



Mercedes-Benz

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Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC  
A DaimlerChrysler Company

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

2003 APR 14 P 3 21

OFFICE OF  
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

April 7, 2003

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Recall Analysis Division  
Office of Defect Investigation  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attn: George Person, Chief

Re: 49 CFR Part 573; Recall of Mercedes-Benz M-Class

Dear Mr. Person:

Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573.5(c)(9), this letter contains 1 document that was communicated to our dealers on the above subject and will be submitted in Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC (MBUSA) regular monthly mailing for the month of April, 2003.

Manufacturer's Campaign Identification Number  
undetermined

NHTSA Recall Number  
08V-121

Sincerely,

Stephen Kraitz  
Senior Staff Engineer  
Product Compliance and Analysis

Enclosure



**To: All Mercedes-Benz Dealers**

**Subject: Voluntary Recall Campaign 1998 – 2003 M-Class  
Power Steering Fluid Cooling Hose Clamp**

**Date: April 3, 2003**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

**On March 26, 2003 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) was notified that Mercedes-Benz USA will conduct a voluntary recall campaign of model-year 1998 – 2003 M-Class vehicles to replace a hose clamp at the power steering fluid cooler. Over time, some customers have experienced reduced power steering assist because of fluid leakage, and the loss of fluid can ultimately damage the power steering pump.**

**Approximately 211,000 vehicles in the U.S. are affected by the recall. A dealer recall bulletin and customer letter mailing are in process and will be distributed towards the end of April 2003.**

**While a news release was not required for this recall, some reporters have seen information on the NHTSA web site and plan to mention this issue in their news coverage. The Questions and Answers on the following page may prove helpful when talking with concerned customers.**

**MBUSA Engineering Services**

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**  
**M-Class Recall – Power Steering Hose Clamp**

- Q. What is the issue?**  
**A.** An over-size hose clamp at the cooler for power steering fluid may result in a loss of fluid.
- Q. What is the worst case?**  
**A.** The gradual loss of power steering fluid may result in reduced power steering assist, increased steering effort and ultimately can damage the power steering pump.
- Q. What is the remedy?**  
**A.** MBUSA will voluntarily install a new hose clamp on the power steering hose to the cooler on the vehicles in question. The new hose clamp will prevent the loss of steering fluid.
- Q. How long does the service measure take?**  
**A.** Installing the new hose clamp can be completed within a few minutes.
- Q. Is there any cost to the vehicle owner?**  
**A.** As always with a recall, the work is done at no charge to the customer.
- Q. Have there been any accidents or injuries as a result of this issue?**  
**A.** There have been no reported accidents or injuries.
- Q. Can the power steering leak fluid during normal driving?**  
**A.** Yes, however, leakage is more likely during starting and while parking, and in cold weather, when hydraulic pressure is highest.
- Q. Does the driver get any warning before the effect occurs?**  
**A.** The driver usually notices the loss of power steering fluid because of steering pump noise and increased steering effort.
- Q. Can the steering fail?**  
**A.** No. Only the power assist can fail. Despite this, the vehicle is fully capable of being steered, but with increased effort.
- Q. Which vehicles are affected?**  
**A.** M-Class: ML320, 350, 430, 500 and ML55 AMG produced between May 1998 and December 2002.
- Q. How many vehicles are affected by this problem?**  
**A.** This issue affects about 211,000 vehicles in the U.S.
- Q. How will MBUSA notify all its customers?**  
**A.** MBUSA will determine the current owners and addresses through vehicle registration sources and notify each of the customers directly.