

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

On or about February 11, 2009, Dorman Products, Inc. decided that a defect which may relate to motor vehicle safety exists in items of motor vehicle equipment listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

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2009 FEB 17 A 10:43
OFFICE OF DEFECTS
INVESTIGATION

Date this report was prepared: February 11, 2009

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable): N/A

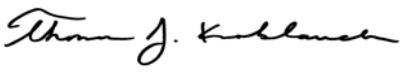
1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer/brand name/trademark owner of the recalled item of equipment. If the recalled item of equipment is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. §30164.

Dorman Products, Inc. 3400 East Walnut Street, Colmar, PA 18915. Brand Name: "DORMAN" "OE Solutions"

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

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.

Thomas J. Knoblauch
Vice President, General Counsel
Dorman Products, Inc
3400 East Walnut Street
Colmar, PA 18915
(215) 712-5222

Signed: 

I. Identify the Recalled Items of Equipment

2. Identify the Items of Equipment Involved in this Recall, for each make and model or applicable item of equipment product line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the item of equipment), provide:

Generic name of the item: Steering knuckle

Make: Model:

MAKE	MODEL	YEARS
BUICK	CENTURY	2005-97
BUICK	LACROSSE	2007-05
BUICK	REGAL	2004-97
BUICK	TERRAZA	2007-05
CHEVROLET	IMPALA	2007-00
CHEVROLET	MONTE CARLO	2007-00
CHEVROLET	UPLANDER	2007-05
CHEVROLET	VENTURE VAN	2005-97

MAKE	MODEL	YEARS
OLDSMOBILE	INTRIGUE	2002-98
OLDSMOBILE	SILHOUETTE	2004-97
PONTIAC	GRAND PRIX	2007-97
PONTIAC	MONTANA	2007-99
PONTIAC	TRANS SPORT	1998-97
SATURN	RELAY-1	2007
SATURN	RELAY-2	2007-05
SATURN	RELAY-3	2007-05

Part Number: Size: Dorman #'s 697-902 and 697-903

Balkamp #BK7-8502 and BK7-8503s, Platinum #2697902 and 2697903, and
MPI #2697902 and 2697903

Function:

Other information which characterizes/distinguishes the items of equipment to be recalled: None

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? 100%

II. Identifying the Recall Population

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

Number of Items: 979

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 979

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of items of equipment estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance: Unknown at this time.

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: Units were first manufactured in 2008. All units have the same design and were manufactured using the same process.

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. Each of the Dorman steering knuckles that are the subject of this recall are made of aluminum. As of the filing of this report, we are investigating a report of only one failed unit. The exact cause of the failure is uncertain at this time but it is suspected that some or all of the units may have been made with improperly processed aluminum.

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition. The exact cause of the failure is uncertain at this time but it is suspected that some or all of the units may have been made with improperly processed aluminum.

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition. A failed steering knuckle may cause the loss of steering control.

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur. No audible or visual warning would precede the failure.

IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

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.

February 2, 2009 – Dorman Products first became aware that a single steering knuckle. Investigation into the potential defect began and is ongoing.

February 3, 2009 – In an abundance of caution and prior to making any final determination that a safety defect may exist, Dorman Products ceased shipping all subject parts and began recalling all such parts identified in I(2) above from its customers inventory.

February 11, 2009 – Dorman Products determined that a defect in design or manufacture may exist and that a recall is warranted.

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. Visual inspection of the single returned unit established that the unit had failed. Metallurgical test results are ongoing.
Testing results will be provided as available.

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. Remedy is uncertain at this time. Remedy could include an improved heat treat process to a complete redesign of the product. In any case, Dorman will refund all amounts paid and/or replace recalled units with cast iron units at no cost to its customers or consumers.

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

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. See answer above

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. See attached recall notice. No problems with implementing the recall are foreseeable at this time.

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.* See Attached

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) 366-5226 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.*