERE TAPED TO THE WHEEL SPINDLES, WHICH LOOSENED AND BECAME ENTANGLED IN THE ROTATION OF THE WHEEL DRUM. AS A RESULT, THE GROUND WIRE BECAME LOOSE. ALL FOUR WHEELS EXPERIENCED THE SAME FAILURE. THE VEHICLE WAS REPAIRED AT THE COST OF OVER \$200. THE MANUFACTURER REFUSED TO PROVIDE REIMBURSEMENT. THE FAILURE MILEAGE WAS UNKNOWN.

The enclosed are letters and an invoice of repair sent to GoodSamsClub for help in my fruitless attempt to recoup my expenses. Also a letter to the CEO of Coachmen of which I received no reply.

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 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond 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.

Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS**From:****To:** actionline@GoodSamClub.com**Subject:** Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS**Date:** May 3, 2008 3:44 PM**Attachments:** Coachmen Industries Inc.tif RONNIES HITCHES AND TRAILER REPAIR BILL.tif

Dear Action Line, This Past December, while stopped at a drawbridge : SC, I observed that my electric brake control LED was reading "0" with brake applied on an incline. I had not noticed this before. However, v owned the RV 18 weeks with only (3) prior trips totaling not over (1,200 and I would not be looking at the brake readout upon stopping.

Upon arriving home, I took my vehicle and T.T. to Ronnie's Hitch and T for diagnosis and repair; This is the shop who installed the electric br on my tow vehicle, without the trailer. I figured there could be a probl instalation. Wrong, the diagnosis revealed that the brake wires were nc properly at each axle wheel housing and according to the technician, it covered by factory, either defect or recall.

This is when I contacted the previous owner, from whom I purchased, wh the T.T. new from Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen in New Ellenton, SC; to see brake problems or any work done on the T.T. brakes during his ownership than (2000) miles of travel. His response was "negative" and that he too had very good brakes on his tow vehicle, also he had never noticed a difficulty. PLEASE SEE ATTACHED CERTIFIED STATEMENT FROM PREVIOUS OWNER Sent to Coachmen Industries.

I then took the T.T. to Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen for repair under war kept the trailer a week and when I called, the Svr. Mgr. said, "you have backing up but no brakes foward, and no warranty on the trailer, it's mor a year old." With all this uncertainty and possibly more complex defects the T.T. back to Ronnie's Hitch & Trailer for repair. Please see attache statement and repair bill.

After Faxing my letter for help to Coachmen, the Svr. Mgr. (Mr. Kenneth called me with his regrets of no warranty repair coverage. This was/is as per my letter to Coachmen, I am confident this problem came from the or a botched job by the dealer to repair upon initial prep-inspection.

Your help in recovering some or all of my \$250.00 repair bill will be

appreciated. Also, someone else may have the same safety hazard with Coachmen and not know it, as we did. This could have been a very dangerous situation. We were fortunate not to have been in an accident.

Aiken, SC

PS: you should receive 2 attachments. A letter to Coachmen and a repair order. I HOPE AND TRUST THEY ARE READABLE, if not let me know and I will resend.

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<http://www.peoplepc.com>

1836 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
WARRENVILLE, SC 29851
(803) 584-9340

2

[illegible]

Coachmen Industries, Inc.
Warranty and Service Center Manager
PO Box 30 or 423 North Main St.
Middlebury, IN 46540

Dec. 31, 2007

Dear Manager,

This is to certify that I, [REDACTED] purchased in September of 2004 a 2005 Coachmen Capri Ruby Edition travel - trailer model # 27DS, VIN # 1TC2B4822 [REDACTED] from Goodman Chevrolet-Coachmen 100 North Main St. New Ellenton, SC [REDACTED]. I sold it to [REDACTED] on June 30, 2007. During this time frame I used it only five (5) times for a total miles of less than 1800 miles, just local trips around South Carolina. Also, during this time, no one, not I or anyone I hired or the dealer service, work on the brakes or brake electrical wires.

I have very good brakes on my tow vehicle and was not aware that I did not have brakes on the trailer. Please see the statement from [REDACTED] below.

Sincerely, [REDACTED] Warrenville, SC [REDACTED] Phone # [REDACTED]

Dear Manager,

This is to certify that I, [REDACTED] purchased the above described travel trailer and have discovered that the trailer either had a factory defect on the brake wires or upon delivery to the above dealer, inspection prep found a problem with the brakes and attempted to repair it. In my ownership of six (6) months and four (4) uses for a total of less than 1000 miles, I have experienced problems of intermittent brakes. I thought the problem was the brake switch. However, upon inspection, no problem was found, so I took it to the dealer who told me that I had no brakes going forward but had brakes backing-up and since the unit was more than a year old that there was no warranty. At this point I took the trailer to the service center that installed the brake switch for a more thorough inspection. I, and the technician could not believe what they found!

