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SAFETY INVESTIGATION

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March 6, 2006

06V-069
3 pages

Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Smith:

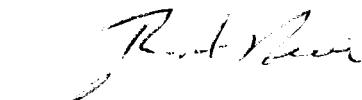
Subject: Ford Recall No. 06S42-2005 and Certain 2006 Model Year Ford Freestar
and Mercury Monterey Vehicles-Power Liftgates

Summary

- Ford Action – Ford is conducting a voluntary safety recall involving 2005 and certain 2006 model year Ford Freestar and Mercury Monterey vehicles, equipped with a power liftgate, and built from April 13, 2004, through December 13, 2005. After being powered open, the power liftgate motor automatically disengages. In the event of a liftgate strut malfunction, the liftgate can fall freely with no prior warning.
- Number of Vehicles Involved – Approximately 12,728 vehicles in the United States and Federalized Territories.
- Affect on Vehicle Operation – At the completion of the power liftgate opening operation, the liftgate can fall with no prior warning.
- Service Procedure – Owners will be notified and instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln/Mercury dealer to have the Power Liftgate Control Module reprogrammed. The new program will sound an audible warning and control lowering of the liftgate to the closed position if the struts have inadequate strength to hold the liftgate open.

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
Attachment



49 CFR Part 573 -- DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT
06S42 -- 2005 AND CERTAIN 2006 MODEL YEAR FORD FREESTYLE AND MERCURY
MONTEREY VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH POWER REAR LIFTGATES BUILT FROM
APRIL 13, 2004 THROUGH DECEMBER 13, 2005

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

573.6 (c) (2) -- Potentially Affected Vehicles

Vehicles potentially affected are 2005 and certain 2006 model year Ford Freestyle and Mercury Monterey vehicles, equipped with the power liftgate option, and built from April 13, 2004, through December 13, 2005.

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 or Lincoln-Mercury 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 12,728 vehicles in the United States and Federalized Territories.

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

100%

573.6 (c) (5) -- Description of the Defect

After being powered open, the power liftgate motor automatically disengages. In the event of a liftgate strut malfunction, the liftgate can fall freely with no prior warning.

573.6 (c) (6) -- Chronology of Events

In October 2005, engineering identified two reports involving two 2005 model year Freestar vehicles that alleged that the power liftgate unexpectedly fell closed immediately after reaching the full open position. During November and December 2005 engineering contacted several dealership technicians to gain additional information from incidents that may be related to this issue. Subsequently, in December 2005, liftgate struts from vehicles in service were examined and the motorized liftgate system operation was analyzed. In addition, manufacturing and vehicle assembly processes at the supplier and Oakville Assembly Complex were reviewed.

Ford has been able to identify 32 vehicles that may have exhibited this condition. Reports relating to five of these vehicles contain allegations that the liftgate fell on the customer. In three of these reports the customer reported that they received medical care as a result of the event.

573.6 (c) (8) -- Service Program

Owners will be notified and instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln/Mercury dealer to have the Power Liftgate Control Module reprogrammed. The new program will sound an audible warning and control lowering of the liftgate to the closed position if the struts cannot hold the liftgate open.

There will be no charge to owners for this service. Mailing of owner notification letters will occur on March 13, 2006. 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 plan to make 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 06S42 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 March 23, 2006.