



MANUFACTURERS OF

*Lightning Loader*

25 April 2009

Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
ATTN: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

09V-156  
(11 Pages)

Subject: Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Equipment, PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

Dear Sir or Madam:

On April 20, 2009, Petersen Industries, Inc. decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in Petersen RS3 "Rear Steer" grapple trucks and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports. This is an initial report. No manufacturer's identification code for this recall has been issued.

The corporate official you should contact with respect to this recall is as follows:

Eric S. Handler  
Position: Vice President/General Manager  
Phone: 863-676-1493  
Fax: 863-676-6844  
Email: [ehandler@petersenind.com](mailto:ehandler@petersenind.com)

Replacement of head assemblies has commenced and we will provide additional information once your Division opens a file on this matter.

Regards,

Eric S. Handler  
VP/General Manager

esh/ESH

encls

4000 SR 60 WEST  
LAKE WALES, FL 33859-8234  
TELEPHONE: 863/676-1493 • FAX: 863/676-6844

RECEIVED  
2009 MAY -7 P 1:14  
OFFICE OF DEFECTS  
INVESTIGATION

April 21, 2009  
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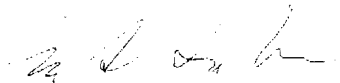
A representative from our company will contact you within 2 business days to verify that your organization is still in possession of the RS3 Grapple Truck(s) listed above, to review the status of each of your trucks, and to verify your shipping address.

If you have transferred possession of any Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Trucks, give this letter to the current owner immediately. Please also tell us the name of the current owner by calling our toll free number 1-800-930-5623, ext. 227.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact us at our toll free number 1-800-930-5623, ext. 243.

We apologize for any inconvenience the product safety/product improvement campaign may cause you and your organization.

Sincerely,



Eric S. Handler  
VP/General Manager

Enclosure (1)

## Petersen Industries, Inc.

### Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Equipment

#### **PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report**

- (1) **Manufacturer's Name:** Petersen Industries Inc., 4000 State Road 60 West, Lake Wales, Florida 33859, 863-677-1493.
- (2) **Identification of the vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment potentially containing the defect:**
- (i) N/A.
  - (ii) **Identification of vehicles affected:** Petersen Model RS3 grapple trucks with head assemblies manufactured prior to April 2006.
  - (iii) **Generic name of the item:** SAI head assembly.  
**Part number:** 107105.  
**Function:** To support and rotate the grapple truck boom.  
**Dates of manufacture:** Prior to April 2006.
  - (iv) N/A.
  - (v) No other manufacturers use this part.
- (3) **The total number of vehicles or items of equipment potentially containing the defect:** Approximately 69 vehicles are the subject of this recall.
- (4) **The percentage of vehicles or items of equipment specified pursuant to paragraph (c)(2) of this section estimated to actually contain the defect:** 40% is probably a high estimate. Regardless, we will be replacing 100% of head assemblies manufactured prior to April 2006.
- (5) **Description of the defect:** Cracks have been found in the spindle portion of the head assembly in some Petersen Model RS3 grapple trucks. It has been determined that the cracks form through metal fatigue after long-term use. These cracks could result in the breaking of the spindle resulting in the boom separating from the pedestal. Final failure would be sudden and without warning. These cracks are in an area that cannot be inspected without special equipment (e.g. ultrasonic tester) and a trained technician. Pictures and drawings are enclosed.
- (6) **A chronology of all principal events that were the basis for the determination that the defect related to motor vehicle safety:** In December 2009, we received word that a truck owned by the City of Houston had a broken spindle. This is a highly unusual event, so we asked that the entire head assembly which includes the spindle be sent back to Petersen for analysis. The head assembly arrived 22 Dec 08. We contracted with a metallurgist and structural engineer to analyze the failure. On 7 Feb 09, they presented their findings that the failure was a result of metal fatigue. We determined to test older spindles for similar cracking in an area with a high

concentration of the vehicles: SE Florida. On 31 Mar 09, days before the testing was to take place, we received word from the City of Miami that a spindle had broken. We told them to take their trucks out of service immediately. On 6 Apr 2009, we took an ultrasound technician to the City of Miami and discovered that 6 more of their vehicles had cracks. With this new data, we examined what would cause the cracking and what vehicles and users it might effect. We gathered records of owners and repairs to determine the possible causes and remedies. On 20 Apr 09, made our final determination that a recall was necessary and began our notification.

(7) N/A.

