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By Recall Management Division at 10:06 am, Aug 01, 2011

11V-385  
(3 pages)



**James P. Vondale, Director**  
Automotive Safety Office  
Environmental & Safety Engineering

**Fairlane Plaza South**  
330 Town Center Drive  
Dearborn, MI 48126-2738 USA

July 29, 2011

Mr. Claude H. Harris  
Acting Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W45-231  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Harris:

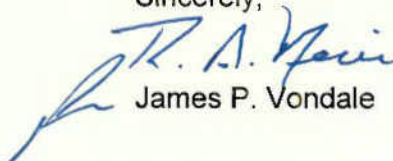
**Subject:** Ford Motor Company (Ford) Recall No. 11S21 - Certain 1997 through 2003 Model Year Ford F-150, 2004 Model Year Ford F-150 Heritage, 1997 through 1999 Model Year F-250 under 8,500 GVWR, and 2002 through 2003 Model Year Lincoln Blackwood Vehicles Fuel Tank Straps

Summary

- Ford Action - Ford is conducting a voluntary safety recall in high corrosion states involving certain 1997 through 2003 model year Ford F-150, 2004 model year Ford F-150 Heritage, 1997 through 1999 model year F-250 under 8,500 GVWR, and 2002 through 2003 model year Lincoln Blackwood vehicles to address fuel tank strap corrosion.
- Number of Vehicles Involved - Ford estimates that there are approximately 1.1 million currently registered vehicles that were either originally sold in or are currently in Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.
- Effect on Vehicle Operation - One or both of the fuel tank straps could potentially fracture due to corrosion after long term vehicle operation in high corrosion areas.
- Service Procedure - Owners will be notified and instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln dealer to have the fuel tank straps replaced with straps that have corrosion protection greater than the original straps used in production. Early in the program, if replacement straps are not available, dealers may install a cable support under the strap as an interim repair or a steel reinforcement over the existing strap as a permanent repair.

Ford is voluntarily taking this action as a safety recall to address the agency's concern and to respond to any potential customer concerns. Also, Ford is extending the free remedy offer to all vehicle owners in this population, including those vehicles that are beyond the statutory required free remedy period. The detailed information required by the applicable portions of 49 CFR Part 573 - Defect and Non-Compliance Information Report is attached.

Sincerely,

  
James P. Vondale





**49 CFR Part 573 -- DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT**  
**11S21 -- CERTAIN 1997 THROUGH 2003 MODEL YEAR FORD F-150, 2004 MODEL YEAR**  
**F-150 HERITAGE, 1997 THROUGH 1999 MODEL YEAR F-250 UNDER 8,500 GVWR, AND**  
**2002 THROUGH 2003 MODEL YEAR LINCOLN BLACKWOOD VEHICLES**  
**FUEL TANK STRAPS**

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Non-Compliance Reports, Ford Motor Company submits the following information concerning a safety recall action that it is voluntarily initiating.

**573.6 (c) (2) - Potentially Affected Vehicles**

Vehicles potentially affected are certain 1997 through 2003 model year Ford F-150, 2004 model year F-150 Heritage, 1997 through 1999 model year F-250 under 8,500 GVWR, and 2002 through 2003 model year Lincoln Blackwood vehicles that are currently registered and that were either originally sold in or are currently in Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. The potentially affected vehicles were built at the assembly plants listed below.

Model	Assembly Plant	Model Years	Build Dates
F-150	CUAUTITLAN	1998 - 2003	12/19/1997 to 8/15/2003
F-150 Heritage	CUAUTITLAN	2004	5/12/2003 to 8/4/2004
F-150	KANSAS CITY	1997 - 2003	7/24/1995 to 6/27/2003
F-250 U-8500	KANSAS CITY	1997 - 1999	4/9/1996 to 8/24/1999
F-150	MICHIGAN	1997 - 1998	5/11/1996 to 5/10/1997
F-250 U-8500	MICHIGAN	1997	5/11/1996 to 7/22/1996
F-150	NORFOLK	1997 - 2003	6/20/1995 to 5/15/2003
F-250 U-8500	NORFOLK	1997 - 1999	1/25/1996 to 7/27/1999
F-150	ONTARIO	1997 - 2003	8/16/1996 to 8/27/2003
F-250 U-8500	ONTARIO	1997 - 1999	8/16/1996 to 8/23/1999
F-150 Heritage	ONTARIO	2004	5/21/2003 to 6/29/2004
Lincoln Blackwood	KANSAS CITY	2002 - 2003	9/25/2000 to 8/31/2002

Because these vehicles are not produced in VIN order, information as to the applicability of this action to specific vehicles can best be obtained by either calling Ford's toll-free line (1-866-436-7332) or by contacting a local Ford or Lincoln dealer who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford On-line Automotive Service Information System (OASIS) database.

**573.6 (c) (3) - Estimated Population of Vehicles Potentially Affected**

Approximately 1.1 million currently registered vehicles that were either originally sold in or are currently in the high corrosion areas of the United States are potentially affected.

**573.6 (c) (4) - Estimated Percentage of Affected Vehicles with the Defect Condition**

Unknown.



573.6 (c) (5) - Description of the Defect

Ford notes the vast majority (approximately 97%) of reports received by Ford relating to this subject come from vehicles that were originally sold or are currently registered in the high corrosion areas of the United States. After many years of vehicle service in these areas, one or both of the fuel tank straps could potentially fracture due to corrosion.

573.6 (c) (6) - Chronology of Events

On September 7, 2010, the NHTSA opened an investigation (PE10-036) on fuel tank strap fractures due to corrosion on 1997 through 2001 model year Ford F-150 vehicles. Ford provided its response to the agency's information request on November 8, 2010.

During the first half of 2011, the complaint rate remained low but Ford continued to gather parts from the field for review to assess how the condition and corrosion performance of the parts compared to the results of prior accelerated corrosion tests.

On May 4, 2011, the NHTSA upgraded its investigation to an Engineering Analysis (EA11-006) on 1997 through 2001 model year Ford F-150 vehicles. The Information Request provided to Ford on July 1, 2011, expanded the model year range of Subject Vehicles to 1997 through 2004. Ford provided its response to the agency's information request on July 25, 2011.

On July 22, 2011, Ford's Field Review Committee (FRC) reviewed the issue and approved a field action.

573.6 (c) (8) - Service Program

Owners will be notified and instructed to take their vehicles to a Ford or Lincoln dealer to have the fuel tank straps replaced with straps that have corrosion protection greater than the original straps used in production. Early in the program, if replacement straps are not available, dealers may install a cable support under the strap as an interim repair or a steel reinforcement over the existing strap as a permanent repair. There will be no charge to owners for this service.

Mailing of owner notification letters will begin the week of September 12, 2011, and be completed by September 30, 2011. Notification to dealers will occur on August 1, 2011.

Ford's general reimbursement plan for the cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners prior to notification of a safety recall was provided to the agency on February 24, 2011.

573.6 (c) (10) - Press statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

National media attention is likely as with most Ford recalls when posted to NHTSA's safecar.gov website. Ford will provide public comments when requested. A news release will not be issued. A copy of the notification letters to dealers and owners from Ford will be forwarded to the agency when available.

573.6 (c) (11) - Recall Number

Ford has assigned recall number 11S21 to this action.

573.13 (c) (2) - Ending date for reimbursement Eligibility

The ending date for reimbursement eligibility for cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners per Ford's general reimbursement plan is October 14, 2011.