

NEF-D10
CL-11175611-5327

Yadkinville, NC [REDACTED]

January 2, 2019

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Motorhome Fire Safety Defect

Dear Sir:

On July 31, 2015 I purchased a new class B motorhome from the Carolina Coach and Marine dealership which is located at 3300 Centennial Blvd., Claremont, NC 28610. The motorhome was manufactured by Pleasure-Way Industries Ltd, 302 Portage Ave., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada S7J 4C6.

The motorhome now with 24,000 miles, carries the Pleasure-Way brand name, model Pursuit. Its VIN is 1FDWE3FS5D[REDACTED]. A photo copy from the owner's manual cover page is attached which also shows the side view and the VIN. This motorhome is built on a 350 Ford cutaway chassis and is equipped with a large V-10 gasoline engine which generates 305 horsepower and intense exhaust heat at highway speed. Its bumper to bumper length is 22 feet and 2 inches. It is built relatively close to the road surface which enhance exhaust heat buildup. The relative short exhaust system runs mostly midway of the frame from the engine, angling to just behind the rear axle on the passenger's side. It then makes a sharp 90 degree turn exiting behind the right rear dual wheels.

The tailpipe, just over 9 inches in circumference passes to the outside through a "U" shaped opening in the fiberglass sidewall. To the rear of the tailpipe there is only one (1) inch of clearance and cooling space between the flange and pipe. This is where the burning takes place. To the front there is also only one (1) inch of cooling space. The top has just slightly over one (1) inch cooling space. The "U" shaped bottom is open. It is not equipped with any type of heat deflectors at this confined critical point. See detailed photos attached. Around this exhaust opening there is a decorative fiberglass exhaust flange which is bonded to the all fiberglass body. I have included a photo of an unattached flange part for your review. Because of the confined space, intense exhaust heat and the rearward wind force while traveling at highway speed, the rear of the flange was burned to a crisp during the spring and summer of 2017 (see attached photo).

After much wrangling, resistance and delay the manufacturer allowed the dealer to replace the damaged flange under warranty. However, they refused to address the burning cause and solution which is to reroute the rear part of the exhaust pipe to a safe and open

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space. Now for the second time the torching of the flange is occurring in the very same location. They still refuse to accept the responsibility to correct the problem.

The burning is occurring in very close proximity of the 40 gallon gasoline and 18 gallon propane tanks. The motorhome is equipped with a propane heater and cooking burners with feeder lines from the main tank. Both are directly over the exhaust area that burns. My common sense instincts and a career in policing, with years of motor vehicle accident investigation, leads me to know that burning causes flames and fire which create explosions and associated horrors of deaths and injuries.

My wife and I often use this motorhome to travel long distances. Our journey from NC to AK is about 5,000 miles one way. On such a trip we average about 450 miles each day for 11 days. The exhaust heat becomes intense. Our motorhome couch which converts into a queen size bed is located directly over the two fuel tanks. We lounge on the couch and sleep on the bed at times while the engine idles to provide heat or air conditioning as need. It alarms us greatly to think about facing unnecessary danger.

My request is that you investigate my concern and claim and determine if some type of corrective action or recall is justified for my motorhome and other owners of the same make and model. My motorhome is available any time for your inspection.

I am enclosing a copy of a more detailed complaint letter (the second of this type) to the NC Consumer Protection Division. Both complaints carry file number [REDACTED] I encourage you to review both complaints. It will enable you to better understand the numerous problems, arrogance and irresponsibility I have experienced and now face with both the dealer and manufacturer.

Also, I have enclosed several photos that show scorched damage, location, measurements, etc. Each photo has a label on the back side with details.

Feel free to contact me by phone at [REDACTED] Many thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Attachments: Complaint Letter

Photos - 6

Motorhome Side View Photo Copy

Pleasure-Way

Pursuit Owner's Manual

VIN# → 1FDWE3FS5D
2F1DPRS28FR



Yadkinville, NC [REDACTED]

January 2, 2019

Ms. Susan Davis
Consumer Protection Division
Attorney General's Office
Mail Service 9001
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001

RE: File # [REDACTED] (Safety Issue)

Dear Ms. Davis:

This is my second complaint to you against both Carolina Coach and Marine dealership, 3300 Centennial Blvd., Claremont, NC 28610, and manufacturer Pleasure-Way Industries Ltd, 302 Portage Ave., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada S7J 4C6. Please file this complaint with your existing [REDACTED] since it is a continuous problem. It involves the 2015 Pleasure-Way Pursuit, Class B Motorhome that I purchased new on July 31, 2015. The recreational vehicle (RV) has been driven about 24,000 miles and has 5 years of warranty against this safety issue.

