CL. 1080829-1971

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

October 20, 2015,

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

NOV -4 2015

This is to update you about some problems I have experienced on my SUPER DUTY F350 FORD CREW CAB 7.3 L TURBO DIESEL PICK-UP TRUCK. I previously notified you about these issues in my September 28, 2015, letter, however, things have gotten worse!!! I am also simultaneously sending a letter to FORD MOTOR COMPANY's CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE CENTER, about my concerns, today. I am enclosing a copy of said letter, as I am convinced it has contributed to all the tire debris scattered all over the highways, wherever I have traveled. This time I am also including MICHELIN's CONSUMER CARE DEPARTMENT in my correspondence, and have included a copy of my letter to them. Please review the contents of the letter to see whether you can take any actions to improve our safety and diminish tire failures as a result of these improper inflation pressure designations?

By the way, I just saw part of a notice by the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD about outdated tires and went back to check the code on the exploded tire carcass. I'm including them here FYI, but cannot attest to the other three purchased at the same time. The codes are: "DOT BFW8 0211 4212". You already have my F350 VIN number from my SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 letter, but here it is again, in case someone else handles this correspondence: 1FTSW30F8YE[redacted]

Thanks Sincerely

[redacted]

Dothan Alabama [redacted]

Home 'phone and FAX (requires prior notice for FAX acceptance) [redacted]

NAM
111015
SMD

October 20, 2015

Ford Motor Company

Customer Assistance Center

This is to update you about some problems I have experienced on my SUPER DUTY F350 FORD CREW CAB 7.3 L TURBO DIESEL PICK-UP TRUCK. Since I sent my Sept. 28, 2015, letter to you, things have gotten worse. I am also sending a copy of this letter to the NHTSA and MICHELIN'S CUSTOMER CARE DEPARTMENT today.

UPDATE:

Since my September 28, 2015, letter to you, my driver side rear tire blew out. I returned from Mauldin S.C., after the problems originally identified to you, due to a family medical situation. Due to the urgency of the condition, I had to go back to Mauldin to retrieve my empty car trailer, various, tools, etc. Having had to replace the first tire only a week earlier, I could still hear tire noise, but didn't expect another failure so soon. Anyway, as I returned home I had a blow out about 80 miles from home in an unpopulated area along ALABAMA HIGHWAY 431, just south of Phenix City, Alabama, essentially about 710 miles after the first tire was replaced. The first tire simply developed a large knot on it. This second tire shed the center of its tread, split along the edge of the remaining tread on one side of the tire, and split across the tread from one side of the rim to the other as it exploded. I was in a 65 mph speed zone and had the truck on cruise control at the time. When I looked at my clock it was 8:57 pm CT. The wheel appears to have suffered no damage, but the tire was destroyed like none I have ever experienced. The empty trailer has a sprung suspension and I would guess it weighs about 1,200 pounds. This may seem like a small problem to you, but it could have been my life, and very well may have already been somebody else's life lost!!! As a matter of fact, on October 14, 2015, as all this disaster was befalling me, before I even got out of South Carolina, a F250 or 350 passed me on the road. A few miles after it passed me, it ran over a section of tire tread that obscured the entire underside of the truck, before flipping, thankfully off to the right apron of the highway. Shortly after that, I observed another FORD F250 or 350 eastbound on I-85, still in South Carolina, whose driver side front tire had disintegrated. From the opposite side of the Interstate highway I could see that his front fender was destroyed, and just fragments of the tire remained on the rim. The driver was sitting in the edge of the woods, in the shade and appeared to be on a cell 'phone, but I could not see whether he was injured.

I have only had access to one Chevy 1500 Silverado, CHRYSLER SUV, and a Chevy S-10, to compare door stickers, but all of them had the same tire pressures designated for front and rear tires!!! While neither vehicle is rated as high as my F350, their tire pressure recommendations make more sense. I had never heard of a staggered tire pressure for the same tire, and am especially surprised to see a pressure that is barely half the recommended maximum inflation pressure, specified for your trucks. These staggered front-to-rear inflation pressure ratings are "extremely **dollar and safety dangerous**"!!! Why, because they only work for when the truck would be standing still!!! Why

