



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
(1-888-327-4235)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

Posted

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

Date Received

ed, or
of
up to

Reference No.

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Street

City

Daytime Telephone Number

551376

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES ☐ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date / /

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Vehicle Identification No. (VIN)
(17 Digits)

(Located at bottom of
windshield on driver's side)

Make

Model

Year

4 V Z C N 0 9 9 2 V C 0 2 5 6 6 4

Fleetwood

American Coach American Tradition

98

Purchased Date

Dealer's Name

Engine Size
(CID/CC/L)

☐ Turbo

☒ Diesel

☐ Gas

☐ Fuel Injection

10-01-97

Ancira

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

No. Cylinders

6

☒ New ☐ Used

Boerne

TX

78006

Manufacture Date
(on driver's door or pillar)

Transmission Type

Restraint System

Cruise Control

Drive/Train

Vehicle Type

Body Style

9/97

☐ Manual

☒ Automatic

☐ Driverside Air Bag

☐ Passengerside Air Bag

☒ 3-Point Belt

☐ Motorbike

☐ 2-Point Belt

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Front

☒ Rear

☐ 4-Wheel

☐ Car

☐ Sport Utility

☐ Van

☐ Truck

☐ Minivan

☐ Motorcycle

☒ Other Motorhome

☐ 2-Door

☐ 4-Door

☐ Stationwagon

☐ Pick Up Truck

☐ Other

☒ Other Motorhome

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Part Name(s)

Location

☐ Left

☐ Front

☐ Right

☐ Rear

Failed Part(s)

☐ Original

☐ Replacement

Handicap Adaptive Equip

☐ Yes

☐ No

TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Brand

Goodyear

Tire Name

Complete Tire Size

265-70-22.5

No. of Failures

Date(s) of Failure(s)

RECALL #91015

Mileage at Failure(s)

SEE ATTACHED RECALL

Vehicle Speed at Failure(s)

Failed Part(s)

Available?

☐ Yes ☐ No

NHTSA Previously

Contacted?

☒ Yes ☐ No

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Attach photos if available.)

Crash

☐ Yes ☐ No

Fire

☐ Yes ☐ No

Number of Persons Injured

Number of Fatalities

Reported to Manufacturer

☐ Yes ☐ No

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies): This concerns a recall by Fleetwood American

Coach of tires on our motorhome due to disproportionate front axle weight dis-

tribution. The recall was to replace front tires only. We wrote to Fleetwood

American Coach and expressed our concerns that they were only replacing the

front tires. They have never addressed our concerns. When we went to the re-

pair center in Decatur, IN in 9/98 Fleetwood American Coach sent us to have some

work done on our front end, then to a Goodyear Tire Co. to have our tires rotat-

ed, thus moving the front tires to the rear. We feel those tires could have been

damaged while they were on the front. In their recall notice attached

Continue on back.

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to a49 U.S.C. Chapter 307. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If NHTSA proceeds with administration enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Mail postage free or fax to 202-366-7882

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies)

they mentioned that "overloading of a tire can lead to tire failure which can result in loss of vehicle control without warning, and result in personal injury and/or vehicle damage." Fleetwood failed to answer our concerns, and refused to replace the four rear tires, two of which had been on the front for approximately one (1) year and driven for about 16,749 miles. We have replaced the rear tires at our own expense and feel that Fleetwood American Coach should reimburse us for those tires.

SEE ATTACHED COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NATL. HWY. TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation, NSA-10.01
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

1-888-DASH-2-DOT

Complete and return or place in your car manual for future use

**VEHICLE
OWNER'S
QUESTIONNAIRE
(VOC)**

DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE

TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS
COMPLETE THIS FORM
OR

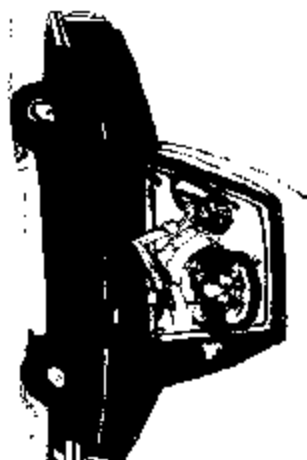
DASH 2 DOT

and dial toll free at

1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
(DASH) 2 DOT



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

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

December 10, 1999

Fleetwood American Coach Service
1420 Patterson Street
P.O. Box 1008
Decatur, IN 45733-5008