In June 2017, I brought to the attention of both dealer and manufacturer that the RV's tailpipe had burned to a crisp the decorative fiberglass exhaust flange that surrounds most of the tailpipe. The flange is painted to match the RV's exterior silver color. It is bonded to the RV's body which is also all fiberglass. After much wrangling, resistance and delay they replaced the part under warranty.

Now for the second time the tailpipe's intense heat, with only one (1) inch separation, is torching the very same area again. Rather than explain the problem by phone, I drove over 100 miles to the dealer's service department in order to show them exactly what was occurring. That date was 10-23-18, and I requested a resolution. I expected no work to be done at that time. However, I was chastised for showing up without an appointment although no other customers were present. The dealer's warranty representative impolitely refused to provide her business card at my request. Much later from other resources I determined her name is Tracey McRodelen. While still there Tracey did make a single photo isolating the charred damage. I insisted that more photos should be made. She did not comply, saying they were unnecessary. Other photos would have showed that the tailpipe was centered in its opening and not touching any surrounding parts. Also, she could have pushed her ballpoint pen against the tailpipe confirming it was not loose or dangling. These minor chores requiring less than 5 minutes and could have saved me another 100 mile trip to their service department and a half day of my time.

Meanwhile, Tracey had contacted Michael Paulo the manufacturer's warranty representative. Several days later he and I had a phone conversation. He told me that he would send me another exhaust flange to replace the heat damaged one. He said after receiving it to make an appointment with Tracey to have their technician inspect the entire exhaust system.

The unpainted replacement exhaust flange arrived 11-9-18. I promptly made an appointment for 10 am, 11-26-18, and I arrived there about 15 minutes early (another 100 mile trip). The technicians

kept the RV about 2 hours. Nothing was found wrong with the exhaust system. Everything was intact and the exhaust was centered. A copy of their work order [REDACTED] is attached for review. Terry Stollings assisted me with this service call and evaluation.

Neither Terry nor Michael made it clear to me what this unpainted replacement would be coated with. I surmised the part would be coated in some unidentified type of truck bed coating which is black. This is an unmatched color and serves no useful purpose in preventing burning or flames. Such remedy is unacceptable and the flange was not installed. Michael's ploy is nothing more than to push a very serious and dangerous problem beyond the warranty period. I will address the problem, danger and solution shortly.

But first I want to share just a few of the bad experiences I have had with Michael Paulo. Just shortly after I purchased the RV new, several items involving warranty work was scheduled to be completed by the dealer. I left the RV with the dealer on 11-12-15 and they kept it 67 days, until 2-3-16. These repairs should have been done in 2 days or less. However, Michael kept sending the wrong parts from Canada which had to be returned and reordered, etc., which solely created the unnecessary and needless slow process of 67 days. While RV traveling in south central Alaska in the summer of 2016 the combined microwave-convection oven failed. I contacted the manufacturer and was told Michael would send a new replacement. Several days later it arrived, however, it was the wrong unit both in brand and size. I contacted Michael and he directed me to keep the wrong unit because of high return shipping rates. I donated it to an Alaska local church. Michael checked and assured me that he indeed did have the correct unit in stock and would ship it. Several days later the unit arrived and I self-installed it. It is beyond my comprehension why Michael has the inability to verify and send correct parts when he has all of this information at his fingertips. Also, due to a conflict between the dealer and manufacturer over other warranty issues, I drove the RV all the way to the manufacturer's plant in Canada to have the first repairs made. On the bright side for the first and only time, Phil Nichel, Pleasure-Way's Customer Service Manager was gracious and helpful in resolving the warranty issues at that time.

As I have been dealing with Michael regarding the two (2) issues of the burned exhaust flanges, his flawed logic is incomprehensible. This creates a strained relationship between himself, dealer personnel and myself. In each of the two cases, his scenario is the same. He implies that I have carelessly damaged the exhaust system causing it to rub where the torching occurs. How absurd! He fails to recognize the dangerous outcome of fire causing death, injury and great property damage. I spent my career in the military and civilian police forces. I investigated motor vehicle accidents for many years and later supervised and trained other investigators. I know first-hand the horrors of human flesh burning and last screams being made from burning vehicles where rescue was impossible.