**(8) (i) A description of the manufacturer's program for remedying the defect or noncompliance:**

1. Petersen began notifying customers by email and registered mail on 20 April 2009 of the existence of a potential defect and instructing those customers to remove those trucks from service and park them. This action effects 24 owners/end-users. 21 have been notified in this manner and one was told in person, by phone, and by email. Of these 22 owners notified, 20 have responded that they have taken the units out of service. We are trying to contact the remaining 4 owners with whom we have no return contact. The 2 owners that we have not yet attempted to contact have bought their units second-hand from our customers after years of use. We are attempting to trace these 2 owners with the organizations that sold the units.

2. We will replace all head assemblies in all units. We have changed the machining of the spindle portion of the head assembly to decrease the stresses in the area where the metal fatigue has occurred. We estimate the new head assembly will be capable of lasting approximately 11 times longer than the old design giving it a life expectancy of approximately 60 years. This new head design will replace all existing head assemblies. This new design will be installed on all future vehicles as well.

3. We will reimburse the single end user who has had to replace his head assembly because of the defect.

**(ii) The estimated date on which it will begin sending notifications to owners, and to dealers and distributors, that there is a safety-related defect and that a remedy without charge will be available to owners, and the estimated date on which it will complete such notifications:** Notification commenced on 20 April and is almost complete. Notification will be complete when we successfully locate 2 trucks that have been sold by our customers to others after years of use.

(iii) N/A.

(iv) N/A.

(9) N/A.

(10) **A representative copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect and are sent to more than one distributor, dealer or purchaser:**  
Documents are enclosed.

(11) **The manufacturer's campaign number:** N/A. We will wait for you to assign a number.



MANUFACTURERS OF

*Lightning Loader*

April 21, 2009

Mr. Lawrence Mikolajczyk  
Corpus Christi, City of  
Post Office Box 9277  
Corpus Christi, TX 78469-9277

**RE: PETERSEN MODEL RS3 GRAPPLE TRUCKS  
IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE - READ IMMEDIATELY**

**Petersen Serial #RS3-0197-0765, Truck VIN# H463967  
Petersen Serial #RS3-1199-0007, Truck VIN# H249038  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0200-0011, Truck VIN# H312613  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0300-0012, Truck VIN# H312612  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0302-0041, Truck VIN# H267196  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0703-0053, Truck VIN# H607106**

Dear Mr. Mikolajczyk:

Our records indicate that you own Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Truck(s) identified by Petersen serial number(s) and truck VIN number(s) listed above.

Under long-term use, the spindle portion of the head assembly in Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Trucks may develop cracks. These cracks pose a potentially serious danger which could result in the breaking of the spindle, resulting in the boom separating from the pedestal without warning, and could result in serious injury or death.

All Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Trucks manufactured prior to April 2006 **MUST BE TAKEN OUT OF SERVICE IMMEDIATELY**. Do not use potentially affected trucks for any purpose. Do not drive these potentially affected trucks at all unless the bucket is properly stowed in the bucket rack.

Petersen will provide a replacement head and spindle assembly to you for all your RS3 Grapple Trucks at no charge to you.

4000 SR 60 WEST, LAKE WALES, FL 33859  
TELEPHONE: 800/930-5623 FAX: 863/676-6844  
WWW.PETERSENIND.COM

## Important Safety Notice – Product Improvement

Petersen Industries, Inc.  
4000 SR 60 West, Lake Wales, FL 33859

### Model RS3 Grapple Trucks

Customer: City of Corpus Christi, TX

- Read this letter carefully.

