



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 11-034
Date Opened: 09/23/2011
Investigator: Michael Lee
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Unexpected Closing of Power Liftgate
Date Closed: 02/29/2012
Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: HONDA (AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO.)
Products: 2008-2009 Honda Odyssey (equipped with power liftgates)
Population: 63,927

Problem Description: When the liftgate struts fail and cannot support the liftgate, a liftgate in the open position can unexpectedly drop and automatically close under power (i.e., a powered close by the liftgate motor).

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	13	94	107
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	3	10	13
Number of Injuries:	3	10	13
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	5,679	5,679

*Description of Other: Warranty claims for liftgate strut replacements.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close this Preliminary Evaluation (NHTSA Safety Recall No. 12V-062).

Summary:

The investigation found that the liftgate struts were failing prematurely and at an abnormal rate in certain model year (MY) 2008 Honda Odyssey Touring and 2009 Honda Odyssey Touring and EX-L model vehicles equipped with power-operated rear liftgates (note: MY 2008 Odyssey EX-L was not equipped with a power liftgate). Unlike vehicles with non-powered (manual) liftgates, the subject vehicle's liftgate can be opened automatically (via the power liftgate motor) even when the struts are in a degraded condition and can no longer support it in the open position. Consumers standing or accessing the rear cargo area under the liftgate and expecting the liftgate will stay open, can be struck when the liftgate unexpectedly drops, or can be trapped under the liftgate as it power closes, both of which can occur when the system detects and reacts to degraded struts. By contrast, users of a manual liftgate assist in lifting it, and thus notice the lack of support as the struts degrade.

Honda is conducting a recall to replace the liftgate struts in approximately 45,747 MY 2008 and early MY 2009 Odyssey vehicles equipped with power liftgates built before a manufacturing change of the liftgate strut assembly that occurred on January 13, 2009 (see NHTSA Safety Recall No. 12V-062 for further details). The vehicles subject to the recall account for 101 complaints, 12 injuries, and 5,630 of the warranty claims shown above (i.e., the MY 2009 and 2010 vehicles built after the manufacturing change experience lower failure rates). In addition, and based on consumer complaints to NHTSA, Odyssey vehicles without power liftgates experience lower complaint and injury rates than the Odyssey vehicles equipped with power liftgates (subject vehicles).

The reports cited above can be reviewed online at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints under the following identification

(ODI) numbers: 10442027, 10441232, 10437461, 10432557, 10430420, 10429962, 10412908, 10401388, 10395475, 10390216, 10343678, 10336744, 10294156