Attn: Chuck James

Re: Recall #91015

Dear Mr. James,

We recently received a letter from you regarding the recall #91015. This letter states that Fleetwood American Coach would replace the two front tires. I have a concern with replacing only the front tires after making adjustments to the load on the front axle. While in Decatur, Indiana getting warranty work done I was sent to Monroeville, Indiana to have chassis work done. When that work was finished, I was sent to a Goodyear Tire Shop to have our tires rotated. How do I know whether the tires that were on the front have not had damage, and could result in tire failure?

I feel that to be safe, all six tires should be replaced. That would eliminate any potential problems, after final adjustments are made with the weight distribution. Also, we are aware that Fleetwood American Coach has replaced all six tires on some coaches.

We are scheduled to go into the Fleetwood Service Center at Riverside, CA on January 7, 2000 for authorized repair set up by your group at Decatur. We are asking to have all six tires replaced at that time, eliminating the possibility of tires being switched for some reason without the owner knowing. Having all the tires the same size would be more safe.

We have been treated like a valued American Coach Customer and have faith this treatment will continue. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

SENDER: COMPLETE THIS SECTION

- Complete Items 1, 2, and 3. Also complete Item 4 if Restricted Delivery is desired.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article Addressed to:

Chuck James: American Coach
1420 Patterson St.
Decatur, IN 46733-5008

2. Article Number (Copy from service label)

P 301 987 373

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

A. Received by (Please Print Clearly) B. Date of Delivery

12/14/99

C. Signature

Chuck James

☐ Agent
☐ Addressee

D. Is delivery address different from item 1?

If YES, enter delivery address below:

☐ Yes
☐ No

3. Service Type

☒ Certified Mail

☐ Express Mail

☐ Registered

☐ Return Receipt for Merchandise

☐ Insured Mail

☐ C.O.D.

4. Restricted Delivery? (Extra Fee)

☐ Yes

Fleetwood American Coach Service
1420 Patterson Street
P.O. Box 1008
Decatur, IN 46733-5008
(219) 728-4773 FAX (219) 728-4574

December 20, 1999

FLEETWOOD

RE: 44-70609

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

We are writing in follow up to our telephone conversation earlier today in which we discussed the weight bias / tire upgrade procedure, which applies to your motor home. As we discussed, we have researched causes for tire failures and have discovered most tires are not properly inflated to carry the corner weights on the front axles of our products. Though your current 265/75R22.5 tire is capable (with proper inflation) of the carrying weight, we have elected to replace the front tires with larger capacity tires to increase its capacity margin. The 265/75R22.5 tire currently applied to your rear axle already has a generous margin of capacity and therefore, is not considered as part of this campaign.

Based on the above, Fleetwood will be unable to replace the rear tires on your unit on a no charge basis. However, as a customer accommodation, we would be willing to sell you four 275/70R22.5 tires at our cost. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you would like to obtain tires for your rear axle.

Thank you for writing and providing us with an opportunity to assist you.

Sincerely,



John C. Mostlin
Warranty Coordinator
American Coach Service

January 25, 2000

Fleetwood American Coach Service
1420 Patterson
P.O. Box 1008
Decatur, IN 46733-5008
Attn: John C. Mestlin

RE: 44-70609

Dear Mr. Mestlin,

We received your answer in regards to our letter dated December 10, 1999. This letter was written concerning the recall #91015. We mentioned our concern with replacing only the front tires. As we said in our letter, we were sent by Fleetwood American Coach to Montneville, Indiana to have chassis work done, then we were sent to a Goodyear Tire Shop to have our tires rotated. We don't know whether the tires that had been on the front had been damaged, and could result in tire failure. This could be a hazardous situation for us and I would think Fleetwood American Coach would be concerned as well.