build a **super duty truck** and use a suitable tire for it, run the rear tire pressures suitable for a **super duty service**, then run the front tire pressures in a **"super duty suited tire and chassis"**, for a **"compact truck service and tire pressure"**?!?!? The only scenario I can imagine where such a tire pressure difference would even remotely be considered appropriate, would be if the front of the truck was completely isolated from the rear of the truck. Even an articulated joint wouldn't fully manage to create that condition. With a single piece frame, the entire frame reacts to whatever forces are applied to it throughout, therefore it is just unfathomable to me how the tire pressures on your stickers are logical. How can running a tire underinflated be prudent or safe?!?!? What happens when a tire is underinflated – noisy operation, rougher (bumpier or softer) ride, tire carcass deformation, tread cupping, unusual sidewall loading and flex, tread squirm, bead rock, slowed steering response, increased steering effort, increased rolling resistance, increased heat build-up, reduced fuel efficiency (**just going from the 50+ psi. in the tires installed by the independent dealer, as mentioned in my September 28, 2015 letter, to 80 psi., resulted in an immediate increase from 16 mpg. to 21 mpg. highway unloaded in my F350, with a stock factory tune**!!!), reduced vehicle front stability, reduced carrying capacity, reduced endurance of, and resistance to, dynamic loadings, differential handling characteristics, overloading of various tire carcass sections/components, increased failure potential, increased personal safety risk, etc.!!!!! All of those symptoms are evidenced in the blown up carcass of my latest tire failure. I have **40** photos of the damage, and the failed tire carcass, if you'd like to see them, but am enclosing a couple of examples. We caught the first obvious tire failure (**9-24-'15** at ~277, 890 miles) in time to prevent the damage the second tire failure (**10-14-'15** at ~279,974) caused, though I tried to get the SAM'S CLUB tire technicians to address it, after the tires started making excessive noise in April of 2014. They should have a record of the rotation and balance check back in April of 2014, but seem to be unable to locate one. They implied that the noise was due to something in my suspension, and after them showing me the door sticker, I apologized to them for accusing them of running the wrong pressures, as mentioned in my earlier letter. After that, I replaced the wheel bearings (the most likely noise makers, other than the tires, in the suspension) and raised the pressure to 80 psi, but the noise didn't change. As stated earlier, the excessive noise started during the return from a trip to Chattanooga, Tennessee, about 700 miles round trip.

SAM'S CLUB made adjustments for my tires. However, you all still need to correct this tire pressure specification, before others suffer injuries to their vehicles, or persons, or are actually killed!!!! If you feel that I am wrong about this issue, then test it, and by all means educate all involved.

Switching gears, for most of my driving years, I have owned CHEVROLET products, and still do, along with my FORDS, BUICKS, MAZDAS, OLDSMOBILE, HYUNDAI, NISSAN, and JAGUAR. All of them have desirable qualities, but one issue with my 1998 VORTECH SUPERCHARGED WINDSOR SMALLBLOCK powered MUSTANG, needs mentioning to you. The car was built for someone else, and I bought it, along with numerous build errors!!! Besides the electrical and mechanical parts being improperly installed and adjusted, the fuel system is grossly inadequate. I was in awe to find that the fuel supply line was only 5/16" diameter!!!! This is an utterly ridiculous fuel line size for your MUSTANGS. The only other vehicle that I own, with such small fuel lines is my 19 hp KAWASAKI powered GREAT DANE

CHARIOT JR. zero-turn lawn mower. Even the four cylinder "economy" cars, mentioned above, have at least 3/8" fuel supply lines!!! It's just ridiculous to expect a V8 car to function properly, let alone at optimum performance, with such inadequate fuel systems. Imagine my shock, when I learned that even your COBRA MUSTANGS, ran these puny lines, with dual in-tank fuel pumps, no less!!! THAT'S JUST BACKWARDS ENGINEERING, that fails to recognize that system pressure and flow are diametrically opposed. Sure, with dual pumps you can maintain system pressure initially, but without the volume needed, your cars are getting beat up in amateur competition. You should put out a notice to all your performance car owners, to inform them to upgrade their fuel flow capacity with at least ½" (ala HELLCATS) or -8 or -10 fuel supply lines, in order to greatly enhance their performance and reliability!!! Otherwise, the lean-outs will keep people swapping in CHEVY LS engines and upgrading the fuel lines to match, mistakenly thinking that your engines are sorry and extremely expensive to modify, when the undiagnosed problem is largely your inadequate fuel system design masking/overshadowing attempts to enhance your engines'/cars' performance. Sure the pros will upgrade the fuel systems, but the first-time buyer will swap brands, after getting spanked in a stop light brawl!!! I mention this, not because I have a problem with CHEVY hybridization of your grass roots racers, but because it's a disservice to baby enthusiasts, and a discouragement to continue as an auto enthusiast, when your shiny bright $20k+ GT MUSTANG gets spanked by some gal's $10k+ jalopy, adding insult to injury!!! **My sister-in-law won three trophies at our home drag strip doing just that, while my only trophy was won by beating a 1970 model 429 SUPER COBRA JET TORINO, with my 1963 CHEVY NOVA SS, running a L79 350 HP 327 SB CHEVY, that I swapped for the 194 inline six. Sure the car was lighter, but the engine was also very much smaller, and supposedly much less powerful than yours. THE TRACK OPERATORS REFUSED TO BELIEVE THAT I HAD BEATEN THE TORINO, AND INITIALLY REFUSED TO GIVE ME MY TROPHY. One of my buddies started to argue with them, but I told them to run the race again, AND I'D BEAT HIM AGAIN. They agreed, we re-ran the race, I beat him again, and they gave me my trophy without any further hassles. All this made my victory even sweeter, but I never raced again at that track, though I still have the trophy!!! Anyway, you catch my drift, the sorry fuel supply lines need to be corrected, and maybe you can catch some HELLCATS, Z-28S, jalopies, etc.!!!** If not, don't say you weren't warned.

