

Safety Recall 10S13 - Supplement #3
Certain 1998-2003 Model Year Windstar Vehicles Operated in Corrosion States
Rear Axle Inspection and Repair

New! Dealer Q & A

- Q1. Do I need prior approval to initiate a rental vehicle for a customer with a cracked or perforated axle?**
- A. No, we understand that the unique challenges of Safety Recall 10S13 are placing an excessive administrative burden on the dealerships. As such, prior approval for rental vehicles is no longer required.
- Q2. Can I submit for rental reimbursement while the customer is still in a rental?**
- A. Yes, in the interest of meeting the diverse needs of our dealerships, claims for rental reimbursement can either be submitted on a monthly basis to assist with cash flow or once when the customer no longer needs the rental.
- Q3. How will customers with unique transportation issues (handicap or other extenuating circumstances) be handled?**
- A. Dealers should contact the Special Service Support Center at 1-800-325-5621 for assistance.
- Q4. Are you offering to repurchase vehicles? How much will you pay customers?**
- A. At this time, Ford is extending repurchase offers to owners of 1998-2000 model year vehicles that do not pass axle inspection. Vehicles registered to subsequent owners after August 26, 2010 are not eligible for repurchase offers. Please be aware that Ford may discontinue repurchase offers when anticipated rental time decreases. The repurchase offer is based on the Trim Level using Kelly Blue Book, Private Party, Excellent Condition, and assuming 12,000 miles per year.
- Q5. After a customer accepts the formal RAV offer, how long does it take for the transaction to be completed?**
- A. Once the necessary paperwork has been completed and returned to RAV headquarters, it takes approximately seven to ten business days.
- Q6. Does the customer need to sign the documents that were mailed to their house as well as the documents the dealer has?**
- A. Yes, the customer information sent to their home must be signed and returned in the FedEx envelope provided. In addition, the customer will need to sign all the documents sent to the dealership.
- Q7. If an owner declines the RAV offer, what happens next?**
- A. The owner may remain in the rental vehicle at Ford's expense until axles are available to complete the repair.
- Q8. Is the Owner Loyalty Direct Offer (FDCI-05240) available to all owners regardless of whether or not Ford extends a repurchase offer?**
- A. Yes, the Owner Loyalty Direct Offer (FDCI-05240) is available to all owners whose vehicles are in the program at this time.

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Q9. *What is Ford's plan to address concerns such as dead batteries and tire flat spotting that may occur on the vehicles that are grounded for an extended period of time?*

A. *Ford recognizes that we have placed a burden upon the dealers due to the unique long term vehicle storage requirements of this safety recall. Therefore, we will provide an allowance to ensure the vehicle is returned to the owner in good, operable condition after the axle is replaced. At least once per month, dealers are requested to perform the following maintenance items:*

- *Start and run the engine for approximately 15 minutes to keep the battery charged.*
- *If possible, move the vehicle to avoid tire flat spots and apply the brakes several times to minimize brake rotor corrosion.*

After the axle has been replaced, please thoroughly clean the interior and exterior of the vehicle before returning to the owner. Ford will provide an allowance of \$150 per vehicle to complete the maintenance and cleaning requested. Please reference the Claims Preparation and Submission section for further instructions.

Q10. *Is the maintenance and cleaning compensation amount fixed or will it vary depending on how long the vehicle was stored?*

A. *Ford realizes that it may be difficult for the dealerships to determine just how long each vehicle was stored. As such, the maintenance and cleaning compensation amount is fixed and should be claimed once for all vehicles stored for at least 30 days.*

Q11. *What is Ford's plan to address concerns associated with limited physical storage space for some dealers?*

A. *Ford acknowledges that physical storage space for grounded Windstars may be an issue in certain geographic areas. We are committed to helping the dealers with this concern and will work with you through your Regional Management Team to develop a plan. The results will be communicated as soon as the plan is finalized.*

Q12. *Do you have an estimate of when the parts will be available?*

A. *Ford expects to begin seed stocking parts in November 2010 to reinforce axles without a crack or perforation. Replacement rear axles are expected to be available beginning January of 2011. Ford will publish another supplement with parts ordering information and updated service procedures in November.*

Q13. *What is the problem?*

A. *Ford is voluntarily recalling 1998-2003 Model Year Windstar vehicles produced between September, 1 1997 and February, 28 2003 to address concerns relating to rear axle corrosion. In some of the affected vehicles, the rear axle could potentially fracture when operated in high corrosion areas for an extended period of time. If the rear axle should fracture, vehicle handling may be affected which could increase the risk of a crash.*

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Q14. Why are you only recalling vehicles in corrosion states?

A. The affected vehicles have been on the road for a number of years and, in many cases, have been driven well over a 100,000 miles. The overwhelming majority of reports of cracks are from high-corrosion states. Corrosion may weaken the axle making it susceptible to torsional stress. We will continue to monitor the performance of vehicles in all states as we always do.

Q15. How many axles does Ford expect to replace?

A. We believe the vast majority of vehicles will not have cracked axles and can be reinforced when parts are available.

Q16. What should I do if an owner believes their vehicle has been operated in a high corrosion environment and requests their vehicle be inspected?

A. If the vehicle is not in the program, but is a 1998 through 2003 model year Windstar produced between September 1, 1997 and February, 28 2003, contact the Special Service Support Center at 1-800-325-5621 to request approval to be covered by Safety Recall 10S13.

Q17. Are the vehicles with a crack or perforation safe to drive? Can people continue to drive the vehicle if the dealer cannot provide a permanent repair soon?

A. Ford is recommending customers accept our offer of alternative transportation until their vehicle can be repaired. There is a small risk that the rear axle may fracture and potentially affect vehicle handling, which increases the risk of a crash.

Q18. What if the customer refuses to leave their vehicle at the dealership even though they have been advised a crack was found in the rear axle?

A. The dealer should document on the repair order with a statement that reads: "Customer advised eligible for rental vehicle but the customer declined the offer and elected to remain in their own vehicle."