

# Ford Motor Company

James P. Vondale, Director  
Automotive Safety Office  
Environmental & Safety Engineering

04V-106 ① of ③

March 1, 2004

Kenneth N. Weinstein  
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

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OFFICE OF  
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Dear Mr. Weinstein:


Subject: Ford Recall No. 04S12 – Certain 2000-2003 Model Year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable Vehicles Equipped with Adjustable Pedal Assemblies and All 2000 Model Year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable Vehicles Equipped with Fixed Pedal Assemblies

## Summary

- **Ford Action** – Ford is conducting a voluntary safety recall involving certain 2000-2003 model year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles equipped with adjustable pedal assemblies built through February 27, 2003 at Atlanta Assembly Plant and through March 31, 2003 at Chicago Assembly Plant and all 2000 model year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles equipped with fixed pedal assemblies to replace stop lamp switch and associated wiring assembly.
- **Number of Vehicles Involved** – Approximately 938,789 Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles in the United States and Federal Territories.
- **Affect on Vehicle Operation** – A malfunctioning stop lamp switch and/or associated wiring may render stop lamps inoperable or cause them to stay on all the time. If the switch and/or associated wiring fall in open position, the brake lights will not actuate and the driver will not be able to shift the vehicle out of park. If the switch falls in the closed position, the brake lights will remain on, which will not allow the speed control to be activated or may cause the battery to discharge.
- **Service Procedure** – Ford has notified dealers not to demonstrate or deliver the affected vehicles until the service procedure has been performed. Owners will be instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln-Mercury dealer to have the stop lamp switch and associated wiring removed and replaced with a newly designed stop lamp switch and wiring assembly.

Attached is the detailed information required by the applicable portions of 49 CFR Part 573 – Defect and Non-Compliance Information Report.

Sincerely,



James P. Vondale



49 CFR Part 573 – DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

04S12 – CERTAIN 2000-2003 MODEL YEAR FORD TAURUS and MERCURY SABLE VEHICLES  
EQUIPPED with ADJUSTABLE PEDAL ASSEMBLIES and ALL 2000 MODEL YEAR FORD  
TAURUS and MERCURY SABLE VEHICLES EQUIPPED with FIXED PEDAL ASSEMBLIES

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Ford Motor Company (Ford) submits the following information concerning a safety recall action that it is initiating voluntarily.

573.6 (c) (2) – Potentially Affected Vehicles

The vehicles potentially affected are certain 2000-2003 model year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles equipped with adjustable pedal assemblies built from May 3, 1999 through February 27, 2003 at Atlanta Assembly Plant and from June 2, 1999 through March 31, 2003 at Chicago Assembly Plant. Also affected are all 2000 model year Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles equipped with fixed pedal assemblies (built from May 3, 1999 through August 4, 2000 at Atlanta Assembly Plant and from June 2, 1999 through August 18, 2000 at Chicago Assembly Plant).

Because these vehicles are not produced in VIN order, information as to the applicability of this action to specific vehicles can best be obtained by either calling Ford's toll-free line (1-800-392-3673) or by contacting a local Ford dealer who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford On-line Automotive Service Information System (OASIS) database.

573.6 (c) (3) – Estimated Population of Vehicles Potentially Affected

Approximately 938,789 Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable vehicles in the United States and Federal Territories.

573.6 (c) (4) – Estimated Percentage of Affected Vehicles with the Defect Condition

Unknown.

573.6 (c) (5) – Description of Defect

A malfunctioning stop lamp switch and/or associated wiring may render stop lamps inoperable or cause them to stay on all the time. If the switch and/or associated wiring fail in open position, the brake lights will not actuate and the driver will not be able to shift the vehicle out of park. If the switch and/or associated wiring fail in the closed position, the brake lights will remain on, which will not allow the speed control to be activated or may cause the battery to discharge.

573.6 (c) (6) – Chronology of Events

On October 28, 2003 the agency opened a Recall Query Investigation (RQ03-008) based on reports alleging stop lamp malfunction primarily in vehicles previously serviced under field service action (FSA) 01S08 announced by Ford in March 2001. As a result of Ford's investigation prior to, during and subsequent to the RQ response, Ford determined that the FSA service procedure may not have corrected the issue identified in the FSA. Additionally, analysis on 2000 model year vehicles not included in the FSA population identified reports of wiring related issues which may result in the same failure mode as the stop lamp malfunction. Ford's December 12, 2003 response to the agency's RQ information request also included reports of stop lamp malfunction

573.6 (c) (6) – Chronology of Events (continued)

on 2001-2002 model year vehicles equipped with adjustable pedals that represent rates significantly higher than expected. Ford believes that along with contamination of the stop lamp switch from grease, that led to the FSA 01S08, fatiguing of the wire assembly in model year 2000 vehicles with fixed pedals and misalignment of booster rod pin in vehicles with adjustable pedals may have contributed to the malfunction of the stop lamps. Ford incorporated changes to the wire assembly in August 2000 that addressed the wire concern in vehicles equipped with fixed pedals and incorporated changes to improve the alignment of the booster rod pin and stop lamp switch in vehicles equipped with adjustable pedals in February 2003. Ford's service kit for this field action includes a redesigned stop lamp switch along with wire harness extension and accessories including tie-wraps to address the concerns identified above.

573.6 (c) (8) – Service Program

Ford has notified dealers not to demonstrate or deliver the affected vehicles until the service procedure has been performed. Owners will be instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln-Mercury dealer to have the stop lamp switch and associated wire assembly removed and replaced with a newly designed stop lamp switch and wire assembly.

There will be no charge to owners for this service. Mailing of owner notification letters will begin on April 5, 2004 and be completed on May 3, 2004. Ford's general reimbursement plan for the cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners prior to notification of a safety recall was provided to the agency on February 28, 2003.

573.6 (c) (9) – Press statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

Ford does not at this time plan to release a statement to the media concerning the subject matter of this action. A copy of the Notification letters to dealers and owners from Ford will be forwarded to the agency when available.

573.6 (c) (11) – Recall Number

Ford has assigned recall number 04S12 to this action.

573.13 (c) (2) – Ending Date for Reimbursement Eligibility

The ending date for reimbursement eligibility for cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners per Ford's general reimbursement plan is May 13, 2004.