



05V-364
(4 pages)

August 18, 2005

George H. Person
Chief, Recall Analysis Division
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Notification: Innovative Design Technologies, Inc.
Roof Lift Systems installed on Viking Recreational Vehicles, LLC camper trailers.

Dear Mr. Person:

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, this correspondence is to serve as our notification to NHTSA of a potential safety defect that exists in certain camper trailers manufactured by Viking Recreational Vehicles, LLC (Viking).

DESCRIPTION OF DEFECT:

On these units, the Innovative Design Technologies, Inc. ("IDT") roof lift system is defective and may fail allowing the roof to collapse unexpectedly. The roof on these tent style camper trailers is lifted by a mechanism manufactured by IDT that uses a gear and paw locking system to keep the roof structure raised. This gear turns a shaft that is connected to it through a collar and held in place with a dowel pin. Each corner of the roof is simultaneously raised when this shaft rotates. We have identified two causes of failure. First, slippage may occur between the gear and paw. When this occurs, there is no mechanical resistance keeping the roof raised and it collapses. The second failure cause relates to the shaft/collar/dowel pin. If the dowel pin shears, the shaft is free to rotate and the roof collapses. Should either one of these failures occur, there is the potential for personal injury to any occupants inside the trailer at the time of failure.

SCOPE OF DEFECT:

Viking installed these lift systems on our Model Year 2004, 2005 and 2006 Viking Epic, Viking Saga, Viking Legend, Coachmen Clipper Sport, Coachmen Clipper Spirit, Coachmen Clipper Classic, and Coachmen Futura camper trailers manufactured between November 2004 and August 15, 2005. A total of (3624) units are affected.

DISCOVERY OF DEFECT:

Viking investigated a complaint from a dealer regarding a roof collapse on or about June 29, 2005. Upon receiving the complaint, Viking immediately repurchased all units from the dealer and ordered them transported back to the factory for investigation. The unit was tested, but the roof did not fall as described. After June 29, 2005, Viking requested other parts of approximately 13 IDT lift systems which caused a roof collapse from other dealers, dating back to April 30, 2005. The parts were examined, and the investigation was expedited, when an additional 5 complaints were received in July. On August 15, 2005, Viking determined that we indeed had a safety defect on this product.

VIKING RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, LLC

580 W. Burr Oak St. - PO Box 549 - Centreville, Michigan 49032
(269) 467-6321 - FAX (269) 467-6021
E-Mail: vikinginfo@vikingrv.com

PRECULSION OF DEFECT:

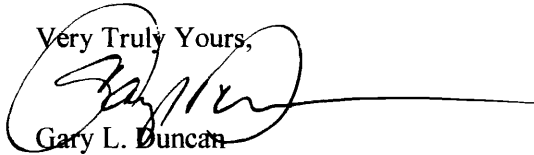
IDT is in the process of redesigning the lift mechanism to eliminate the potential for slippage. Once this redesign is complete and tested, replacement systems will be made available for existing products and the redesigned system will be installed on all new products going forward. It is expected that 100% of all units involved will require the repair.

Viking will supply the necessary instructions and replacement parts for remedying this defect. The repairs will be done by Viking dealers at no expense to the dealers or retail customers.

All purchasers and dealerships that receive these units with the potential defect will be advised by mail regarding this problem. A copy of our proposed owner notification letter is attached for review and approval. We will start the mailing campaign immediately upon receipt of your approval of this letter.

Should you have any additional questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (574) 825-8528.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary L. Duncan', is written over a horizontal line.

Gary L. Duncan
Vice President, Engineering Services

CC: Mike Terlep
Rick Lavers
Gar Warlick



August 19, 2005

Dear Coachmen/Viking Owner:

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

Viking RV Company has determined that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety exists in Model Year 2004, 2005 and 2006 Viking Epic, Viking Saga, Viking Legend, Coachmen Clipper Sport, Coachmen Clipper Spirit, Coachmen Clipper Classic, and Coachmen Futura camper trailers manufactured between November 2004 and August 15, 2005.

SAFETY DEFECT

On these units, the Innovative Design Technologies, Inc. ("IDT") roof lift system is defective and may fail allowing the roof to collapse unexpectedly. Should this occur, there is the potential for personal injury to any occupants inside the trailer at the time of failure.

WARNING: DO NOT OPERATE LIFT SYSTEM. TRAILER ROOFS SHOULD BE KEPT CLOSED UNTIL LIFT SYSTEM IS REPAIRED BY AN AUTHORIZED VIKING DEALER.

REPAIRS

PLEASE TAKE YOUR UNIT PROMPTLY TO YOUR VIKING OR COACHMEN DEALER. At no charge to you, the dealer will perform the necessary repairs. Once the replacement parts are available, the procedure should take approximately 1 hour.

REFUNDS

If you have paid to have this service performed prior to receiving this notice you can receive a full refund. Please mail your paid original invoice or receipt to Viking RV Service, P.O. Box 549, Centreville, Michigan, 49032.

CHANGED ADDRESS OR SOLD THE VEHICLE?

Please fill out the enclosed pre-paid postcard and mail it to us if you have changed your address or sold the vehicle.

Any vehicle lessor receiving this recall notice must forward a copy of this notice to the lessee within ten days.

If your dealer does not make the required repair promptly and without charge, you may contact Viking Customer Service at 1-800-239-6157. You also may contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590 or call the toll-free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

We regret the inconvenience this situation may have caused you. However, Viking RV Company believes in the early detection and immediate correction of potential concerns. Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,

VIKING RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, LLC

VIKING RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, LLC

580 W. Burr Oak St. - PO Box 549 - Centreville, Michigan 49032

(269) 467-6321 - FAX (269) 467-6021

E-Mail: vikinginfo@vikingrv.com



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Washington, DC 20590

Re: Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Notification: Innovative Design Technologies, Inc.
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Dear Mr. Person:

This correspondence is to correct an error in the original notification we sent in to NHTSA regarding the referenced defect. In the original notification, I had the manufacturing date range specified as November 2004 through August 15, 2005. That should have read November **2003** through August 15, 2005. The models and quantity of units affected remain as originally stated.

We've made the correction on our consumer notification letters and have begun the mailing campaign.

I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. If you have any questions, please email me at gduncan@coachmen.com or give me a call at (574) 825-8528.

Very Truly Yours,

Gary L. Duncan
Vice President, Engineering Services

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