U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 10-010
Prompted by: 10E-049
Date Opened: 12/14/2010 **Date Closed:** 01/09/2012
Investigator: Alexander Ansley
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Norcold Refrigerator Fires

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: NORCOLD INC.
Products: 1200 series refrigerators made 1/1/2003-10/6/2010
Population: 151,795

Problem Description: Norcold is installing a thermocouple into certain refrigerators to ensure high temperatures are detected and the chance of fire reduced.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

***Description of Other:**

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close EQ.

Summary:

On October 7, 2010 Norcold, Inc. (Norcold) notified the NHTSA that it had decided certain 1200 series refrigerators, manufactured between January 1, 2003, and October 6, 2010, contain a safety related defect. Norcold stated that certain refrigerators contain either a sensing algorithm or a thermal switch to interrupt power to the refrigerator when it detects high temperatures that could lead to a fire. Norcold intends to install a thermocouple to improve the response time of this high temperature detection and further reduce the possibility of fire within these units. Should a fire occur within a refrigerator installed into a recreational vehicle, both personal injury and property damage are possible. This issue was assigned recall number 10E-049.

On December 14, 2010, the Recall Management Division (RMD) mailed an information request (IR) letter to Norcold requesting a list of customers who purchased the same or similar defective refrigerators. Norcold responded to RMD's IR letter on December 21, 2010, with a list of companies that were further sold this equipment.

On January 3, 2011, RMD mailed IR letters to 55 companies from Norcold's customer list known to manufacture vehicles or alter new vehicles. On August 8, 2011, RMD mailed another IR to 6 companies that did not respond to the first request for information.

In total, 39 companies filed responses with RMD. Of those companies that responded, 23 filed Defect Reports with NHTSA and conducted safety recalls for their affected vehicles. 12 companies responded that they did not install the defective refrigerators into new motor vehicles. One company, Gulfstream Coach Inc., filed their Part 573 Report prior to the opening of this EQ. Three companies, Country Coach Corp., Trail Lite, and H&H Trailer Company, responded that their companies were previously liquidated and their new companies did have the needed records to conduct safety recalls.

Of the IR letters mailed, 12 letters were undeliverable due to companies now out of business. Four companies, Elite Trailer, Inc., Mathees Enterprises, Nashville Coach, Inc., and Rexhall Industries did not file a written response with RMD despite being contacted multiple times. RMD will refer this matter to the Office of the Chief Counsel (NCC) for further enforcement activity as appropriate.

The following companies submitted the appropriate Part 573 Report for their affected vehicles:

ALUMINUM TRAILER COMPANY (11V-233)
COACHMEN RV COMPANY, LLC (11V-065)
DYNAMAX CORPORATION (11V-069)
FLEETWOOD RV, INC. (11V-074)
FOREST RIVER, INC. (11V-152)
GEOMARC, INC., (11V-231)
HAULMARK MOTOR COACH (11V-269)
KING OF THE ROAD (11V-085)
KZRV, L.P. (11V-022)
MARATHON HOMES CORP. (11V-080)
NEW HORIZONS RV CORPORATION (11V-140)
NEWMAR CORPORATION (11V-235)
NRC MODIFICATIONS, INC. (11V-073)
SHOWHAULER TRUCKS INC. (11V-103)
SIERRA CUSTOM INTERIORS (11V-171)
SPACE CRAFT MFG. INC. (11V-052)
SUPERIOR COACH INTERIORS, INC. (11V-449)
T&E ENTERPRISES (11V-075)
TECHWORKS INC. (11V-484)
TRAIL BOSS CONVERSIONS, INC. (11V-083)
TRAVEL UNITS INC. (11V-056)
TRIPLE E RECREATIONAL VEHICLES (11V-138)
UNITED SPECIALTIES INC. (11V-087)

A summary of IR responses can be found attached with this closing resume.

This EQ is closed.