

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

**From:** [Wells, Cynthia CTR \(NHTSA\)](#)  
**To:** [Fogle, Brenda CTR \(NHTSA\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 20120926055904043.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Standard  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012 10:13:54 AM  
**Attachments:** [20120926055904043.pdf](#)

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EQ-10475303-5624

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**From:** Williams, Maritza CTR (NHTSA) **On Behalf Of** DataQuality, DataQuality (NHTSA)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012 10:02 AM  
**To:** Wells, Cynthia CTR (NHTSA)  
**Subject:** FW: 20120926055904043.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Standard

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012 9:17 AM  
**To:** DataQuality, DataQuality (NHTSA)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** 20120926055904043.pdf - Adobe Acrobat Standard

Here is the information you requested, I hope someone can help us, this is a HUGE SAFETY issue before someone is killed for this unsafe issues of this RV

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Cell # is [REDACTED]



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

13-SEP-2012

Repository Reference No.  
10475303**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name

Address

City

LODI

State

CA

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

The information you provide will be used to identify potential safety-related defects. We may share your information with the applicable vehicle manufacturer during an investigation or recall in accordance with the routine uses described in the agency's Privacy Act notice. See 49 FR 53971 (Sep. 3, 2004).

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

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

5SFGF40398E

Make

HEARTLAND

Model

CYCLONE

Model Year

2008

Date Purchased

7-14-07

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Manteca Trailer &amp; Camper

Engine:

No: Cylinders

Fuel Type:

Original Owner

Dealer's City

MANTECA

State

CA

Zip Code

95336

Transmission Type

 Antilock Brakes

Powertrain

 Cruise Control

Multiple Failure:

Incident Date(s)

23-JUN-2012

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Vehicle Component Code: 020000 SUSPENSION

Failure Mileage

5000

Failure Speed

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE**

Tire Make

COOPER MARATHON

Tire Model (Name or Number)

RADIAL

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

ST 225/75R15

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 2008 HEARTLAND CYCLONE TRAILER. THE CONTACT STATED THAT WHILE THE VEHICLE WAS PARKED WHEN HE NOTICED THAT THE PASSENGER SIDE FRONT WHEEL WAS LEANING INWARD. THE CONTACT DIAGNOSED THAT THE FAILURE WAS A BROKEN LEAF SPRING. THE VEHICLE WAS NOT TAKEN TO A MECHANIC. THE VEHICLE WAS REPAIRED BY THE CONTACT. THE MANUFACTURER WAS NOT MADE AWARE OF THE FAILURE. THE FAILURE MILEAGE WAS 5,000 AND THE CURRENT MILEAGE WAS 6,000.

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 to 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.



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Consumer:

NVS-216rr

As a follow-up to your report to the Vehicle Safety Hotline (VSH), we have recorded your information on the enclosed Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) form. Please review the form and make changes, additions and corrections as necessary. Additionally, please provide a more detailed description of the failure(s) you reported that you believe relevant to safety. Also, if available, include copies of repair invoices, letters to the manufacturer, or any other document related to the problem(s) you reported. If a crash or fire occurred, include a copy of the police or fire department report.

It is helpful to be as thorough as possible in your report so that our ability to use your report will be maximized. If you do not have the information, it is not necessary to complete all the boxes. However, it is very difficult to identify the scope of a vehicle problem unless the vehicle identification number (VIN) is known. The VIN is located inside the vehicle on the dashboard adjacent to the left (driver's side) of the windshield pillar and on the driver's door or the driver's door jam. It may also be listed on a dealer repair invoice or your insurance or registration cards. When reporting a tire problem, the brand name, tire line and complete tire size should be included. Be certain to provide the DOT tire identification number. It is usually located near the rim flange of the tire on either side of the tire.

We do not make your personal information (name, address, phone numbers, etc.) available to the general public. However, if we open an investigation that involves your vehicle, we will provide the manufacturer of your vehicle with a complete copy of your report. The information you provide may assist the manufacturer and NHTSA in determining if a safety-related defect exists.

Any information provided is entirely voluntary. There is no consequence or penalty of any kind if you do not wish to provide it. We seek this information to develop both statistical and investigative evidence that will help identify potential safety related problems in vehicles or vehicle equipment, e.g., tires, child safety seats, jacks, etc.

When completed, please fold and staple or tape the form so that the pre-addressed portion of the form is on the outside. If a larger envelope is used, tape the VOQ form to the larger envelope so that the pre-addressed portion of the form is showing.

