

INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)

NVS-200

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Longview Texas
July 11, 2011

JUL 19 2011

Administrator NHTA
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear NHTA Administrator:

The purpose of this letter is to report a defect which can lead to loss of air pressure in both (or all four) dual rear wheels simultaneously related to a 2010 Solera by Forest River Motorhome as built on a 2008 Freightliner Sprinter Chassis.

The failure results from the rivets which hold the friction locking devices on the chrome "artificial wheel" wheel covers. Failure of these rivets causes the wheel cover to become loose and attached to the vehicle only by the air valve extension hoses which are attached to the wheel cover with a nut. The rivet failure leads to wear through of the armored extension hoses, and simultaneous rapid loss of air pressure to both dual wheels (and possibly all four) mounted on the rear axle when they eventually separate and allow the wheel cover to depart from the vehicle.

This failure occurred on my vehicle, 2010 Forest VIN WDPPF445489 [REDACTED] on June 20, 2011. It occurred somewhere between Jade City on British Columbia Hwy 37 (Cassiar Hwy) and Teslin, Yukon Territory, (Alaska Hwy) Canada while travelling with my daughter, [REDACTED] and her husband [REDACTED]. They were also witness to the wheel cover failure. The vehicle had 13,558 total miles when the defect was discovered at Teslin, YT. Both rear wheel covers were found to be unattached to the wheels by the friction hold devices. One tire was partially deflated and the valve extension to the mated dual was nearly worn through. If not detected prior to complete hose extender failure and separation of the wheel cover from the vehicle, this failure would have led to rapid loss of air in at least two paired dual tires and possible all four simultaneously. On a vehicle of this size, this presents a significant risk to vehicle control. The wheel covers and valve extensions were removed following detection of the failure, and the remainder of the trip was completed without rear wheel covers. It would seem that only luck in detecting the impending failure while refueling, prevented catastrophic failure.

The wheel covers are stamped with a "Tiawan" stamp, but have no other identification. I have enclosed photos showing the rivet failures, the wheel covers, and the wear through an armored valve extension.

As this failure occurred while traveling through Canada, a courtesy copy of this report is also sent to Transport Canada, Motor Vehicle Defect Investigation and Recalls as well as to Forest River, Inc., the manufacturer of the motorhome.

Please contact me if additional information is needed, or if you would like to examine the failed parts

Sincerely,

Enclosure(s)

Xc: Transport Canada
Motor Vehicle Defect Investigation and Recalls
2780 Sheffield Road
Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1B 3V9

Forest River, Inc
P.O. Box 3030
55740 County Road One
Elkhart, IN 46515-3030



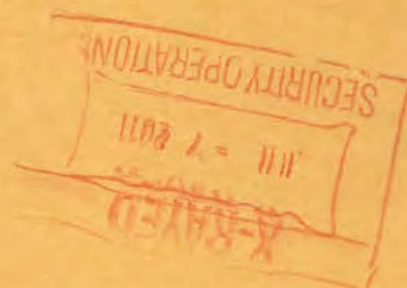








Longview, Tx



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