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**NISSAN NORTH AMERICA, INC.**

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April 26, 2011

Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)  
Room W48-302  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Sir:

We are transmitting the enclosed amended Defect Information Report in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573. The report submitted on April 20, 2011 contained a typographical error in the chronology. The third entry in the chronology states January 2010 – February 2011, when it should read January 2011 – February 2011. Please replace the previous submission with this corrected one.

A voluntary recall campaign will be initiated and your office provided with the notices. Nissan plans to notify dealers by April 21, 2011 and begin interim owner notification on May 16, 2011. We will include a statement in the Part 577 owner notification concerning reimbursement for the cost of obtaining a pre-notification remedy.

Very truly,

John Gibbons  
Senior Manager,  
Technical Compliance

Encl.

## **DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT**

1. Manufacturer:

Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., Japan

2. Vehicles Potentially Involved:

Certain Nissan Pathfinder and Infiniti QX4 vehicles originally sold in or currently registered in the following 20 states and the District of Columbia: Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington D.C., West Virginia and Wisconsin ("subject vehicles").

<b><u>Model Year</u></b>	<b><u>Model</u></b>	<b><u>Manufacturing Date</u></b>
1996-2004	Nissan Pathfinder	SOP October 1995 to EOP July 2004
1997-2003	Infiniti QX4	SOP September 1996 to EOP October 2002

No other Nissan and Infiniti vehicles are affected because the design of the strut housing and steering column location is different than the models that are subject to this recall.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Involved:

<b><u>Model Year</u></b>	<b><u>Model</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Vehicles (Approximately)</u></b>
1996-2004	Nissan Pathfinder	162,658
1997-2003	Infiniti QX4	33,333

Approximately 195,991 vehicles are currently registered in States where the recall campaign will be conducted. Some additional number of vehicles currently registered in other States, but initially sold and registered in States where the recall campaign will be conducted will also be included in the recall campaign.

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect:

Unknown

## 5. Description of the Defect:

In areas of the country in which heavy concentrations of road salt are used, a mixture of snow/water and salt may enter an assembly location hole in the upper strut housing, causing water to collect at the mating surface of the strut housing panel and the inner hood ledge assembly. Over time, this snow/water and salt intrusion may result in corrosion of the strut tower housing in some subject vehicles.

The extent of the corrosion will depend on a variety of factors, including overall vehicle condition, usage patterns, care and maintenance, among others. In most cases, the corrosion is limited to the surface level only and does not affect vehicle structure. However, in certain instances, the corrosion, over time, can penetrate the strut housing structure. If the vehicle continues to be driven in this condition, the strut housing may crack and pull away from the inner hood ledge assembly. This could lead to the strut housing panel separating and contacting the steering column lower shaft. Based on duplication testing, we expect this condition may create a grinding noise and some increase in the steering effort, which could alert the driver to the existence of a problem (though the vehicle would remain drivable). If this is ignored, in extreme cases, possibly associated with tire impact to cause the corroded strut housing to strike the steering column shaft, the steering column shaft may break. This could result in a crash.

## 6. Chronology of Principal Events:

October 12, 2010 – Nissan was informed of an incident involving a Canadian market Model Year 2001 Pathfinder that resulted in a steering loss. Nissan immediately initiated an investigation of the incident.

November 2010 - December 2010 – Investigation of the incident revealed significant corrosion at the left front hood ledge assembly. This corrosion caused the seam to separate at the strut tower housing, which resulted in contact with the steering column lower shaft causing it to break. Based on the overall condition of the vehicle, which indicated that it had been exposed to severe environmental conditions, Nissan did not believe that the subject vehicle contained a defect. However, Nissan decided to continue investigating this issue.

January 2011 - February 2011 - Nissan conducted a field investigation program and analysis to examine similar vehicles to determine the scope of the corrosion issue. While investigating this issue, Nissan found some high-

mileage vehicles that exhibited surface corrosion patterns that were consistent with frequent use in areas in which heavy concentrations of road salt are used. Most of these vehicles, while exhibiting some corrosion, did not show evidence of concentrated corrosion. However, Nissan also noted some instances of corrosion that was concentrated in the driver's side strut tower area.

During the course of the internal investigation, NHTSA issued a Preliminary Investigation (PE11-004) on January 28, 2011.

March 2011 - April 2011 – Several representative vehicles were collected in the field and shipped to Japan for evaluation. Concurrently with this activity, Nissan also purchased and evaluated several vehicles in the U.S.

Nissan conducted testing to recreate the subject condition using actual vehicles to study the effects of the concentrated corrosion on driving. This included weld separation intended to simulate the condition described in Section 5 above. These test results showed that corrosion of the strut housing alone is not enough to cause steering column breakage. There must also be some road impact on a tire to cause the corroded strut housing to strike the steering column shaft. In addition, this duplication testing revealed that a grinding noise is heard and steering effort is increased (which could alert the driver to the existence of a problem) when the strut housing makes contact with the steering column shaft.

Finally, Nissan's investigation also confirmed that strut tower corrosion was only present in those areas of the country in which heavy concentrations of road salt are used in the winter.

April 13, 2011 – Nissan determined that a safety related defect exists in the subject vehicles originally sold in or currently registered in the states identified above and that a voluntary recall campaign will be conducted.

#### 7. Description of Corrective Action:

Owners of the subject vehicles will be requested to take their vehicle to a Nissan or Infiniti dealer. The dealer will inspect the strut housing and if no corrosion or only minor surface corrosion is present, an anti-corrosion sealant will be applied. If moderate corrosion is present, resin patches will be applied in addition to the sealant. If there is evidence of more significant corrosion, a metal reinforcement plate will be used to reinforce the strut housing assembly. In rare instances where it is impossible to repair the vehicle, Nissan will provide an appropriate remedy.

1. Nissan plans an interim notification to the owners of the subject vehicles on May 16, 2011 alerting them of the recall. Customers will be advised

that if they have immediate concerns about their vehicle, they can have their vehicle inspected at the Nissan dealership at no charge. If necessary, Nissan will provide an appropriate remedy at no charge.

2. After the campaign remedy is fully developed, there will be another notification that will instruct owners to bring the subject vehicles to Nissan dealers for repair at no charge.

In addition, and in the interest of customer satisfaction, owners of similar vehicles that are not subject to this recall because they were originally sold in and are registered in States where corrosion causing this issue is unlikely to occur will receive a courtesy notification. They will be offered an opportunity to have their vehicles inspected at no charge if they believe their vehicle was operated for extended periods of time in States where Nissan is conducting a recall campaign or they are unsure about their vehicle's history or they believe their vehicles are exhibiting concentrated corrosion in the driver's side strut tower. If necessary, the vehicles will be remedied free of charge.

8. Copy of Notices:

Copies of all notices will be provided to NHTSA as they become available.