Problem: This RV is only 22 feet and 2 inches in length and relatively low to the road surface. Its short exhaust system has hardly any exposure for air cooling. It is built on a 350 Ford chassis and is equipped with a large V-10 gas engine which creates a lot of horsepower and engine heat at highway speed. The exhaust system runs mostly midway of the frame, angling rearward near the rear axle on the passenger side. There it makes a sharp 90 degree turn making its exit just behind the right rear dual wheels. The opening through which this tailpipe, 9 plus inches in circumference, passes is comparatively small. To the rear where the burning occurs there is only one (1) inch of separation. The front has only one (1) inch clearance as well. The top has just over one inch of cooling space. The bottom of the hole is open. The tailpipe at this critical point has not been equipped with any type of heat deflectors. The tailpipe has a downturn at its terminal point. All of the new and late model RV's that I have observed have heat deflectors at each critical point and for a good reason, to prevent fires. Consequently, the intense heat from the exhaust system is concentrated at the terminus of the tailpipe where torching is occurring. As the RV travels at highway speed the rearward wind force drives heat to that area as well. On some RV trips, especially to Alaska from NC, which is about 5,000 miles, I average about 450 miles

per day for 11 days to reach my destination. Exhaust heat buildup during that period is tremendous and a safe system is expected.

Danger: Neglected burning cause's flames, fires and disasters. Both the gasoline and propane tanks are located in the rear of the RV in close proximity to where the burning occurs. Also, a couch which converts into a queen size bed is located directly over the two fuel tanks. The small so-called window escape hatches are located at each end of the couch. The couch is the only place for coach passengers to sit while the RV is in motion or parked. My wife and I are senior citizens, ages [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. While traveling and parked we use the couch for setting and sleeping. When needed we leave the RV motor running to provide either heat or air condition. It creates less noise than the RV's generator. Needless to explain, any fire or excessive heat to the rear of this RV or other, like it will cause explosions, brake failure and a major catastrophe.

Solution: Reroute the rear part of the exhaust pipe, using needed heat deflectors, to a safe open space. It can easily be done at a minimal expense. I will not accept any substitute! The old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" remains applicable.

I appreciate your valuable help again. Had it not been for your assistance with my first complaint, little or none of the earlier warranty work would have been done.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

CC: U.S. National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
Better Business Bureau

Attachment: Work Order [REDACTED]

CAROLINA COACH & CAMPER LLC
3300 CENTENNIAL BLVD
CLAREMONT NC
US
28610

(PH) 828-459-9790 (FAX) 828-459-0339

Tracey Mcrodlen
Warranty Manager

CUSTOMER WORK ORDER # [REDACTED]

Date In: 23 OCT 18
Promised Date:
Promised Time:
Customer Name: [REDACTED]
Address: [REDACTED]
Postal/Zip: [REDACTED]
Phone#(res): [REDACTED]
Phone#(bus):
Cell Phone:
Email: NONE
Purchased Date: 07 AUG 15
Delivery Date: 03 AUG 15

Author: KP
Stock No: [REDACTED]
Year: 2015
Manufacturer: PLEASUREWAY
Brand: PURSUIT
Model: PURSUIT
Unit Type: MB+-CLASS B+ MOTORHOME
Warranty Date: 03 AUG 15
Chassis#: 1FDWE3FS5DD [REDACTED]
Serial#:
Tag#:
Miles/Hrs:
Completed Date:

Job # Description JOB INFORMATION

1 COMPLAINT: TRIM PIECE AT EXHAUST HAS BURNT PLACE
FOR A 2ND TIME
1 CORRECTION: PUT UNIT ON RAMPS, INSPECTED EXHAUST
AND TIGHTNED BRACKET TIGHT AS IT WOULD
GO, EXHAUST APPEARED CENED TO TECH.
MADE ADJUSTMENTS. EXHAUST WAS CENTERED.

140 MOTORHOME

100 18920

Lab Code Job# Description LABOUR Total

LB 1 LABOR TIME 016 W -N/C=

Parts Total: 0.00
Labour Total: 0.00
Sublet Total: 0.00
Extras Total: 0.00
Work Order Total: 0.00

Customer Signature: _____

Date: 26 NOV 2018

My signature above authorizes my permission to contact my by telephone
or email concerning any matters related to my vehicle, Carolina Coach
Customer special events, invitations, products or service specials, or
pertinent business matters.

_____(Initials) I declind the Preferred Customer Contact described

Continued on page 2

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Dec. 2018
photo which
shows EARLY
RECURRING IN THE
EXACT (SAME)
SAME LOCATION
AS BEFORE, 2016-
2017.



BACK SIDE
OF NEW DETACHED
EXHAUST FLANGE



FRONT SIDE
OF NEW DETACHED
EXHAUST FLANGE



ANOTHER 2017
PHOTO SHOWING
BURIED AREA
TO VIEWER'S
LEFT, TOWARD
REAR OF RV.



2017 Photo
With MEASUREMENTS
BURNED AREA
TO YOUR LEFT IS
TOWARD THE REAR
OF THE RV. THIS
FLANGE WAS REMOVED
AND REPLACED.



Right REAR
SIDE VIEW of
RV