

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles
PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report⁽¹⁾

08V-513
(13 pages)

This report is an expansion of the original safety recall campaign number 06E076. The new recall campaign number is 08E032

In March of 2007, Dometic notified Transport Designs, Inc. a vehicle manufacturer and converter as well as offering wholesale sales of a potential defect to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with the applicable provisions of 49 CFR Part 573. In July of 2008, the recall was expanded to include refrigerators manufactured between June 1, 2003 and September 30, 2006.

Date this report was prepared: 7/29/2008

The affected Dometic products which may contain the potential defects are two door refrigerators manufactured between June 2003 and September of 2006. The potentially affected refrigerators have the model designations set forth below:

NDR1062, RM2652, RM2662, RM2663, RM2852, RM2862, RM3662, RM3663, RM3862

The possibly affected units will have serial numbers beginning with the following digit combinations:

320xxxxx through 352xxxxx

401xxxxx through 452xxxxx

501xxxxx through 552xxxxx

601xxxxx through 639xxxxx

RECEIVED

2008 OCT -3 10:35 AM

DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
RECALL MGMT DIV.

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.

Transport Designs, Inc.
240 Streibeigh Lane
Montoursville, PA 17754

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

Telephone Number: 570.368.1403

Fax No.: 570.368.2398

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.

Stephen Mattie , President

Signed:

I. Identify the Vehicle Models Involved in the Recall

Transport Designs “Prolite” or “Silver Eagle” motor coaches and Sales to Individuals for use in their personal Vehicles as well as multipurpose vehicles and trailers

Descriptive information which characterizes/distinguishes the recalled vehicles from those model vehicles not included in the recall:

The only way to identify which vehicle is to research the serial number inside the refrigerator.

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. For example, if the recall involved Widgets equipped with certain items of equipment from January 1, 1996 through April 1, 1997, then what was the percentage of the recalled Widgets of all Widgets manufactured during that time period.

II. Identify the Recall Population

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

Number of Vehicles – 28

Model Year Potentially Involved

2003-2006

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 12

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

43%

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 vehicles:

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.

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

The potential defect is associated with cooling unit at the back of the refrigeration cabinet. A fractional percentage of the potentially affected refrigerators have experienced a fatigue crack that may develop in the boiler tube and the heater pocket. A fatigue crack may release a sufficient amount of pressurized coolant solution into an area where an ignition source (gas flame) is present. Dometic's investigation has shown that a simulated release of cooling solution (refrigerant) in the area of the boiler, under certain conditions, could be ignited by the presence of open flame. A boiler fatigue crack with the loss of cooling solution without ignition would result in a non-operational refrigerator that is not a safety issue. Under certain conditions, the released coolant could ignite and result in a fire. In order to have a fire, at a minimum, all of the following conditions must exist:

1. The refrigerator must be on and normally operating and a gas burner must be lit.
2. There must be an oversized heating element in the refrigerator.
3. The boiler tube must develop a throughway crack of a specific size.
4. There must be a release of the cooling solution at a rate which will allow the accumulation of the cooling solution at a concentration within its range of flammability.
5. There must be an ignition source (gas flame) present.

If any of these conditions are not present, a release of cooling solution will not result in a fire.

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

Fire. See above for description.

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

None that Transport Designs has been made aware of.

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

Dometic Corporation
509 South Poplar St.
LaGrange, IN 46761

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

Mr. Patrick N. McConnell, Director of Engineering
Product Safety and Standards

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.

For the population of product with the models and serial number range shown above from the 20th week of 2003 through the 39th week of 2006, a potential inconsistent weld process may have contributed to the weld fatigue resulting in a crack of the boiler to heater pocket welds or in the boiler tube on cooling units manufactured or warehoused during this period.

Increased market demand required a new production line with new state-of-the art technology to be introduced and the old production line to be updated with the same new technology between the end of 2005 through January of 2006. This improvement in technology and the streamlining of the production weld process significantly reduced the variability of the boiler to heater pocket seam welds. By September 30, 2006 all quantities of cooling units manufactured prior to the introduction of the new production line technology having the potential safety related defect were used and no longer in inventory.

The list of products shown above are all refrigerators used in the original manufacture of recreation vehicles as well as replacement equipment for recreation vehicles. The total population of these refrigerators potentially containing the defect is 745,574. Dometic estimates that as many as 0.005% may develop weld or boiler fatigue cracks which may result in a fire. There are no incidents of death related to the affected population of Dometic refrigerators.

