



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

May 15, 2009

MR. ROGER BLANDFORD
MANAGER PRODUCT SUPPORT
SOUTHEAST TOYOTA DISTRIBUTORS, LLC
9983 PRITCHARD ROAD
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32219

NVS-215kjs
09E-028

Subject: AFTERMARKET STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST TIPS/CLAMP

Dear MR. BLANDFORD:

This letter serves to acknowledge Southeast Toyota Distributors, LLC's (Southeast Toyota) notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a safety defect in the products described below for which a safety recall campaign shall be conducted pursuant to Federal laws.

Please review the following information to ensure that it conforms to your records as this information is being made available to the public. If the information does not agree with your records, please contact us immediately to discuss your concerns.

Makes/Models/Model Years: TOYOTA/HIGHLANDER/2008
TOYOTA/HIGHLANDER HYBRID/2008
TOYOTA/PTS18-48080/9999

Mfg's Report Date: April 24, 2009

NHTSA Campaign Number: 09E-028 **Components:** EQUIPMENT

Potential Number of Units Affected: 3,499

Summary:

SOUTHEAST TOYOTA IS RECALLING 3,499 STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST TIPS SOLD BY SOUTHEAST TOYOTA AS AN OPTIONAL ACCESSORY FOR USE ON MY 2008 HIGHLANDER AND HIGHLANDER HYBRID VEHICLES. DUE TO IMPROPER HEAT TREATMENT DURING THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS, THE ORIGINAL CLAMP USED TO SECURE THE STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST TIP TO THE EXHAUST PIPE MAY DEVELOP MICROSCOPIC CRACKS. EVENTUALLY THE CRACK MAY EXPAND CAUSING THE CLAMP TO BREAK.

Consequence:

THE ORIGINAL CLAMP AND THE TOYOTA STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST TIP MAY FALL OFF THE VEHICLE'S EXHAUST PIPE AND BECOME A ROAD HAZARD WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE RISK OF A VEHICLE CRASH.

Remedy:

SOUTHEAST TOYOTA WILL NOTIFY OWNERS AND REPLACE THE CLAMP FREE OF CHARGE. THE SAFETY RECALL IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN DURING MAY/JUNE 2009. OWNERS MAY CONTACT SOUTHEAST TOYOTA CUSTOMER LOYALTY DEPARTMENT AT 1-800-301-6859.

Notes:

OWNERS MAY ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S VEHICLE SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-800-424-9153), OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.SAFERCAR.GOV](http://www.safercar.gov).

The information in your defect report appears to satisfy the requirements of 49 CFR 573.6.

We have received Southeast Toyota's proposed owner notification letter it meets the requirements of Part 577. Copies of all notices, bulletins, dealer notifications, and other communications that relate to this recall, including a copy of the final owner notification letter and any subsequent owner follow-up notification letter(s), are required to be submitted to this office no later than 5 days after they are originally sent (if they are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser/owner).

As stated in Part 573.7, submission of the first of six consecutive quarterly status reports is required within one month after the close of the calendar quarter in which notification to purchasers occurs. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due on or before 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter.

Your contact for this recall will be Kelly Schuler, who may be reached by phone at 202-366-5227, by email at Kelly.Schuler@dot.gov, or through the office email at RMD.ODI@dot.gov. We look forward to working with you for successful completion of this recall campaign.

Sincerely,



George H. Person
Chief, Recall Management Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement