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January 15, 2003 2003 JAN 16 P 3 33

**OFFICE OF DEFECTS
INVESTIGATION**

03V-014 ① of ③

Mr. Kenneth Weinstein,
Associate Administrator
Office of Defects Investigation
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

On January 9, 2003, Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (HMC) determined that a defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in the fuel tank in the vehicles listed below. The following information is submitted pursuant to the requirements of 49 CFR 573.5.

573.5(c)(1)

Name of manufacturer: Honda Canada Manufacturing, Inc. (HCM)
Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, LLC (HMA)

Manufacturer's Agent: William R. Wiljen
American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (AHM)
1919 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90501-2746

573.5(c)(2)

Identification of potentially affected vehicles:

<u>Make/Model</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>VINs/Dates of Manufacture</u>
Honda Odyssey	Certain 2003 model year	2HKRL18**3H503505 - 2HKRL18**3H503700 5FNRL18**3B041904 - 5FNRL18**3B048078 December 4 -17, 2002

Description of the basis for the determination of the recall population:

The recall population was based on manufacturing records. The VIN ranges listed above reflect vehicles that could have received one of the affected fuel tanks.

573.5(c)(3)

Total number of vehicles potentially affected: 3,617

573.5(c)(4)

Percentage of affected vehicles that contain the defect: Less than 1%

573.5(c)(5)

Defect description:

Summary

Some fuel tanks were manufactured with surface imperfections that could allow fuel to leak from the tank. A fuel leak in the presence of an ignition source could result in a fire.

Detail

Water was inadvertently introduced into one of the fuel tank manufacturing processes when a machine seal failed. When extreme heat is applied during a subsequent process, the water converts to steam and creates air pocket(s) in the tank wall. These occurrences are visible as surface imperfections in the area of the tank as indicated below. Some imperfections may allow fuel to leak from the tank. A fuel leak in the presence of an ignition source could result in a fire.



573.5(c)(8)

Chronology:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Dec. 12, 2002 | HMA production line associates found a blemish on a fuel tank during vehicle assembly. |
| Dec. 13, 2002 | HMA initiated an investigation. |
| Jan. 7, 2003 | HMA completed the investigation and analysis. |
| Jan. 9, 2003 | HMC determined that a safety-related defect exists. |

573.5(c)(8)(i)

Program for remedying the defect:

Dealers will inspect the fuel tanks of all affected vehicles. If any surface imperfections (e.g., soft spots, bulges or slight indentations) are found, the fuel tank will be replaced. The inspection and fuel tank replacement will be performed free of charge.

573.5(c)(8)(ii)

The estimated date to begin sending notifications to owners: Jan. 28, 2003

The estimated date to begin sending notifications to dealers: Jan. 9, 2003

The estimated date of completion of the notification: Jan. 28, 2003

573.5(c)(9)

Representative copies of all notices, bulletins and other communications:

A copy of the dealer service bulletin and text of the final customer notification letter will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

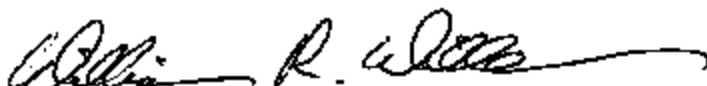
573.5(c)(10)

Proposed owner notification letter submission:

A draft of the owner notification letter was previously submitted for your review.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.



William R. Willen
Managing Counsel
Product Regulatory Office

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