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United States Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance
400 7th Street SW Room 6111 Mail Code NSA 30
Washington DC 20590

MAR -3 2015

Subject – Consumer Complaint - Substandard tires on new recreation vehicles at time of delivery from the manufacturer Forrest River

To whom it may concern

I am writing to your agency because I have grave concern about the substandard quality of tires being sold on new recreation vehicles and the danger to motorists on the highway.

I took delivery of a 35 foot fifth wheel recreation vehicle on May 3, 2012. The unit is a 2013 model Wildcat Sterling manufactured by Forrest River at their plant in Dallas, Oregon. (Vehicle identification number 4X4FWCH26DT [REDACTED]) From May 2012 to August 2014 we had two incidents of tire damage resulting from the tread separating from the tire on each occurrence. After the second blowout I was not going to place my family or other motorist in harms way so I took the unit to a tire dealer (Carroll's in Tulare, California) to have all of tires replaced. The tire technician told me that the other three original tires on the unit were in the process of the tread separating from the tire and that the tires were of very poor quality. (Freestar was the brand name).

I have talked with many individuals in my travels that said the tires on their new recreation vehicles were so bad that for peace of mind they replaced their tires soon after purchase. On a website – Pissed Forrest River Consumers – many complaints to date lodged about Forrest River substandard manufacturing includes the tires.

I discussed the tire issue with the dealer that I bought the unit from, Magic Touch RV in Tulare California. He advised me that he had other customers with similar problems. In the thirty three months that I have owned this Forrest River product I had numerous problems requiring repairs. Our time on the road with this unit has been a frustrating and disappointing experience. In the past 33 months of ownership this unit has been in for repairs a total of nine months at the Magic Touch RV Service Center. Many repairs were not covered by warranty.

My unit is a 'Lemon' for sure and I have dealt with the numerous problems with great frustration. Everything else that has gone wrong (41 items documented that the dealer service department or myself has repaired) has no comparison to the highway safety issues that comes with substandard tires.

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It is my opinion that recreation vehicle industry may be subjecting the American driving public to tremendous danger on the highway with the use of 'cheap substandard tires'. Novice consumers like me trust the dealer and manufacturer when we purchase these units only to learn the hard way that the industry is not being regulated properly.

Our first tire incident was just outside of Ellensburg, Washington with only about 2000 miles on the tire. The repairman from Automobile Club commented on the substandard quality of the tire and noted that the tread had separated from the tire. The second incident was on California Highway 99 just south of Livingston. The blowout with about 8,000 miles on tire was so violent that the side of the RV was damaged, a jack was knocked off and under carriage wiring was ripped out. This was caused by the poor quality of the tire but me and my insurance company had to pay.

I hope that sharing my experiences can save lives in the future on our highways by setting higher standards for tires on recreation vehicles.

[REDACTED]

Tulare, Ca.

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Forrest River Manufacturing Dallas, Oregon
Magic Touch RV Tulare, California – Dwayne Nichols
California Department of Consumer Affairs
Attorney File



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