

Recall Campaign

October 2004
FL427A
NHTSA #04V-270

Copy of Letter to Owner

Subject: American LaFrance Cab Tilt Cylinders

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act and the Canadian Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

Freightliner LLC, on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, American LaFrance, has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists on specific American LaFrance Metropolitan and Eagle vehicles manufactured between January 2, 1997, and January 19, 2004.

One or both of the cab tilt cylinders may lock when the cab is being lowered and a velocity fuse in one of the cylinders trips. If a velocity fuse trips in just one cylinder but not both, the resulting unequal load may cause one or both of the cylinders to bend, lowering the cab to the chassis, resulting in possible personal injury or vehicle damage.

Flow restrictors will be installed in the cab tilt cylinders to reduce the speed at which the cab lowers.

Repair kits are now available for authorized dealers to order. Contact your authorized dealer to arrange to have your vehicle(s) modified and to assure that parts are available at the dealer.

When you contact your dealer, refer to campaign number **FL427A**. Once kit(s) are received at the dealership, the modification will take approximately an hour and will be performed at no charge to you.

As stated in the terms of your express limited warranty, Freightliner LLC will not pay for any damage caused by failure to properly maintain your vehicle. Freightliner LLC considers the work necessary under this campaign to be proper maintenance and will, therefore, not pay for any damage to your vehicle caused by your failure to have the repairs that are the subject of this campaign performed in a reasonable time.

IMPORTANT: When the recall has been completed, please ensure that a label has been affixed to your vehicle referencing **FL427A**.

If you do not own the vehicle that corresponds to the identification number(s) which appears on the Recall Notification, please return the notification to the Warranty Campaigns Department with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. If you have leased this vehicle, please make sure this notification is immediately forwarded to the lessee. If you have paid to have this recall condition corrected prior to this notice, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement. Please see the reverse side of this notice for details.

If you are not able to have the defect remedied without charge and within a reasonable time, which is not longer than 60 days after you tender the vehicle for repair, please contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 547-0712, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time Monday through Friday, e-mail address WarrantyCampaigns@freightliner.com, or the Customer Assistance Center at (800) FTL-HELP or (800) STL-HELP, after normal business hours. You may also wish to submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 7th Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, or phone (888) 327-4236. If your vehicle is involved in the Canadian portion, you may wish to notify the Manager, Recall and Public Compliance, Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch, Transport Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, or phone (613) 993-9851.

We regret any inconvenience this action may cause but feel certain you understand our interest in motor vehicle safety.

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Enclosure

Reimbursement to Customers for Repairs Performed Prior to Recall

If you have already **paid** to have this recall condition corrected you may be eligible to receive reimbursement.

Requests for reimbursement may include parts and labor. Reimbursement may be limited to the amount the repair would have cost if completed by an authorized Freightliner LLC dealer. The following documentation must be presented to your dealer for consideration for reimbursement.

Please provide original or clear copies of all receipts, invoices, and repair orders that show:

- The name and address of the person who paid for the repair.
- The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) of the vehicle that was repaired.
- What problem occurred, what repair was done, when was the repair done.
- Who repaired the vehicle.
- The total cost of the repair expense that is being claimed.
- Proof of payment for the repair (such as the front and back of a cancelled check or a credit card receipt).

Reimbursement will be made by check from your Freightliner LLC dealer. If your claim is denied, you will receive a letter from Freightliner LLC with the reason(s) for the denial.

Please speak with your Freightliner LLC authorized dealer concerning this matter.

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Work Instructions

Subject: American LaFrance Cab Tilt Cylinders

Models Affected: Specific American LaFrance Metropolitan and Eagle vehicles manufactured between January 2, 1997, and January 19, 2004.

Prior to Beginning the Replacement Procedure

1. Park the vehicle on a level surface. Shut down the engine, set the parking brake, and chock the tires.
2. Inspect the passenger-side door for a campaign completion sticker (Form WAR260). If a sticker is present for campaign FL427, no further work needs to be done. If there is no sticker, proceed with the steps below.
3. Choose the flow restrictor replacement procedure below (with the cab raised or with the cab lowered) that will allow you to perform the recall in the safest manner based on the equipment installed or any obstructions on the vehicle.

Flow Restrictor Installation Performed Without Raising the Cab

1. Connect the tilt control and activate the down button to ensure the cab is completely down. See Fig. 1.
2. Make sure the pressure is off the tilt cylinders by opening the release valve on the manual pump and leaving it open during installation. See Fig. 2.
3. Place a drain pan under the bottom of the tilt cylinder.

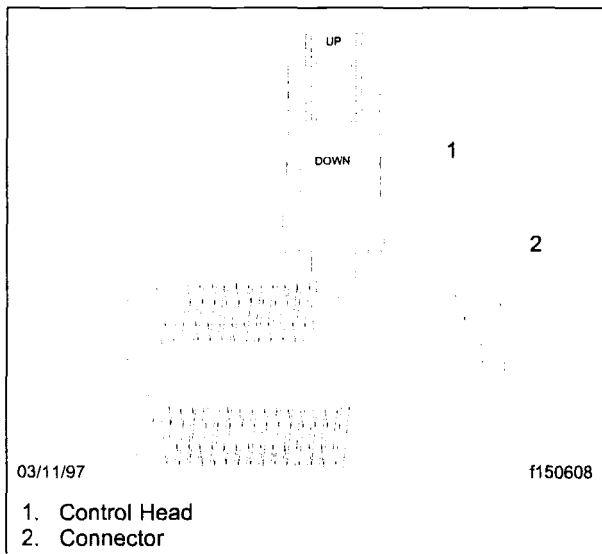


Fig. 1, Cab-Tilt Control

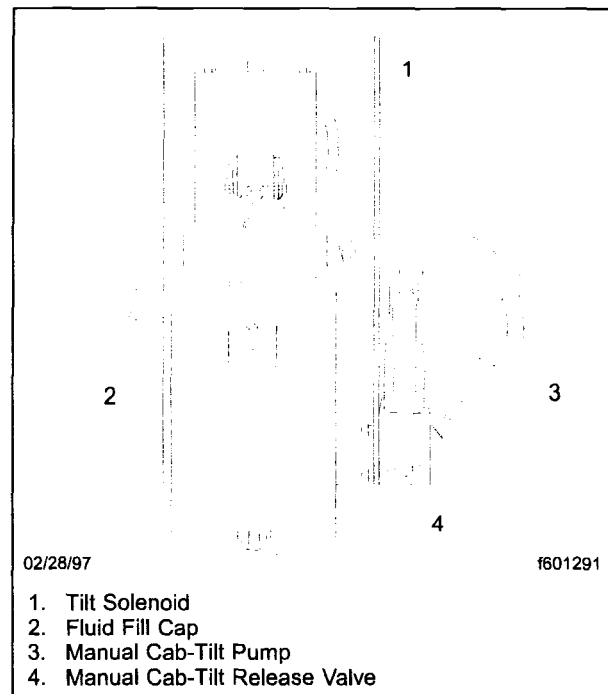


Fig. 2, Cab-Tilt Pump

4. Remove the hydraulic hose and elbow adaptor fitting from the supply and return ports on the tilt cylinder. The supply port is located 90 degrees from the fluid tube and the return port is adjacent to the fluid tube on the tilt cylinder. See **Fig. 3**.
5. Apply thread sealant compound to the threads of the flow restrictors (from kit 25-FL427-000), then install them on both the supply and return ports on the tilt cylinder. See **Fig. 3**.
6. Clean the threads of the elbow adaptors, apply sealant compound, then install the adaptors on the flow restrictor.
7. Install the hydraulic lines on the elbow adaptors.
8. Repeat this procedure to install the flow restrictors on the opposite side.
9. Close the release valve on the manual tilt pump.
10. Fill the tilt pump reservoir with the fluid specified on the fluid data label located inside the driver's side door opening.
11. Test the operation of the tilt cylinders.
12. After completing the repair, clean a spot on the base label (Form WAR259). The base label is usually located on the passenger-side door about 12 inches (30 cm) below the door latch. Attach a completion sticker (Form WAR260) for campaign FL427 to the base label.
13. Remove the chocks from the tires.

Flow Restrictor Installation Performed With the Cab Raised

IMPORTANT: Before performing the following procedures, refer to **Section 60.17** of the *American LaFrance Workshop Manual* and follow all the cautions and warnings listed.

1. Ensure that all optional equipment on the front bumper will not interfere with the cab being raised.

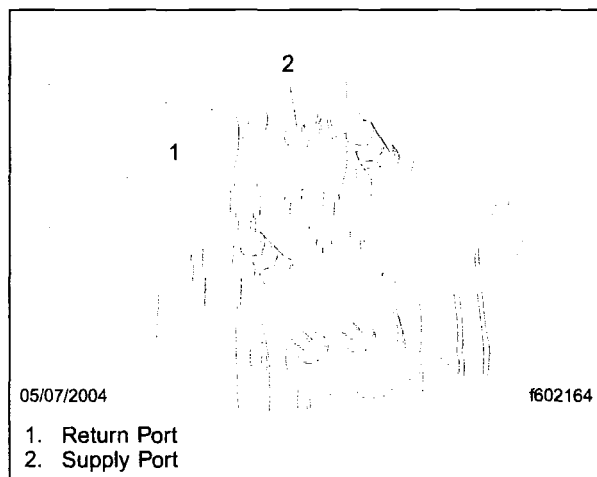


Fig. 3, Install a Flow Restrictor on the Supply and Return Ports

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CAUTION

Remove all loose and heavy items from the cab before raising. Objects falling in the cab, or a door flying open, could cause damage to the vehicle or cause serious personal injury.

2. Raise the cab until all safety locks are set.

WARNING

Do not work under or around a raised cab until the safety locks are in place. Do not attempt to replace a damaged cylinder on a raised cab until an alternative cab support is in place. If the safety locks are not in place and the cab should drop, the result could be serious injury or death.

IMPORTANT: Install safety stands or properly support the cab to prevent the cab from coming down.

3. Release the hydraulic pressure on the tilt cylinders by opening the release valve on the manual tilt pump. See Fig. 2.

WARNING

Do not loosen the hydraulic lines on the tilt cylinders until all pressure is relieved from the system. Doing so could cause the cab to fall and result in serious personal injury and property damage.

4. Place a drain pan under the bottom of the tilt cylinder. Remove the hydraulic hose and elbow adaptor fitting from the supply and return ports on the tilt cylinder. The supply port is located 90 degrees from the fluid tube and the return port is adjacent to the fluid tube on the tilt cylinder. See Fig. 3.
5. Apply thread sealant compound to the threads of the flow restrictors (from kit 25-FL427-000), then install them on both the supply and return ports on the tilt cylinder.
6. Clean the threads of the elbow adaptors, apply sealant compound, then install the adaptors on the flow restrictors.
7. Install the hydraulic lines on the elbow adaptors.
8. Repeat this procedure to install the flow restrictors on the opposite side.
9. Close the release valve on the manual tilt pump.
10. Fill the tilt pump reservoir with the fluid specified on the fluid data label located inside the driver's side door.

IMPORTANT: Maintain cab support in order to bleed air out of the system. The hydraulic system must be fully purged before attempting to lift the cab with the hydraulic system.

11. Remove the safety stands from the cab.
12. Test the operation of the tilt cylinders.

NOTE: With the flow restrictors installed, the cab may raise and lower slower than before the modification.

13. After completing the repair, clean a spot on the base label (Form WAR259). The base label is usually located on the passenger-side door about 12 inches (30 cm) below the door latch. Attach a completion sticker (Form WAR260) for campaign FL427 to the base label.
14. Remove the chocks from the tires.