On all four wheels, the brake wires were taped with electrical tape to the axel spindle and brake housing assembly and had come loose and frayed by the drum rotation.

I have not had anyone nor have I done any work on this trailer my-self. Therefore, as I stated above, it either came with this condition from the factory or a problem correction attempt at the dealer. The defect with the brakes (all wheels) was corrected by Ronnie's Hitches and Trailers, Inc. 1989 Jefferson Davis Hwy. Warrenville, SC 29851 Phone#: 803-594-9340

Your help in this situation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, [REDACTED] SC [REDACTED] Phone # [REDACTED]

Re: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS

From: [REDACTED]
To: Action Line
Subject: Re: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS
Date: May 5, 2008 4:54 PM

Dear Robin Duffield,

With my E-mail to you I had two attachments , one was my appeal to Coa for compensation and they declined my request. This was stating my case was the repair bill on the brakes from Ronnie's Hitch & Trailers of \$250

I hope you were able to recover the two attachments on my E-mail to yo please let me know and I can re-send.

My name & address: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Aiken, SC [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

>From: Action Line <ActionLine@affinitygroup.com>

>Sent: May 5, 2008 12:42 PM

>To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

>Subject: Re: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS

>

>Thank you for contacting The Good Sam Club's Action Line. I have receiv
>your complaint and would be happy to file a petition on your behalf. Pl
>send in a typed letter of no more than two pages, making your case plus
>expected resolution including your personal contact information plus ar
>supporting documents you might have on this matter.

>

>You may send your information by email or U.S. postal mail to:

>

>Action Line

>Box 8545

>Ventura, CA 93002

>

>Please make sure to include your return mailing address.

>

>Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Editorial Coordinator

>Highways Magazine

>Fax # [REDACTED]

>

>

>On 5/3/08 1:44 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

>

>> Dear Action Line, This Past December, while stopped at a drawbridge in

>> Charleston, SC, I observed that my electric brake control LED was read "0"

>> with brake applied on an incline. I had not noticed this before. However

>> had only owned the RV 18 weeks with only (3) prior trips totaling not >> (1,200) miles and I would not be looking at the brake readout upon start

>> Upon arriving home, I took my vehicle and T.T. to Ronnie's Hitch and

>> Trailers for diagnosis and repair; This is the shop who installed the >> brake switch on my tow vehicle, without the trailer. I figured there be

>> a problem with installation. Wrong, the diagnosis revealed that the >> wires were not connected properly at each axle wheel housing and according

>> the technician, it should be covered by factory, either defect or recall

>> This is when I contacted the previous owner, from whom I purchased, >> bought the T.T. new from Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen in New Ellenton, to

>> see if he had brake problems or any work done on the T.T. brakes during his

>> ownership with less than (2000) miles of travel. His response was "no"

>> and that he too had very good brakes on his tow vehicle, also he had not >> noticed any stopping difficulty. PLEASE SEE ATTACHED CERTIFIED STATEMENT

FROM

>> PREVIOUS OWNER and MY-SELF. Sent to Coachmen Industries.

>> I then took the T.T. to Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen for repair under
>> defect. They kept the trailer a week and when I called, the Svr. Mgr.
>> have brakes backing up but no brakes forward, and no warranty on the trailer
>> it's more than a year old. "With all this uncertainty and possibly
more complex

>> defects I took the T.T. back to Ronnie's Hitch & Trailer for repair.
Please

>> see attached statement and repair bill.

>> After Faxing my letter for help to Coachmen, the Svr. Mgr. (Mr. Ken
>> Bohannon) called me with his regrets of no warranty repair coverage.
>> was/is very provoking, as per my letter to Coachmen, I am confident the
>> problem came from the factory or a botched job by the dealer to repair
upon

>> initial pre-inspection.

>> Your help in recovering some or all of my \$250.00 repair bill will
>> greatly appreciated. Also, someone else may have the same safety hazard
with

>> Coachmen brakes and not know it, as we did. This could have been a very
>> dangerous situation, we were fortunate not to have been in an accident
>> [REDACTED] Aiken, SC

>> PS: you should receive 2 attachments. A letter to Coachmen and a
>> bill/invoice. I HOPE AND TRUST THEY ARE READABLE, if not let me know
I

>> will resend. [REDACTED]

>>

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>> _____
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HIGHWAYS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GOOD SAM CLUB

May 6, 2008

Customer Service Manager
Coachmen Recreational Vehicle Company
P.O. Box 30
Middlebury, Indiana 46540

RE:

[REDACTED]
Aiken, SC [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madame:

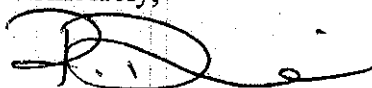
This letter comes to you from "Action Line," a regular column of Highways, a monthly magazine serving more than one million members of the Good Sam Club. We received the enclosed letter from one of our members who is having difficulty resolving a problem that concerns your company. As an impartial, third party mediator, "Action Line" tries to bring the member and business together to equitably resolve their differences.