Dometic has continued to review claims subsequent to NHTSA recall campaign 06E-076 to verify the integrity of the rationale and to make certain that other contributing factors were not present that could cause fatigue on units beyond the original recall population and dates. This review revealed that microscopic cracks could randomly be found in the boiler metal in the area of the weld between the heater pocket and boiler tube which could release coolant into the area of the burner. These findings have resulted in the preparation of this notice.

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.

V. Identify the Remedy

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

The field remedy used for the Dometic recall 06E-076 is equally effective for use on this population of product and will be deployed in identical fashion as previously identified. Dometic, along with conducting their own recall campaign, will participate in the remedy campaigns initiated by the original equipment manufacturers

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

Transport Designs has no inside knowledge of the replacement component(s) that are to be installed by authorized repair facilities for Dometic.

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.

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.

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.

1. ¹Each manufacturer must furnish a report, to the Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance, for each defect or noncompliance condition which relates to motor vehicle safety.

This guide was developed from 49 CFR Part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Reports" and also outlines information currently requested. Any questions, please consult the complete Part 573 or contact Mr. Jon White at (202) 366-5227 or by FAX at (202) 366-7882.

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-579, As Amended: *This information is requested pursuant to the authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administration enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.*



Subject: Transport Designs, Inc. Dometic Refrigerator Recall
NHTSA Recall #08E032

Dear Valued Customer:

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

REASON FOR THIS RECALL

TRANSPORT DESIGNS, INC. has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain vehicles it manufactured equipped with Dometic refrigerators. This decision was based on information provided by Dometic Corporation that a defect exists in some of the refrigerators that Dometic manufactured between June 1, 2003 and September 30, 2006; for installation in recreational vehicles. **TRANSPORT DESIGNS, INC.** installed these refrigerators in vehicles that it manufactured from June 1, 2003 through June 30, 2007.

The Problem:

A fatigue crack can develop in the boiler tube of the identified refrigerators, which can permit the release of pressurized coolant solution. If this solution is exposed to an ignition source under certain specific circumstances, it can result in a vehicle fire.

Affected Vehicle Models:

Trailer models Xplorer XL, Prolite, All Motorhome Models Including Omega, Apollos, Series I and II

Affected Refrigerator Models:

The potentially affected refrigerators have the following model numbers:
NDR1062, RM2652, RM2662, RM2663, RM2852
RM2862, RM3662, RM3663, RM3862

The possibly affected units have serial numbers beginning with the following combinations:

320XXXXX through 352XXXXX
401XXXXX through 452XXXXX
501XXXXX through 552XXXXX
601XXXXX through 639XXXXX

If you own one of the above units, it requires immediate service and continuing use could pose a potential safety hazard.

WHAT WE WILL DO

Transport Designs, Inc., in cooperation with Dometic, will provide owners of all covered refrigerators a rework for the potential defect at no charge for parts or labor. The rework consists of secondary burner housing, a thermal fuse and a melt fuse.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

How Do I Know If My Refrigerator Is Being Recalled?

- 1) Find your refrigerators' model and serial numbers by opening the refrigerator door and looking for the sticker attached to the side wall of the interior. See the photo instructions included in this mailing for the exact location of the sticker.
- 2) Call **1-888-446-5157** or go to **www.dometic.com/recall** to confirm if your refrigerator is affected by the recall.

What to Do:

- 1) **Turn the refrigerator off immediately if you notice any of the following indicators:**
 - Leakage or staining at the back of the refrigerator.
 - Yellow residue at the back or sides of the refrigerator.
 - The smell of ammonia.
 - Refrigerator does not properly cool.