# WARNING

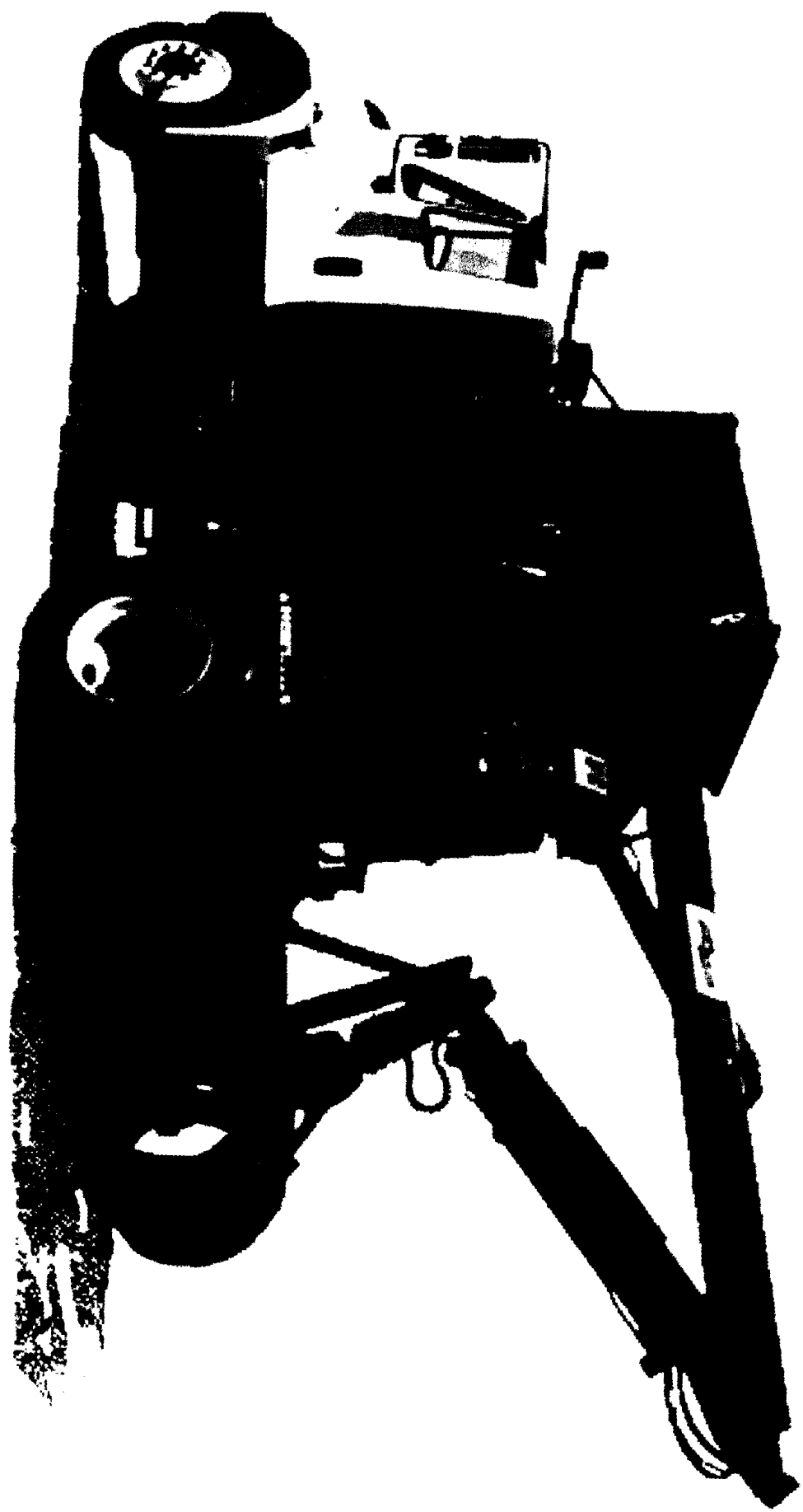
**Under long-term use, the spindle portion of the head assembly in a Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Truck may develop cracks resulting in failure of the spindle. A spindle failure could result in the boom separating from the pedestal without warning, and could result in serious injury or death.**

- The following Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Truck(s) must be taken out of service immediately:

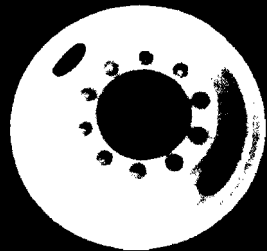
**Petersen Serial #RS3-0197-0765, Truck VIN# H463967  
Petersen Serial #RS3-1199-0007, Truck VIN# H249038  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0200-0011, Truck VIN# H312613  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0300-0012, Truck VIN# H312612  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0302-0041, Truck VIN# H267196  
Petersen Serial #RS3-0703-0053, Truck VIN# H607106**

- **The head assemblies on the above listed unit(s) must be replaced prior to putting the unit(s) back into service.**
- **Failure to take the Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Truck(s) listed above out of service could cause an accident resulting in severe injuries or death.**
- If you have transferred possession of a Petersen Model RS3 Grapple Truck, notify the current owner immediately. Also, notify Petersen toll free at 800/930-5623, ext. 227.

- You will be contacted by Petersen within the next 2 business days with more information regarding this safety notice and product improvement initiative.
- Please contact us at 800/930-5623 with regard to any questions about this notice.



NO OAH



4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

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