Due to the large volume of mail handled by this department, only a fraction of the letters we receive are published. Letters that are chosen for the column are edited for style and length. Every attempt is made to choose letters that have educational value for our members.

Your earliest reply concerning this problem, plus a copy of any correspondence forwarded to our member will be appreciated.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,



Robin Duffield
Editorial Coordinator

cc: [REDACTED]

Re: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS

From: [REDACTED]
To: actionline@goodsamclub.com
Subject: Re: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS
Date: May 14, 2008 1:57 PM

To: Robin Duffield, Today I received an E-mail from Mr Mel Williams, As Coachmen RV Group, requesting the VIN of my Capri Travel Trailer, which and gave him the number. About an hour later he returned my call and we my brake problem and repair. He told me that he did not have a copy of invoice bill nor the certification affidavit from myself and the previous of no work ever performed on the brakes during our ownership. These two documents were in an attachment of my E-mail sent to you on May 1. I hope you have them. Please verify.

I do not feel that Mr Williams is going to compensate me for my expense in correcting this factory error. However, he may listen to you.

Original Message-

>From: [REDACTED]
>Sent: May 3, 2008 4:44 PM
>To: actionline@GoodSamClub.com
>Subject: Ref. 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer Capri, Mod. 27DS

>
> Dear Action Line, This Past December, while stopped at a drawbridge SC, I observed that my electric brake control LED was reading "0" with brake applied on an incline. I had not noticed this before. However, I owned the RV 18 weeks with only (3) prior trips totaling not over (1,200) and I would not be looking at the brake readout upon stopping.

> Upon arriving home, I took my vehicle and T.T. to Ronnie's Hitch and for diagnosis and repair; This is the shop who installed the electric brake on my tow vehicle, without the trailer. I figured there could be a problem with the installation. Wrong, the diagnosis revealed that the brake wires were not properly at each axle wheel housing and according to the technician, it was covered by factory, either defect or recall.

> This is when I contacted the previous owner, from whom I purchased, the T.T. new from Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen in New Ellenton, SC; to see brake problems or any work done on the T.T. brakes during his ownership than (2000) miles of travel. His response was "negative" and that he too had very good brakes on his tow vehicle, also he had never noticed a difficulty. PLEASE SEE ATTACHED CERTIFIED STATEMENT FROM PREVIOUS OWNER Sent to Coachmen Industries.

> I then took the T.T. to Goodman Chevrolet Coachmen for repair under warranty. They kept the trailer a week and when I called, the Svr. Mgr. said have brakes backing up but no brakes forward, and no warranty on the trailer more than a year old. "With all this uncertainty and possibly more complex I took the T.T. back to Ronnie's Hitch & Trailer for repair. Please see attached statement and repair bill.

> After Faxing my letter for help to Coachmen, the Svr. Mgr. (Mr. Kenneth) called me with his regrets of no warranty repair coverage. This was/is as per my letter to Coachmen, I am confident this problem came from the or a botched job by the dealer to repair upon initial pre-inspection.

> Your help in recovering some or all of my \$250.00 repair bill will be appreciated. Also, someone else may have the same safety hazard with Coachmen and not know it, as we did. This could have been a very dangerous situation were fortunate not to have been in an accident.

Aiken, SC

> PS: you should receive 2 attachments. A letter to Coachmen and a request. I HOPE AND TRUST THEY ARE READABLE, if not let me know and I will resend.

>
>

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COACHMEN RV GROUP

SERVICE OPERATIONS

May 14, 2008

Attn: Robin Dunfield
Highways
2575 Vista Del Mar Drive
Ventura, CA 93001

RE: ITC2B4822 [REDACTED]

(Your letter of May 6, 2008 regarding our customer [REDACTED])

Dear Robin:

Thank you for writing regarding our customer [REDACTED]. We were very sorry to hear of his dissatisfaction with our company. According to our records:

- The unit in question left our factory in Georgia on July 27, 2004
- The original owner purchased the unit in on September 8, 2004
- The one-year Coachmen warranty expired on September 8, 2005
- There are no claims for any repairs to the brakes and no repairs since November of 2005
- We were not contacted until January of 2008 regarding the brake issue ✓
- The repair bills contain very confusing repair information ✓

✓ It is our experience that a manufacturing defect will evidence itself very early in the life of a vehicle. This is especially true in this instance when the unit was delivered from South Florida to South Carolina, owned by two owners over an almost four year period, and worked on by an RV dealer in 2005.

