



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

February 27, 2014

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

North Hampton, NH

NVS-216 am
Ref. No. 10533554

Dear

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your Model Year 2011 Four Winds Windsport recreational vehicle (RV) built on a Ford Chassis. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation received your correspondence. We regret any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

NHTSA is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

You indicate that the left front leaf spring failed at the axle on your MY 2011 Four Windsport RV and are concerned about a potential safety issue. The problem was noticed by a local repair facility that you asked to check the RV's alignment because the front tires were badly worn and cupping. You reported the problem to Ford and they told you the RV was unsafe to drive. Ford towed the RV to a local dealer who replaced the left front leaf spring and front tires. Based on the opinion of two mechanics, you feel that Ford should cover the cost of the repair and also replace the right front spring. So far Ford has denied your requests for reimbursement and warranty repairs stating that the problem was caused by external damage.

We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to front leaf spring failures in MY 2011 Four Winds Windsport RVs. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention. The NHTSA investigation and recall process is on our web site at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm.

Your requests for a reimbursement for the tires, leaf spring replacement, and related warranty repairs do not fall under our jurisdiction. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency or ask your dealership for a meeting with a Ford district

manager regarding your problem. In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over non-safety defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

You may also consider contacting the Better Business Bureau (BBB). The BBB offers free mediation/arbitration to resolve warranty disputes under guidelines established by the FTC. Remedies include repair, reimbursement, repurchase or replacement, depending on program eligibility. You can visit their web site at www.bbb.org to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB at 1-800-955-5100.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.gov or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at our web site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy Reid".

Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement