

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Equipment  
**PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report**

07V-546  
(9 Pages)

On November 13, 2007, The Braun Corporation decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in the motor vehicles listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

Date this report was prepared: **November 16, 2007**

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall: **N/A**

1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer of the vehicle being recalled. If the recalled vehicle is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. §30164:

**The Braun Corporation**

Identify the corporate official, by name and title, who the agency should contact with respect to this recall:

**Rick Nelson**  
**Director of Product Support**

Telephone Number: **1-800-946-7513 Extension 3272**

Fax Number: **574-946-3143**

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report:

**Barry Wolff**  
**Director of Risk Management**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Identify the Vehicle Models Involved in this Recall

2. Identify the Vehicles Involved in this Recall, *for each make and model or applicable vehicle line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the vehicle), provide:*

Make(s): **Toyota**

Model Years Involved: **2004-2007**

Model(s): **Sienna Rampvan**

Production Dates: Beginning: **August 29, 2003**  
Ending: **August 10, 2007**

VIN Range: Beginning: **5TDZA23C64S016583**  
Ending: **5TDZK23C17S092942**

Vehicle Type: **\_Low floor minivan**

Bodystyle: **Rampvan**

Descriptive information which characterizes/distinguishes the recalled vehicles from those model vehicles not included in the recall. **N/A**

Identify the approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models manufactured by your company between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above, that the recalled model population represents: **100 percent.**

II. Identify the Recall Population

3. Furnish the total number vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect or noncompliance.

| <u>Model</u>          | <u>Year</u>      | <u>Number of Vehicles Potentially Involved</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|--|
| <b>Sienna Rampvan</b> | <b>2004-2007</b> | <b>All</b>                                     |

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: **Approximately 4000.**

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance: **1 to 2 percent**

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined—in particular how the recalled models were selected and the basis for the beginning and final dates of manufacture of the recalled items of equipment:

**The recall population was determined to be all handicapped accessible low floor minivan conversions built on a Toyota Sienna chassis. The beginning date was determined to be the date on which the first 2004 model Rampvan was manufactured. The final date was determined to be the date a manufacturing process change was implemented to address the safety issue.**

### III. Describe the Defect or Noncompliance

5. Describe the defect or noncompliance. The description should address the nature and physical location of the defect or noncompliance. Illustrations should be provided as appropriate.

**During conversion, the driver side rear axle beam mount may not have been adequately welded to the OEM chassis.**

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

**Inadequate welding technique employed.**

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

**The consequence of the defect is that a squeaking noise may develop, worn tires may be present, and the driver side rear axle beam mount may become partially separated from the chassis.**

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur.

**A driver may hear a squeaking sound emanating from the rear of the vehicle. This could indicate a loosening of the axle beam mounting structure. Excessive driver side rear tire wear may also be a precursor. In addition, a rough ride may develop.**

If the defect or noncompliance is in a component or assembly purchased from a supplier, identify the supplier by corporate name and address.

N/A

Identify the name and title of the chief executive officer or knowledgeable representative of the supplier:

N/A

#### IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

*If the recall is for a defect, complete item 6, otherwise item 7.*

6. With respect to a defect, furnish a chronological summary (including dates) of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination of the defect. The summary should include, but not be limited to, the number of reports, accidents, injuries, fatalities, and warranty claims.

**During the late spring and early summer of 2007, Braun noticed a slight increase in the number of vehicle warranty claims involving the rear axle mounting structure. Based on this, Braun made an internal investigation of its manufacturing practices and decided that it needed to tighten the welding process associated with the axle beam mounting structure. As a further corrective measure, the axle beam mounting structure was redesigned to enhance manufacturability, and reduce welds. This corrective measure was implemented for all Sienna Rampvans produced after August 10, 2007.**

**In total, Braun has received 31 warranty claims, with symptoms ranging from squeaking components, to broken welds, and worn tires. To date, there have been no reports of injuries, or fatalities.**

7. With respect to a noncompliance, identify and provide the test results or other data (in chronological order and including dates) on which the noncompliance was determined.

N/A

#### V. Identify the Remedy

8. Furnish a description of the manufacturer's remedy for the defect or non-compliance. Clearly describe the differences between the recall condition and the remedy.

**To be provided at a later date.**

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly:

**To be provided at a later date.**

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production. If the production remedy was identical to the recall remedy in the field, so state. If the product was discontinued, so state.

**The recall condition was corrected in production on August 10, 2007. This took the form of a redesigned axle beam mounting structure, and enhanced welding practices. The production remedy is not identical to the recall remedy.**

#### VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

Furnish a schedule or agenda (with specific dates) for notification to other manufacturers, dealers/retailers, and purchasers. Please identify any foreseeable problems with implementing the recall.

**The Braun Corporation anticipates the recall campaign will begin during sometime in December, 2007. At that time, Dealers will be notified of their responsibilities in coordinating the campaign and making remedies to the recall population. Also, end users will begin to**

**be notified regarding the recall. The only foreseeable problem centers on our ability in identifying end users, as their identities are only known if they submitted a warranty registration card to The Braun Corporation. We will work closely with Dealers to identify end users who are unknown to us.**

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

9. Furnish a final copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, or purchaser. This includes all communications (including both original and follow-up) concerning this recall from the time your company determines the defect or noncompliance condition on, not just the initial notification. *A DRAFT copy of the notification documents should be submitted to this office by Fax (202-366-7882) for review prior to mailing.*

Note that these documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 573.8 requirements.

**See the attached proposed recall communications.**

SAFETY RECALL – REAR AXLE BEAM MOUNTING ON 2004-2007 TOYOTA SIENNA  
RAMPVANS MANUFACTURED BY INDEPENDENT MOBILITY SYSTEMS AND THE  
BRAUN CORPORATION

Dear Rampvan Owner:  
Vehicle Identification Number:  
NHTSA Recall Identification Number:

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

The Braun Corporation has decided that certain 2004-2007 Toyota Sienna Rampvan mobility conversions may contain a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety. This defect may result in squeaking noises, worn tires, a rough ride, or degradation in vehicle control. As a result, passengers, pedestrians, or other motorists may be injured or killed.

**Your vehicle**, identified above, **is affected**. To correct this condition please take your vehicle to the mobility dealer from whom you purchased the vehicle. If this is not possible, please call 800-488-0359 and a Braun Service Technician will direct you to a Braun approved mobility dealer who can perform the required inspection, and repair as needed. An approved Braun service technician will perform the inspection and any additionally required action.

The inspection should take approximately 1 hour. However, additional time may be required depending on the outcome of the inspection.

Please contact your mobility dealer service center and schedule an appointment. Please bring this Owner Notification letter with you at the time of your appointment and give it to your mobility dealer. This form identifies the vehicle and the service that is required. Once again, an approved Braun service technician will perform the inspection and any additionally required action.

If you have a problem obtaining the needed repair or wish to schedule service with an approved Braun technician, please contact The Braun Corporation Product Support at 800-488-0359. A Braun Product Support representative will arrange for prompt attention for your vehicle.

We regret any inconvenience this action may cause you. However, we are concerned about your safety. If your dealer fails or is unable to remedy this defect without charge and within a reasonable time, you may submit a written complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590, or call 1-888-327-4236.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

**Date:**

**To:** All Rampvan Dealers

**Subject:** NHTSA Toyota Sienna Rampvan rear axle beam mounting (Recall Number \_\_\_\_\_)

I am writing to inform you that The Braun Corporation recently initiated a recall that concerns 2004-2007 Toyota Sienna Rampvan rear axle beam mounting. We will soon be notifying all vehicle owners we have record of, and that are affected by this recall, via U. S. Postal Service First Class Mail. The letter being sent to customers will contain the NHTSA required notification documents as well as information the recipient will need to know in order to have their vehicle inspected/repaired. In taking this action, The Braun Corporation is hoping to lessen the burden on our dealers in contacting the persons affected by this action.

Shortly, you will receive information regarding vehicles for which we do not have owner contact information. Please provide this information to us and we will be happy to mail this information directly to the owner of the vehicle.

In taking this action, Braun continues to place the safety of our customers at the top of our priorities. We are also committed to support our dealer partners in their effort to service their customers. It is our hope that the steps outlined in this letter will serve to reaffirm that commitment and acknowledge the value we place in our working relationship. Should you have any questions with regard to the matters outlined above, feel free to contact The Braun Corporation's Product Support Department.

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Rick Nelson, Director of Product Support

Dear Valued Braun Customer:

The Braun Corporation is committed to keeping you informed of important information concerning the Braun product you purchased from an authorized Braun Mobility Dealer. Our emphasis on building the safest and most reliable products is likely among the reasons you have chosen Braun for your Mobility needs and we appreciate and value your business.

The attached recall notification is our way of keeping you safe and satisfied with your vehicle. We are asking you read and follow the instructions carefully. The inspection and repair (if needed) should be completed in less than 8 hours by one of our authorized mobility dealers.

We regret any inconvenience you may incur in answering this recall notification. Please know that The Braun Corporation will continue do our part to keep you safe and secure and will remain committed to standing by the mobility products we sell.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph W. Braun". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Ralph W. Braun  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Braun Corporation

**Braun Corporate Quality Policy:**

**Together, we will meet or exceed customer expectations. We pursue activities that lead to continual improvement through inspection, analysis and regular review throughout the organization of our quality objectives.**