We feel strongly that your company should replace all six tires in the interest of safety. Also, we are aware that you have replaced all six tires on some coaches. This sets a president and shows that you, too, were concerned about just replacing the front two tires.

We also expressed our concern about the possibility of the tires being switched for some reason without the owner knowing, causing possible problems since all of the tires won't be the same size. Here again, our safety is at stake.

Your letter didn't address these concerns. Again, we appreciate the good treatment we have had from American Coach so far. We would like to hear from you and Fleetwood American Coach addressing our concerns. We will expect an answer.

Sincerely,

cc: Chuck James

SENDER: COMPLETE THIS SECTION

- Complete Items 1, 2, and 3. Also complete item 4 if Restricted Delivery is desired.
- Print your name and address on the reverse so that we can return the card to you.
- Attach this card to the back of the mailpiece, or on the front if space permits.

1. Article Addressed to:

John C. Mestlin
American Coach - Fleetwood
1420 Patterson St.
Decatur, IN.
46733-5008

2. Article Number (Copy from service label)

2326 785 574

COMPLETE THIS SECTION ON DELIVERY

A. Received by (Please Print Clearly) B. Date of Delivery
1/21/00

C. Signature
Dennis K. Tjalk
☐ Agent
☐ Addressee

D. Is delivery address different from item 1? ☐ Yes
If YES, enter delivery address below: ☐ No

3. Service Type
☒ Certified Mail ☐ Express Mail
☐ Registered ☐ Return Receipt for Merchandise
☐ Insured Mail ☐ C.O.D.

4. Restricted Delivery? (Extra Fee) ☐ Yes

January 28, 2000

RE: 44-70609

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

We are writing in response to your letter of January 25, 2000 regarding your 1998 American Tradition motor home.

The tires currently on your vehicle are adequate and capable of carrying the weight allowed on your motor home, providing your tires are properly inflated. For your convenience, please find enclosed a Good Year tire chart. We hope this will assist you in keeping the proper tire pressures in your tires.

As stated before we are unable to grant your request for the rear tires, as this is not part of the recall. Please keep in mind we are still willing to sell you four tires for your motor home at our cost. If you choose to purchase these tires, you may contact us at 800-435-7345.

We hope you understand our decision regarding this matter. If you have any questions, or need further assistance, you may reach us at the above mentioned telephone number.

Sincerely,



John C. Mestlin
Warranty Coordinator

Enclosure

c. Chuck James

AMERICAN COACH RECALL ANNOUNCEMENT

As many of you are aware, there has been growing concern among motor home owners, dealers, and manufacturers about tire blowouts. Several months ago American Coach began investigating the possible causes of this issue on our product, since we didn't appear to be any better (or worse) than other brands on the market. Our conclusions were that, although the tires provided on our units had enough capacity for the application, some customers lacked understanding of their unit weights and therefore tended to underinflate their tires. Underinflation is a major cause of tire blowout. We then undertook a campaign through our dealers and direct mailings to better educate our customers about these issues.

We now feel, however, that education is not enough. We feel that we need to make a change to the product that allows for a greater margin of safety for those people who might make mistakes in how their tires are maintained. Therefore, American Coach has decided to replace the front tires on all Eagles, Dreams, and Traditions made between 1996 and current with a larger capacity, more forgiving tire. Our intent is to wipe the slate clean by removing any potentially damaged tires from the field, starting our customers out with a fresh pair of tires and a better understanding of this issue.

We are also planning to address a front end weight bias that exists on some of our products. All motor homes, from any manufacturer, are built with natural imbalances. That is, if you weigh all 4 corners of your motor home the weights will always be different. We have discovered some of our units that are worse than others in this respect. We have a fix for this problem, and we are contacting those owners affected. The fix involves a shim in the rear suspension that acts to redistribute the weight on the front of the coach.