Thanks Sincerely,

[redacted]

Dothan, Alabama [redacted]

Home 'phone and FAX (requires prior notice for FAX acceptance) [redacted]

October 20, 2015,

MICHELIN NORTH AMERICA CUSTOMER CARE

This is to update you about some tire problems I have experienced on my 2000 Model SUPER DUTY F350 FORD CREW CAB 7.3 L TURBO DIESEL PICK-UP TRUCK. I previously notified you about these issues by phone, and was told you "...could do nothing for me, until SAM's CLUB responded to my complaint about the tires, since they have their own warranty program." While that may be how you handle issues with tires sold by others, divestiture, I was also told that response was not true, and that I apparently didn't speak to the right person. Regardless, that response has rung true.

However, things have gotten worse!!! I am also simultaneously sending a letter to FORD MOTOR COMPANY's CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE CENTER and the NHTSA about my concerns, today. I am enclosing a copy of all my previous letters to each entity FYI. I am convinced THAT IMPROPER INFLATION PRESSURES, and of course other issues, have significantly contributed to all the tire debris scattered all over the highways, wherever I have traveled. I am not saying it was just your tires, but this situation impacting me just happened to involve your tires. I'm sure you remember the troubles FIRESTONE had a few years ago, which, despite the investigative reports published, may too have been due, significantly, to improper tire inflation pressures. It is my belief that the NHTSA should address other tire manufacturers about these concerns. You need to review the contents of the letters, to determine what actions you need to take to improve our safety and diminish tire failures as a result of these improper inflation pressure designations?

By the way, I just saw part of a notice by the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD about outdated tires and went back to check the codes on the exploded tire carcass. I'm including them here FYI, but cannot attest to the other three tires purchased at the same time. You should retrieve that information from SAM's CLUB. The codes are: "DOT BFW8 0211 4212". You already have my F350 VIN number from my SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 letter, but here it is again, in case someone else handles this correspondence: 1FTSW30F8YE[redacted].

As with FORD and the NHTSA, I have questions/ challenges for you. It doesn't take my engineering degree or my interest in vehicles, to see that there's room for improvement in situations like mine, and countless other drivers. Your tires sidewalls state the "MAXIMUM" recommended pressure and load capacity, among other info, yet based upon your tire pressure recommendations, as recorded on your telephone information line, you defer to the vehicle manufacturer for determining the tire pressures to run. The vehicle manufacturers generally don't get blamed, or compensate people for loss of use of the tires, damage to our vehicles, or even lives lost, or get the bad press for tire failures, along with lost sales, without intervention from some legal entity. There's much more to be said, but here are just a few questions my situation has generated, which I hope will result in saving somebody's life(lives), maybe even yours!!! Why just post the maximum pressure on the tires when under-inflation is more likely to occur, due to driver negligence? I would expect that you have already determined the optimum pressure for each tire, based upon your design construction and materials, so why not just post the optimum design pressure, as the inflation pressure and scrap the "maximum" labelling? The

use of the word "maximum" implies that there is only an upper inflation pressure limit, when all of us brought into this discussion, should know that there is also a lower limit for tire inflation pressures. Therefore, why not post optimum pressures and maximum loads on your tires, or at least post both an upper and lower pressure specification? I've seen warnings about under-inflation of tires, but no specification as to what pressure is actually considered underinflated. The inference is that inflation pressures below that posted on your tires, currently as "maximum recommended psi" is the target pressure, so why not let function follow form and use it? Incidentally, why would you want to delegate the public's perception of your product to a manufacturer who will not stand behind your product for a warranty anyway? I understand your desire to avoid liability for the outcome of the use of your tires, but is that goal more valuable than protecting the reputation, marketability, etc., of your products, and the lives of your customers?