If further assistance is needed, please contact the VSH at their toll-free number, 1-888-327-4236.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Randy Reid Chief  
Correspondence Research Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement

Enclosure: VOQ



September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Re: 2008 Cyclone Toy Hauler made by Heartland

To Whom It May Concern:

You have asked us to put a timeline together on everything that has happened to our trailer.

On April 2007 we purchased a 2008 Cyclone toy Hauler from Manteca Camper and Trailer in Manteca, Ca. anything and everything went wrong with this trailer. Every time we took the trailer in for repairs it came out with worse damage from the service department. They did so much damage to the trailer that the dealership actually let us trade it for a new Cyclone Toy hauler, which is the one we have now. I'm telling you this first so that you will understand our reluctance to bring it in for different items to be repaired.

July 2007 we got our new trailer, we have been very happy with this trailer from the floor up, underneath the trailer is a different story.

Oct. 2007 we went on vacation, first to Sand Mountain then to the Battaglia Cabin in Eagleville, Ca. the vacation was great until our trip home. We had a blow out, and we were in the middle of nowhere. There was no where to pull over off of the road. We ended up just pulling over as far as we could to change the tire. The tire had wrapped around the axle so bad that [REDACTED] had to use a knife to cut it off. Our daughter was very scared that we were going to get hit by a big rig because of where we had to change the tire. This was on Hwy 447, it was dark and we were alone coming home from this trip. It was pretty stressful.

We took our trailer in to Manteca Trailer and Camper when we returned from the trip to have them replace the tire and wheel; since the trailer was brand new we figured they should pay for it. We did not run over anything and there were no puncture wounds in the tire, so it was just a bad tire. Needless to say, we disputed back and forth for a couple of months before we ended up having to pay for it ourselves

April 2008 we picked up the new tire and wheel. We needed the trailer to be ready for our next trip in May to Sand Mountain. We had our trailer in for other repairs from ravens pecking at the awnings and window seals so it was not available for use for a while. The insurance paid to get this fixed so we took it to Best RV in Turlock ca. They did the repairs and the trailer was like new again, so off we went on our next adventure.

We thought we got all the kinks worked out of the trailer because we had no problems in 2009, except for strange tire wear.

May 2010 we went on our annual vacation to Sand Mountain NV. We had a great time. On the way home we had a blow out on hwy 50, luckily we were with family so everyone pulled over to help. We even had a local highway patrol officer pull over to make sure we were ok. After this blow out, we really started thinking something is wrong with this trailer... why were we having so many blow outs? [REDACTED] is a fanatic about making sure the tire pressures are what they should be and rotating tires, etc... so this had us baffled. We were able to get the tire changed and get back on our way home. We were now on hwy 80 in Sacramento and we had another blow out, this time we have no spare tire. We had the car next to us scared to death... they looked at us like we just shot a gun at them. Thank God the driver next to us didn't swerve or get into an accident because of the tire blowing so loudly. There was no shoulder to pull over on so we had to take the first exit to get our long rig off of the hwy. We were in the worst area of Sacramento for this to happen. We pulled into the first parking lot big enough for our truck and trailer since we were going to have to disconnect because we had no spare tire, therefore [REDACTED] was going to have to locate a tire store on a Sunday late afternoon. My family stayed with me while [REDACTED] went to buy a new tire, it was pretty scary wondering if someone would try to rob us or something. Luckily [REDACTED] did find a tire and made it back to change the tire while it was still daylight. We got back on our way, with no spare tire for the rest of our 4 hour trip home. We made it as far as Stockton and had another blow out; we had to find another place to get a new tire. By this time we are traveling alone since the rest of our family lives in Lodi, I had to stay with the trailer on the side of the highway so [REDACTED] could go find another tire.... Needless to say, the rest of the drive home was stressful.

March 2010 we received a letter from Heartland saying that the trailer axles do not handle the original amount of weight we were told they did when we purchased the trailer so now we needed to put these new stickers on the trailer to remind ourselves of this. This got us thinking about the axles; maybe this is why our tires keep having blow outs. I am appalled that the government lets a manufacturer send out a sticker instead of doing a recall to fix the problem. It just doesn't make sense. We were sold this trailer under false pretenses. We tried to contact Heartland several times but got no response back.