Some additional information on this issue:

- You will be contacted by phone and mail about where you can go to get new tires and have the weight bias corrected (if needed). You can also call 1-800-353-0226 for further information.
- This recall extends back only through 1996 models because prior to that model year total weight and weight bias were not significant.
- We will be replacing only front tires because total tire capacity with respect to axle capacity is much closer on the front axle than on the rear. At 120 psi, the front tires can carry 12,800 lb. on a 12,000 lb. axle, and the rear tires can carry 24,000 lb. on a 19,000 lb. axle.
- Fleetwood is attempting to make additional tires available at a reduced cost to those customers who choose to replace their rear tires as well.
- On some units the larger tire will hit the stepwell when turned to the left, and a modification to the stepwell will be made to eliminate the interference.
- With larger tires on the front of the unit, the traditional front-to-rear tire rotation pattern will be replaced with a side-to-side (same axle) pattern approved by all tire manufacturers.
- With the larger capacity tires on your unit, in most cases tire pressure can be kept at less than maximum for a more comfortable ride. Set pressure in accordance with tire pressure and loading charts.
- If you have previously replaced your Goodyear tires with same size tires from another manufacturer, Fleetwood will replace your front tires with larger capacity tires from that manufacturer. If you have previously replaced your Goodyear tires with larger tires from another manufacturer, Fleetwood will reimburse you for the cost of those front tires.
- The 7.5" rims on your unit are approved for the new tires.

It is our utmost concern that you reach the repair facility destination safely. The risk of tire failure is highly dependent on how you load your motor home and the air pressure you have maintained in your tires. If have underinflated your tires in the past, you may be at greater risk. Be sure that you are comfortable driving your motor home to the specified location for repair. The following recommendations will further add to your ability to reach the repair site safely:

- Inflate your front tires to the maximum allowed pressure. for units with 275/70 tires this pressure is 120 psi, and for units with 265/75, 255/70, or 245/75 tires this pressure is 110 psi.
- Lighten the load on the front axle as much as possible by removing any unnecessary cargo, move heavier items toward the rear of the motor home, and limiting the amount of fresh water and fuel that you carry.
- Drive slowly. Maintain speeds at or below 55 mph.
- Visually inspect your tires frequently. Do not drive on your tires if you notice any soft spots, cracks, or bulges.

Although this campaign may be seen by some as excessive, it is in keeping with the American Coach philosophy to go the extra mile for your customers. It is imperative to us that you feel safe using your motor home, and we feel that this effort is an important step in regaining your confidence.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the folks that attended the Virginia Beach ACA rally for their overwhelming support for our action on this serious issue. I can't express how much your kind words and encouragement have meant to us here at American Coach, and I am convinced that, by working together, we can put this issue behind us.

Bob Wheeler
American Coach Product Development Manager

American **COACH** ASSOCIATION

November 17, 1999

IMPORTANT RECALL INFORMATION

Dear Valued American Coach Customer:

This important notice is being sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Highway Traffic and Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc. has determined that a defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in certain 1996 through 2000 model year American Eagle, American Dream and American Tradition class "A" motor homes built at our Decatur, Indiana manufacturing plants.

What is the problem? Subject motor homes, when built with a disproportionate front axle weight distribution, fully equipped, loaded with cargo, and operated with improper tire pressures, may experience an overload condition on a front tire. Overloading of a tire can lead to tire failure which can result in loss of vehicle control without warning and result in personal injury and/or vehicle damage.

What will Fleetwood do? The repair for this potential problem consists of adjusting the load on the front axle (if necessary) by making adjustments to the front and rear suspension. We will also replace the two front tires with larger capacity tires. Please rest assured that this repair will be performed only by an authorized repair facility and at no cost to you.

If you have any questions or need additional information pertaining to this Recall #91015, please contact :

**Fleetwood American Coach
Customer Response Team
1420 Patterson Street
Decatur, IN 46733
800-353-0226**

How to schedule your motor home for repairs. Since this defect affects motor vehicle safety, it is recommended that you immediately have your motor home repaired by contacting one of the authorized Fleetwood repair facilities listed below and scheduling an appointment. When you call please refer to the 12 digit Fleetwood Identification Number of your motor home.