There have been several instances where tire technicians misread the maximum pressure posted on the sidewalls of my tires. I'm sure I'm not the only one who has experienced, misread and improperly inflated tire pressures, so how about making the print of the numbers larger, or highlighting them with color, at least something contrasting with the typical black tire carcass?

Finally, check out the enclosed pictures and give me an assessment of what you consider the cause of the tire failure, all other conditions being within specification? I also still have the tire that blew out, as shown in the pictures, if you would like to buy it. Why buy it, because you all charged me to get a replacement, and that doesn't even address the damage to my truck. Therefore, if you want it, you can prorate the value it would have represented to me, had it not failed catastrophically!!!

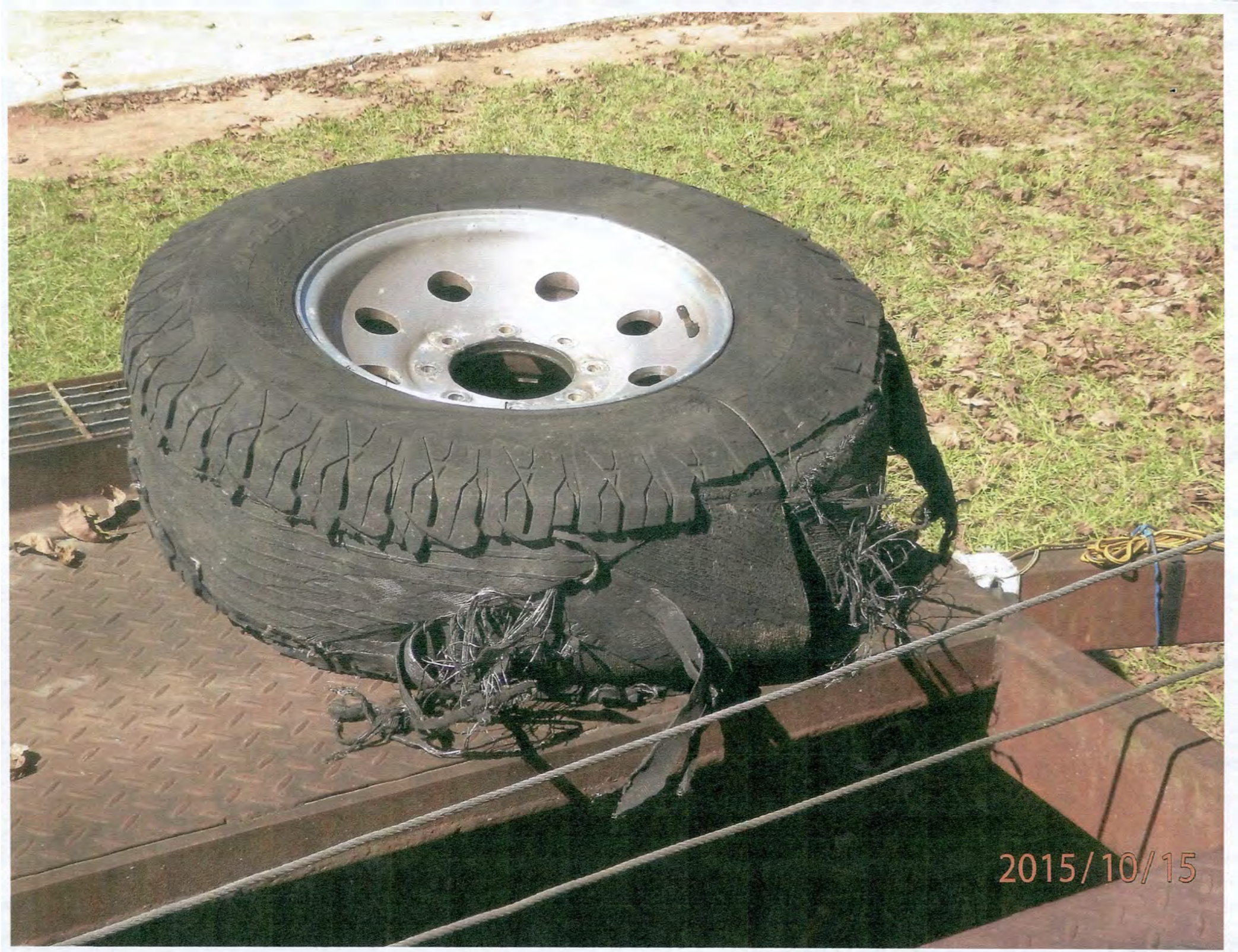
Thanks Sincerely,

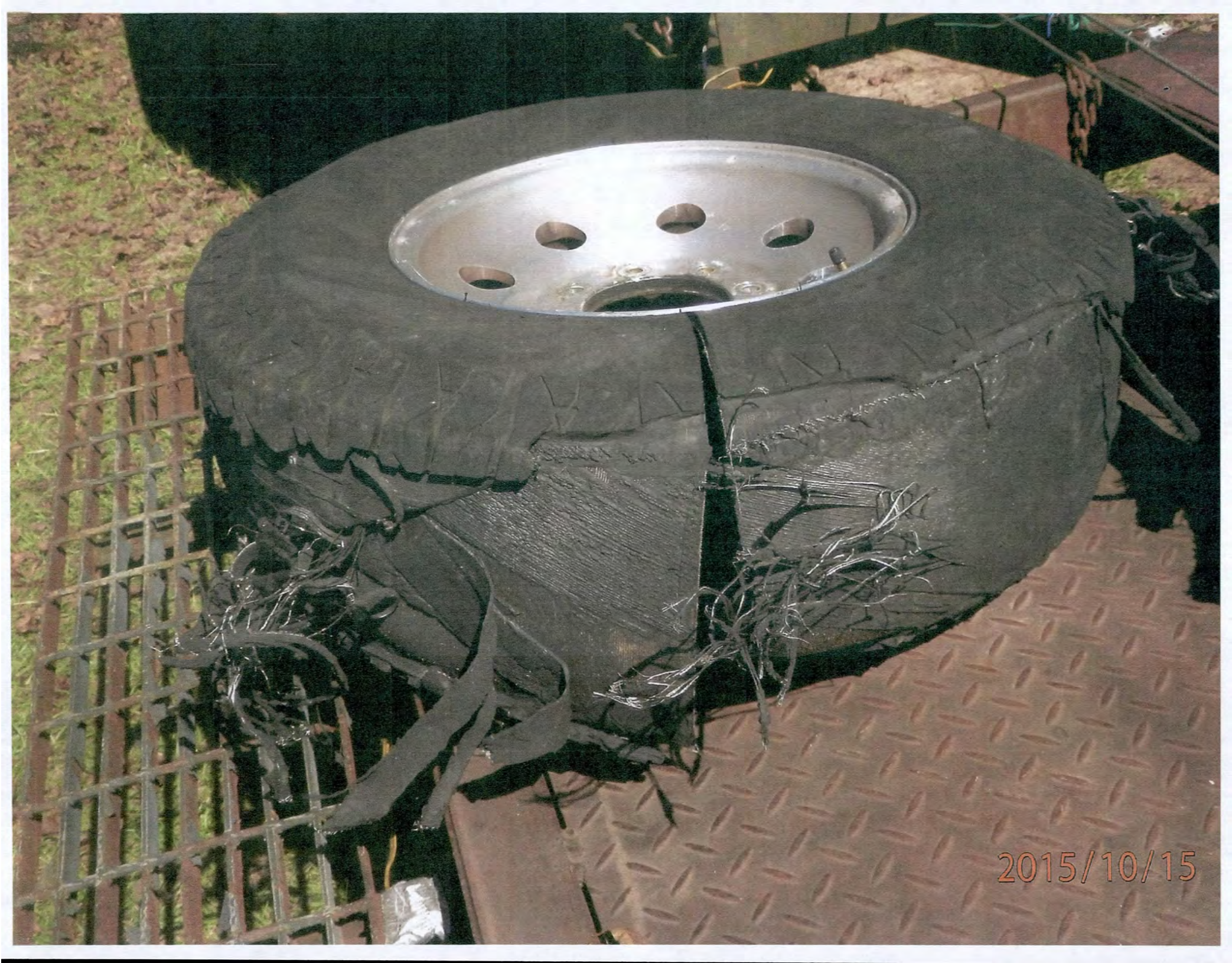
[redacted]

Dothan Alabama [redacted]

