

CURT MFG., INC. PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report for Equipment

On August 9, 2010 CURT Manufacturing Inc. decided that a defect which relates 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 Responsibility and Reports.

Date this report was prepared: August 9, 2010

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By Recall Mgt Div. at 8:48 am, Aug 10, 2010

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.

CURT Mfg. Inc.
6208 Industrial Drive
Eau Claire, WI 54701

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

Frank Espinoza III, Quality Manager

Telephone Number: 1-800-738-7213 Fax No.: 715 831 1581

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report. Frank Espinoza III, Quality Manager

Signed: fespinoza@curtmfg.com,

Frank Espinoza III 8-9-2010

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: Class 3 Receiver Hitch

Model: Chrysler Town and Country Van, Dodge Caravan, Plymouth Voyager Van

Part Number: 13347 Size: Class 3

Function: Attach to vehicle for towing purposes

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.

100% of product sold since 6/05/2002 when these hitches were first sold.

II. Identifying the Recall Population

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

<u>Model</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Items Potentially Involved</u>
Class 3, 13347	2002 - 2010	6,686 sold

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 6,686

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

Approximately 5%, based on failure rate, the percentage is very small.

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:

100% of affected product produced from 2002 to 2010

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.

When the hitch is loaded to the maximum rating, the hitch may fracture or break at the bend location where the main body of the hitch meets the hitch muffler strap.

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

The design bend radius tolerances may potentially cause a weakened condition when loaded to maximum and cause a fracture or break near the main body and muffler strap.

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

If the area in question fractures or breaks, this could cause an unstable driving condition due to the product connected to the hitch becoming unbalanced.

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

N/A

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 principal 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.

4 reported incidents:

5-6-2008 Tracker # 814, : (2001 Chrysler Town and Country Van)
Customer was hauling approximately 100 lbs. and the hitch broke near the corner where the main body meets the muffler strap. Sent out a warranty replacement hitch # 13362

5-11-10 Email, and Tracker # 2467: (1998 Chrysler Town and Country Van)
Hitch installed since 2006, was hooking to a 5 x 10 trailer with less than 800 lbs. evenly distributed, while latching the hitch broke near the muffler strap connection. Shipped a 13362 as a replacement.

6-15-2010 Tracker # 2694, : (1996 Dodge Caravan)
Installed hitch 3 years ago, was pulling a 6x9 cargo trailer with a motorcycle on it. Tongue weight at approximately 180 lbs. The hitch broke near the bend of the muffler strap. Sent out a warranty replacement hitch # 13362

6-30-2010 Email, and Tracker # 2916: (2003 Dodge Caravan)
Hitch hooked to a 2003 Dodge Caravan, and is used a few times per year. Hitch broke as they were getting ready to go camping. The hitch Broke near the junction of main body and muffler strap. Was sent a replacement 13362 hitch

Defective hitches are to be returned for evaluation whenever possible.
Hitch 13347 discontinued, hitch 13362 is the replacement.

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. A description of the manufacturer's program for remedying the defect or noncompliance. This program shall include a plan for reimbursing an owner or purchaser who incurred costs to obtain a remedy for the problem addressed by the recall within a reasonable time in advance of the manufacturer's notification of owners, purchasers and dealers, in accordance with §573.13 of this part. A manufacturer's plan may incorporate by reference a general reimbursement plan it previously submitted to NHTSA, together with information specific to the individual recall. Information required by §573.13 that is not in a general reimbursement plan shall be submitted in the manufacturer's report to NHTSA under this section. If a manufacturer submits one or more general reimbursement plans, the manufacturer shall update each plan every two years, in accordance with §573.13. The manufacturer's remedy program and reimbursement plans will be available for inspection by the public at NHTSA headquarters.

CURT MFG., INC will pay for any outstanding inventory at our distributor's location, or replace all inventory with hitch number 13362.

All related labor costs to replace and install the new hitch will be paid by CURT MFG., INC. Customer related hitches will be replaced with hitch 13362. Labor costs will be paid by CURT MFG.Inc.

CURT MFG. Inc. will pay for returned hitches.

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

CURT MFG., INC will replace the 13347 hitch with a 13362 hitch, or pay for the cost of outstanding inventory.

Hitch 13347 has been discontinued as of May 25, 2006. The replacement hitch is 13362.

The 13362 hitch is a different design. The main body strap had a .75" inside radius bend and was modified to a .9375" inside radius. The left hand bend line was 3.420" and was modified to 3.458".

The right side bend line was 2.991" and was modified to 2.930".

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

The replacement part is clearly labeled as part number 13362, versus 13347 on the old defective product.

11. 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 13347 product was discontinued and product 13362 was manufactured on February 3, 2006

VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

12. 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.

Recall Notification to be mailed on XXXXXX to listed distributors and customers.

Follow up calls to verify Notification receipt on XXXXXX.

Replacement parts available to be sent per request from XXXXXX forward.

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

13. 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: These documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 579.5 requirements.