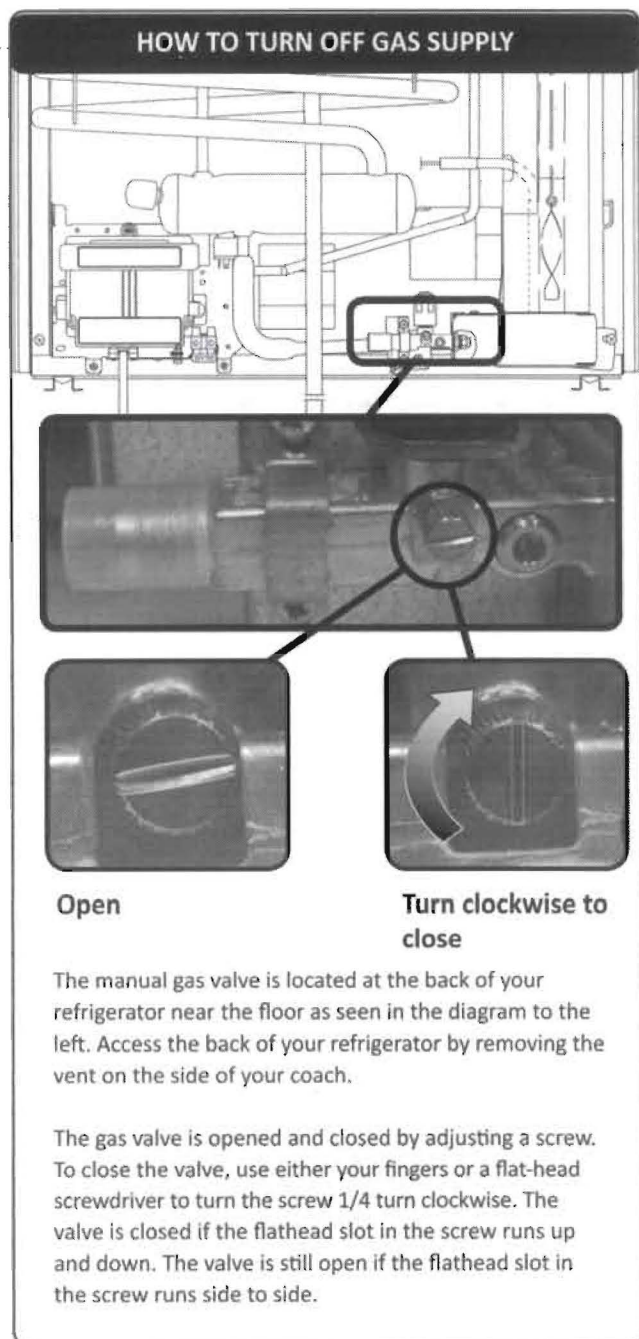
Any unit found to have one or more of the characteristics mentioned above MUST be shut down and not operated until the unit is fixed and the recall rework administered.

Where to find the serial and model numbers on your Dometic refrigerator

The serial and model numbers are both located on a sticker inside the fridge door. It could be on either side of the interior.

Remember, the model number starts with RM or NDR, and the serial number is 8 digits long.





For any unit that does fall within the recall population, but does not exhibit any of the four indicators mentioned in #1, consider the following:

- 2) Do not operate your refrigerator on LP gas under **Any** circumstances. Switching to electric power lowers the incident rate associated with LP gas. If you own a 3-way refrigerator, running the unit on 12-volt power carries the least risk of all. 3-way refrigerators have model numbers that end in "3".

Dometic recommends that the unit not be operated on electric unless absolutely necessary until your unit has been serviced. **If you choose to operate your unit on electric prior to the recall rework, you must inspect the burner area weekly for any of the indicators referenced in number 1 above.**

- 3) Dometic recommends that you turn off the gas valve at the back of your refrigerator. **DO NOT**, however, attempt to disconnect the gas supply. Instructions on how to turn off the gas valve are included in this envelope.
- 4) If you must operate your refrigerator on electric, **DO NOT** operate your refrigerator while in transit or while occupants are asleep.
- 5) The rework kit is available. Please call your preferred service center to set up an appointment. For help in locating a

service center, or for the most up-to-date recall information, call 1-888-446-5157.

Please do not simply go to a dealer or service center without an appointment, since some facilities will not be performing this work, and the ones that are doing the work will need to obtain the appropriate parts. Please bring this letter with you at the time of your scheduled service.

- 6) If the repair facility fails or is unable to rework this noncompliance without charge and within a reasonable time, please contact us at the number provided above so we can attempt to resolve the problem. You may also submit a written complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590; or call the toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY: 1-800-424-9153); or go to <http://www.safercar.gov>.

- 7) If you previously paid to repair or replace a Dometic refrigerator that failed due to this defect, you can be reimbursed for your costs pursuant to Dometic's Pre-Notification Reimbursement Program. To be eligible for reimbursement under that Program, you must complete and submit the required form and provide the necessary documentation. The Program and form can be obtained by calling 1-888-446-5157.

If You No Longer Own This Recreational Vehicle:

If you are no longer the owner of the recreational vehicle, we would greatly appreciate you furnishing us with the name and address of the new owner by calling 1-888-446-5157.

You May Receive More Than One Mailing In Regards To The Recall:

To reach as many customers as possible Transport Designs and Dometic will each send notifications in regards to this recall. Be advised that though you may receive multiple notifications, all pertain to this same, single recall.

Your safety and satisfaction with your Transport Designs product are important to us and we regret any inconvenience to you.

Sincerely,

TRANSPORT DESIGNS, INC.