<u>Repair Facility</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>
American Coach Service	Decatur, IN	800-634-0648
Fleetwood Service Center	Riverside, CA	888-804-7990
Tom Johnson Camping Center	Marion, NC	800-225-7802
Lazy Days RV Center	Seffner, FL	800-626-7800
Beaudry RV Center	Tucson, AZ	800-284-4878
Poulsbo RV Center	Everett, WA	800-556-3878
Romania's RV Center	Eugene, OR	800-624-3355
Stoltzfus RV & Marine	West Chester, PA	800-860-1406
Pro Tech RV Service's	Seguin, TX	888-561-2277
Link Automotive	Nashville, TN	615-256-3060
Fleet Care Inc.	Largo, FL	727-538-4746
River City Products	San Antonio, TX	800-879-4277

It is imperative that you follow the loading information and instructions provided to you in your Fleetwood Owner's Manual in the *Motor Home Loading* chapter. Furthermore, it is essential for the safe operation of your motor home that the tire manufacturer's load and pressure directions are adhered to strictly.

It is our utmost concern that you reach the repair facility destination safely. The risk of tire failure is highly dependent upon how you load your motor home and the pressures you have maintained in your tires. **If you have underinflated or overloaded your tires in the past, you will be more at risk.**

Ensure you are comfortable driving your motor home to the specified location for repair. The following recommendations will further add to your ability to reach the repair facility safely:

1. **Inflate your tires to the maximum pressure.** Following are maximum inflation pressures for the original equipment tires on the subject motor home. Tire size designations as well as maximum pressure rating are also noted on the sidewall of the tires and on the rims.

275/70 tires: Maximum pressure is 120 psi front and rear.

265/75 tires: Maximum pressure is 110 psi front and 100 psi rear.

255/70 tires: Maximum pressure is 110 psi front and rear.

245/75 tires: Maximum pressure is 110 psi front and rear.

2. **Decrease the load on your front axle as much as possible by:**
 - a. Unloading any unnecessary cargo.
 - b. Moving heavier items to the rear of the motor home.
 - c. Limiting the amount of fresh water you carry.
(Fresh water weighs approximately 8.3 lbs. per gallon.)
 - d. Limiting the amount of fuel you carry.
(Diesel fuel weighs approximately 7.0 lbs. per gallon.)
3. **Drive slowly. Maintain speeds at or below 55 mph.**
4. **Visually inspect your tires before traveling and at intermediate stops during your trip.**
 - a. Look for anything unusual, soft spots, bulges, etc., or tires that feel significantly hotter than the other tires on your motor home. **Do not drive on your tires if you notice or detect anything unusual.**

When you deliver your motor home for repairs, your repair facility will complete a Fleetwood Repair Order. Upon completion of the repair, please sign the Repair Order and it will be returned to Fleetwood.

If you no longer own this vehicle, please notify Fleetwood by calling our Customer Assistance Group at 800-353-0226, stating the name, address, and telephone number of the person or dealership you sold it to. This will enable us to send this important recall information to the new owner.

If you are unable to obtain the specified repair promptly and without charge, please contact:

**Fleetwood American Coach
Customer Response Team
1420 Patterson Street
Decatur, IN 46733
800-353-0226**

If you believe that the dealer and Fleetwood Enterprises, Inc. have failed or have been unable to remedy the defect without charge or within a reasonable period of time, you may submit a complaint to:

**Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20590**

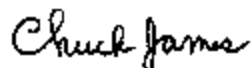
or call the toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at (800) 424-9393. Residents of Washington D.C. area should call (202) 366-0123.

Fleetwood regrets any inconvenience this situation may cause you. We are taking these steps in the interest of your safety. We appreciate your prompt assistance in eliminating a potential hazard.

This letter does not constitute an acknowledgment of legal liability.

Sincerely,

FLEETWOOD ENTERPRISES, INC.



Chuck James
Parts & Service Manager
American Coach