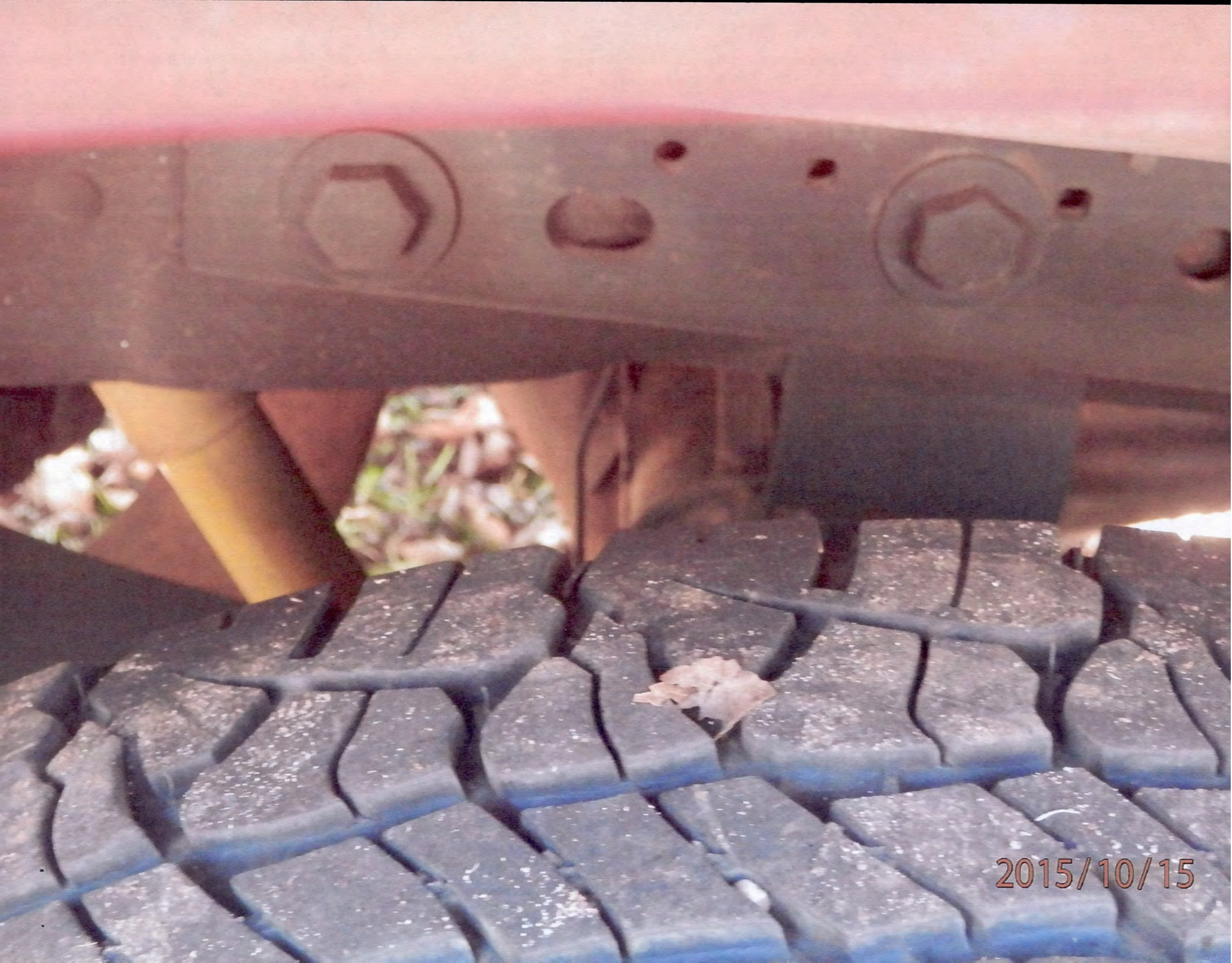
Home 'phone and FAX (requires prior notice for FAX acceptance) [redacted]

2015/10/15


2015/10/15


2015/10/15


2015/10/15


2015/10/15

[redacted]

Dothan, Al [redacted]

PLACE STICKER AT TOP OF ENVELOPE TO THE RIGHT
OF THE RETURN ADDRESS, FOLD AT DOTTED LINE

CERTIFIED MAIL®

7015 0920 0002 3528 3199

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE®

1000

20590

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
DOTHAN, AL
36302
OCT 28 15
AMOUNT
$7.67
R2303S102079-06

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

W40-304