

720 Hauser Blvd
Helena MT 59601
January 25, 2008

Toyota Motor Sales USA
National Customer Relations
19001 Southwestern Ave. Dept. WC-11
Torrance CA 90509

Ref: 2006 Toyota Tacoma VIN 5TEUU42N26Z258969

To Whom It May Concern:

I purchased the above referenced Toyota Tacoma new in May 2006 and drove it for approximately 24,500 miles without incident and requiring only normal maintenance.

However, on January 5, I was returning from a trip when I had two spontaneous and uncommanded sudden acceleration incidents in the span of less than two hours. Luckily, both were at low – barely creeping – speeds, and I was able to get my truck under control quickly, but they left me shaken. On Monday, January 7, I brought the truck to my Toyota dealer – Helena Motors, of Helena, Mont. The service department could find nothing wrong and could not replicate the problem.

I have filed a defect complaint with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (ODI #10214130, text quoted below). But I also looked deeper into the NHTSA database, and discovered that the Toyota Tacoma for model years 2006 and 2007 was at least 32 times more likely to be the subject of a sudden acceleration complaint to NHTSA than any other light truck sold in the United States. That statistic alone suggests these complaints cannot be written off as panicked drivers pressing the wrong pedal; if that were the case, there would be some comparable number of complaints against other models of truck.

I passed this information to Scott Lynch, the service manager at Helena Motors, who promised to bring the matter up with engineers from Toyota USA. When I spoke with him two days later, however, he sounded astonished. He said Toyota USA dismissed all of the dozens of complaints as unverified because they could not be replicated in the shop. More astonishing, he said, was that Toyota USA refused to examine any further the incidents that were the subject of the NHTSA complaints, and refused to commit to any further inquiry into sudden acceleration problems.

Gentlemen, it is understandable that new technology such as the Tacoma's electronic throttle control will have bugs. It is also predictable that some of those unexpected bugs will not be picked up by Toyota's existing diagnostic tools. The challenge for an organization committed to quality then is to identify credible complaints and examine those vehicles in depth to determine what the defect is, how to fix it and how to develop appropriate tools to find it in other vehicles. It is unconscionable that an auto company

that professes its commitment to quality will brush aside multiple credible complaints about a safety defect, however rare, that puts the customer's life in danger.

Accordingly, I renew my request, first made through my Toyota dealer, for a full and complete investigation of the defect in my Tacoma. I am willing to have a data recorder installed to record vehicle performance parameters. I am willing to have my electronic throttle control swapped out so it can be examined closely by specialists. I am willing to have my vehicle available for detailed examination. I am willing, in other words, to cooperate with any in-depth investigation into this defect.

I ask that you respond to this request in writing, and if you will not perform a full investigation of my vehicle, I ask that you explain your refusal.

Cordially,

William C. Kronholm

cc: Scott Yon, DOT/ODI

Text of my ODI complaint:

THE VEHICLE EXPERIENCED TWO SPONTANEOUS AND UNCONTROLLED ACCELERATIONS WITHIN ABOUT TWO HOURS. THE FIRST WAS ON THE HIGHWAY. I TURNED INTO A PULLOUT TO ALLOW A FASTER CAR TO PASS ON A SNOW-SLICKED ROAD. WHILE TURNING BACK TOWARD THE HIGHWAY AT SLOW SPEED, ABOUT 5 MPH, TAPPING ON MY BRAKE PEDAL, THE CAR SUDDENLY ACCELERATED AND I WAS FORCED TO STAND ON THE BRAKES TO KEEP IT FROM RUNNING AWAY. BECAUSE OF THE ANTI-SKID BRAKES ENGAGING, THE CAR STILL MADE IT 3-4 FEET INTO THE TRAFFIC LANE BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO STOP. THE SECOND INCIDENT OCCURRED ABOUT AN HOUR LATER WHEN I ARRIVED HOME. I WAS BACKING THE TRUCK DOWN A CURVED, GRAVEL DRIVEWAY TOWARD A TUCK-UNDER GARAGE. THE TOTAL DISTANCE TO BE TRAVELED WAS ABOUT 30 FEET. EASING DOWN IN THE TURN, I HAD TRAVELED ABOUT 20 FEET WITH MY FOOT ON THE BRAKE (IDLING POWER WAS ALL THAT WAS NEEDED TO BACK DOWN AT 1-2 MPH; NO GAS WAS APPLIED). THE VEHICLE SUDDENLY LURCHED BACKWARDS. AGAIN, I HAD TO STAND ON THE BRAKES WHILE THE ENGINE REVVED AND THE REAR TIRES SPUN AND THREW GRAVEL, DIGGING 3-4 INCHES DEEP INTO THE GRAVEL SURFACE, BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO TURN OFF THE ENGINE. THE FOLLOWING MONDAY, I TOOK THE TRUCK TO MY TOYOTA DEALER. THEY WERE UNABLE TO FIND ANY DEFECT OR RECREATE THE PROBLEM, BUT SAID THEY WERE OPENING A CASE FILE WITH TOYOTA ON THE INCIDENTS AND HOPED TO GAIN MORE INFORMATION FROM THE MANUFACTURER.