Because of these facts, we feel that our obligation regarding this matter has been fulfilled. While we cannot be of assistance in this matter, our door is always open to provide technical assistance and parts support if [REDACTED] should need to contact us in the future.

Thank you again for writing and giving us an opportunity to assist our customer.

Sincerely,

COACHMEN RECREATIONAL VEHICLE COMPANY, LLC



Mel Williams
Assistant Vice President

CRV SERVICE DEPARTMENT:

GBM/SERVICE & PARTS DEPARTMENT:

CRV SERVICE PARTS DEPARTMENT:

COACHMEN OF GEORGIA:

WEST COAST SERVICE OPERATIONS:

P.O. BOX 1000

P.O. BOX 1000

P.O. BOX 1109

P.O. BOX 0948

P.O. BOX 0905

MIDDLEBURY, IN 46540

MIDDLEBURY, IN 46540

MIDDLEBURY, IN 46540

FITZGERALD, GA 31750

CHINO, CA 91708

800-453-6064

800-521-8733

800-891-5078

800-638-5471

909-628-5755

FAX 574-825-8339

FAX 574-825-5280

FAX 800-278-7278

FAX 229-423-1208

FAX 909-628-5318

Letter from Coachmen RV Group, Mr. Mel WILLIAMS

From: [REDACTED]
To: actionline@goodsamclub.com
Subject: Letter from Coachmen RV Group, Mr. Mel WILLIAMS
Date: Jun 16, 2008 4:27 PM

Hello Robin,

From: [REDACTED]
Good Sams Club Member # [REDACTED]

Received your letter this past week dated June 3, 2008 and a copy of decline from Coachmen RV Group dated May 14, 2008 signed by Mel Williams

No! I do not care to drop my claim concerning the factory defective brake wires on my 2005 Coachmen Capri Ruby Edition travel trailer. I am that the problem was a defect. The repair technician said so and Mr Mel Williams stated at the beginning of his se "It is our experience that a manufacturing defect will evidence itself early in the life of a vehicle". I agree and it was early in the operational life of this vehicle. After less than 2,800 miles, which is very early, do not evidence a problem when a vehicle is parked.

Mr. Williams also stated that the repair bills contained very confusing information. Another COP-OUT. He was provided, by yours truly, the phone and address of the repair shop. (Ronnie's Hitches and Trailers, Inc. 1989 Jefferson Davis Hwy. Warrenton, SC 29851 Phone # 803- 594-9340), and he did not care enough to contact the their explanation.

I believe this is another large company trying to WEASEL-OUT, SHIRK, and forsakenly neglect their obligation and responsibility. Don't let him forsake his customers this way, and in his letter he did refer to me as

Sincerely, [REDACTED]

Mr. Al Nuzzi
President, Coachmen RV Group
PO Box 1000
Middlebury, IN 46540

August 22, 2008

Dear Mr. Nuzzi:

I have delayed my appeal letter to you until now, thinking your argumentative Assistant Vice President, Mr. Mel Williams, would have conveyed his biased thoughts and decision to you and I would have heard from you. Your assistant really needs some schooling in Customer Relations with classes on Customer Care. I hope he recorded our conversation of July 8, 2008, around 4:00 pm EDT, for educational purposes. It was not pleasant. However, I told him that I was going to contact you, so here goes.

Unless he has destroyed them, Mr. Williams has the particulars about this appeal. Therefore, I will be brief. I have a 2005 Coachmen Travel Trailer, which developed a safety hazard with the brakes with less than 2800 miles on it in December 2007. Please see affidavit of ownership. This is early in the life of the vehicle. Brake problems are nil with trailer parked.

The technician, who repaired the problem, affirmed that it was a factory defect in the mannerism in which the wires were attached to the wheels spindles. All four (4) wheels had the same problem. From what I understand from the repair person, the wires were tapped to the spindles and had come loose and gotten caught-up into the rotation of the drums which had frayed and broken the ground wires. Mr. Williams had the information to contact the repair shop. However, he chose not to. All he wanted to do is argue and belittle the ownership affidavit, which he said was bogus. In essence, he said that it was a LIE.

I feel that I should not have to pay to correct a factory defect, especially a safety hazard. I am appealing to you for compensation on this repair. Mr. Williams knows exactly what the cost was. I do not intend to cast a threat. However, if your decision is not in my favor I will contact the National Highway Safety Administration for their help.

In the event that you need any additional information, any at all, please contact me at any of the three mediums below.

Address: [REDACTED] SC [REDACTED] / Phone: [REDACTED] / e-mail:

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]