



April 5, 2010

**Kathleen DeMeter, Esq.**

Director, Office of Defects Investigation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
West Building  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: 2004 Mitsubishi Endeavor Fuel Filler Pipe

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc. (MMNA) submits this letter pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Part 573.5-Defect and Noncompliance Information Report (DIR). This DIR contains details of a potential defect relating to motor vehicle safety in the fuel filler pipe on certain 2004 Mitsubishi Endeavor vehicles originally shipped to or currently being operated in locations where road salt is used and in cold conditions. Road debris (mud) mixed with road salt, can become trapped between a reinforcing bracket and the fuel filler pipe, potentially causing corrosion of the pipe. Over time, corrosion could create a leak in the fuel filler pipe, leading to fuel leakage from the pipe during fueling of the vehicle. Fuel leakage while driving is prevented by a one way valve attached to the fuel tank which closes after the filling operation. Any perforation of the filler neck will illuminate the Malfunction Indicator Lamp (MIL), initiated by the evaporative system check process, informing the driver to have the vehicle checked by a repair facility. Fuel in the presence of an ignition source may result in a potential fire hazard.

The subject vehicles are distributed in the United States and Canada by MMNA and in Puerto Rico by Mitsubishi Motor Sales of Caribbean (MMSC). Due to the cold weather nature of this potential defect, this recall campaign will be conducted only in U.S. salt-belt states, the adjoining states, cold weather states, and Canada.

For 2004 Endeavors which are registered in or the owner is residing in U.S. non-salt-belt states, non-cold weather states or Puerto Rico, MMNA will extend the warranty coverage for the fuel filler pipe to 10 years or 150,000 miles, whichever comes first. MMNA will notify these owners and extend the warranty coverage for the fuel filler pipe to 10 years (from the original delivery date) or 150,000 miles, whichever comes first. This extended limited warranty covers the fuel filler pipe currently installed in each vehicle, even if the original part has been replaced, and is transferrable to subsequent vehicle owners. Customers who have experienced a problem with the fuel filler pipe due to corrosion will be entitled to have the pipe replaced at no charge. MMNA will reimburse customers who have already paid for fuel filler pipe replacement due to corrosion.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Tom Bennett  
Director, Service  
Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc.  
Telephone 714-372-5554, Email:tbennett@mmsa.com

**1. Manufacturer's Name**

Mitsubishi Motors North America Manufacturing, Inc.

**2. Vehicles Potentially Containing the Defect**

Vehicles of the following model years and manufacturing periods and owner registered or currently residing in Canada and the affected salt-belt or cold regions listed below:

<b>Make</b>	<b>Line</b>	<b>Model Year(s)</b>
Mitsubishi	Endeavor	2004

**Affected Salt Belt Regions, Cold States, and Adjoining States:** Salt Belt states include Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington D.C.. Cold states include North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, and Utah. Adjoining states include Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

**3. Total Number of Vehicles**

<b>Vehicle Line</b>	<b>Number of Vehicles</b>	
	<b>United States</b>	<b>Puerto Rico</b>
2004 Endeavor	54,212	1,901

<b>Recall Vehicles</b>	<b>26,135</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Warranty Extension Vehicles</b>	<b>28,077</b>	<b>1,901</b>

**4. Approximate Percentage of Vehicles Actually Containing the defect:**

It is impossible to tell the percentage of vehicles that may experience the subject problem since it is caused by mud mixed with road salt which could enter the fuel filler neck area when driving on roads covered by road salt. However, all the vehicles identified in Nos. 2 and 3 above will be included in this campaign.

**5. Defect Description**

In severe corrosive environments where road salts are frequently used in winter, vehicles may be exposed to road debris (mud) mixed with road salt. This material can become trapped between a reinforcing bracket and the fuel filler pipe, potentially causing corrosion. Over time, corrosion could create a leak in the fuel filler pipe that could result in a fuel leakage when fueling the vehicle.

**6. Chronological Summary of Events Leading to Determination**

October 2008, MMNA received a single customer complaint on a 2004 Endeavor with a corroded fuel filler pipe and an investigation was started.

May 2009, MMC investigation was completed and found that due to the very small amount of warranty activity there was no need for a field action at that time. MMC also noted that the

MIL light would illuminate should this part have a minor leak which would bring the customer into the dealership and at that time a repair would be completed. Fuel leakage while driving is prevented by a one way valve attached to the fuel tank which closes after the filling operation. Issue was moved to monitor status.

January 2010, as a result of preliminary evaluation PE09-0056 MMNA received, MMC restarted their investigation to study this issue further. MMC reported that in late 2004 MY there was a change to the MMC standards related to corrosion resistance that was applied to the fuel pipes.

Based on these findings, Mitsubishi in Japan determined that a safety-related defect existed on some 2004 Endeavors and advised MMNA on February 17, 2010 to conduct a safety recall.

As the new corrosion standard was implemented in late 2004 MY production at this time no additional vehicle model years beyond 2004 MY need to be included in this recall action.

## **7. Test Results or Data Used to Determine Non-compliance**

N/A

## **8. Proposed Remedy Description**

Owners of affected vehicles originally sold or currently being operated in affected salt-belt states, cold states, and adjoining states in the US and Canada, will be notified via first class mail and instructed to bring their vehicles to their local Mitsubishi Motors dealer. The fuel filler pipe will be inspected to determine if the part has the improved corrosion protection. Those fuel filler pipes that do not have the added corrosion protection will be replaced with a new, improved part. There will be no charge to the customer for the inspection or replacement, if needed.

Owners of affected vehicles in U.S. non-salt-belt states, non-cold weather states and Puerto Rico will be notified and informed that the warranty coverage for the fuel filler neck is extended to 10 years or 150,000 miles, whichever comes first.

## **9. Notice(s) and Bulletin(s)**

Our schedule for dealer and customer notification will depend on the availability of replacement parts. We notified our dealers on March 23, 2010, and will notify owners based on sufficient parts supply. The owner notification and technical bulletin drafts will be forwarded to your attention when they become available. Due to the current limited parts availability, the timeline for completion of the customer notification is currently July 5, 2010.

## **10. Reimbursements**

Owners seeking reimbursement for any expenses associated with this recall will be directed in the notification letter to contact Mitsubishi Customer Relations for instructions on how to apply for a refund.

## **11. Dealer Notification**

Mitsubishi has determined that this incident does not constitute an immediate and substantial threat to motor vehicle safety. Therefore, the three-day dealer notice does not apply. Our schedule for dealer and customer notification will depend on replacement parts availability. We provided early dealer notification on March 23, 2010.