June 2011 we were so tired of having blow outs on our trips that we went and had all new tires put on the trailer. Better "E" rated tires 10 ply on... so we went from "D" rated tires to the bigger, better ones. The next trip out was good, no blow outs. The only problem we had was our front lifting jacks quit working, so we had to do the manual crank to lift the trailer up to get it back on to the trailer hitch inside the bed of the truck. We called and set it up to have Best RV fix the trailer jacks; we had to get Manteca Trailer and Camper to approve it since we purchased the extended warranty through them. They fixed the jacks and they went out again. Best RV stated that this trailer is too heavy for the motor on these jacks.... They still do not work.

Oct 2011 we were getting ready for a big Thanksgiving trip to the Redwoods and we wanted to make sure everything was good on the trailer. It was pretty embarrassing to be

in this big beautiful RV Park and have to get out and do the manual crank to lift the trailer. While the trailer was in getting repaired we had the dealership look at the axles to see if this could be why we kept getting blow outs. They told us that the axles are too light for this trailer and that the bearings needed to be packed, so we had them pack the bearings. I did contact Heartland who in turn had me contact Lippert Components, but the warranty for the axles, jacks and leaf springs are only for 1 year. So once again we are at a dead end on the issue.

June 2012 we were getting ready for our annual trip to Bridgeport for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and [REDACTED] noticed that two tires on the trailer had tire separation and were ready to fall apart; we had to go get two new tires before we could even leave for this trip. At this point we are ready to explode with frustration regarding the tire issues.

July 2012 we were getting ready for a big 10 trip to Bridgeport CA before we moved to Lodi, we wanted to relax and do some trout fishing and we were pretty excited.... [REDACTED] went out in the early morning around 6am to check the air pressure in the trailer tires and noticed that one of the leaf springs on the trailer was completely broken, how in the world could this happen??? So here we are with a big trip coming in 3 days and the trailer can't be moved.... Couldn't even take it into the dealership if we wanted to. We called Manteca Trailer and Camper to get a suggestion as to where to go to get a new leaf spring. After getting that information, [REDACTED] went to the place and got a new leaf spring, the gentleman there was shocked that the leaf spring was for a trailer that big, he said we really should have had a 5-6 layered leaf spring. Now we are really wondering why this trailer was ever aloud on the hwy. [REDACTED] brought the leaf spring home and fixed it himself, thank God. We got it all fixed and went on our trip.

Aug 2012 We were once again leaving for our annual trip to Sand Mountain NV, it was a Wednesday afternoon... we are all happy driving on hwy 50 about 45 minutes from our destination and BOOM... ANOTHER BLOW OUT!!!! This time, the whole side of our trailer has been ripped off and shattered into tiny pieces all over the hwy. We had to radio ahead to let everyone else know we had a blow out; they all pulled over to help... once again. This blow out ripped power cords out of the trailer from the slide outs. We were barely able to get the truck jack under the trailer to change the tire due to the angle the trailer was sitting on. We got the tire changed and we are back on our way. We did make it to our destination, but it wasn't relaxing because [REDACTED] had to leave to head back to town on Thursday morning to find a tire store to get a new tire...something you shouldn't have to do when you are on a much needed vacation. He did find a tire and paid a pretty high price due to the location of where we were... We left to come home on Sunday afternoon and guess what..... another blow out, so we all pulled over and once again fixed the flat. Now we had no spare and we are in the middle of nowhere... we drove home so slow 45-50 mph my brother in law was very nervous all the way home.

Needless to say that after this trip we did contact Heartland, they instructed us to empty the trailer and get a true dry weight on the trailer. They wanted to make sure it weighed what it was suppose to after it left the manufacture. We were so paranoid to go get the trailer weighed before taking it to the dealership. We didn't know if we would get

another blow out and we are done buying tires for this trailer. We got it certified for the weight, it was 15,260, the tire rating is 2500 pound maximum for each tire, this shows that the trailer empty is over the maximum weight. Emptying a trailer after a very stressful vacation from start to finish was not something we wanted to do, but we did it. Our trailer is sitting at Manteca Trailer and Camper waiting on who is going to fix it and if it truly can be fixed. The axles need to be heavier, the leaf springs need to be bigger and the wheels need to be 8 lugs not 6, we need bigger tires to allow for better air flow to keep the tires cooler. This trailer is a death trap; it's going to kill one of us or someone else out on the hwy. We know that Heartland is aware of these problems because they have fixed them in the newer trailers. We have friends that have the newer ones and we can see where they have reinforced all the weak points. We have reached out to professionals that build trailers and they do not recommend us even towing this trailer. They also stated that it may not be repairable due to engineering on the trailer, it may not tow right with bigger axles, and they say it could make the trailer frame snap in two. We are at our wit's end and hopefully you can help.

Sincerely,

  
Home 