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14V-021
(4 pages)

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

Date: January 23, 2014

This report serves as Trails West Mfg. of Idaho, Inc.'s ("Trails West") notification to the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that a defect related to motor vehicle safety exists in certain Trails West RPM model Bumper Pull Trailers. Trails West Mfg. of Idaho, Inc. decided that this defect existed in these vehicles on Friday, January 17, 2014.

I. Manufacturer, Designated Agent, and Other Chain of Distribution Information

Manufacturer's corporate name: Trails West Mfg. of Idaho, Inc.

Vehicle brand: Trails West RPM model Bumper Pull

If this notification concerns a defective or noncompliant component that the above identified manufacturer did not manufacture, identify that component and provide the name, address, and phone number of the manufacturer of the component (if this manufacturer is unknown, provide this information as to the supplier of the component):

Furnace Model: FS-30 FQ

Manufactured By: Suburban, 676 Broadway Street, Dayton, TN 37321

Phone: (423) 775-2131

Name, address, email, and phone and fax numbers for the person(s) to whom inquiries about this report should be directed:

Jon Reeder, Trails West Mfg. of Idaho, Inc.

Phone: (208) 852-2200 Fax: (208) 852-2203

E-mail: Jonr@trailswesttrailers.com

Manufacturer's assigned campaign number (where applicable): N/A – not yet assigned

II. Identification of the Recall Population and Its Size

Complete the tables below for each group of vehicles subject to this notification. Additional tables may be necessary where there are more than three groups subject to a notification.

Make: Trails West

Model: RPM (Bumper Pull only)

Model Year(s): 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014

Inclusive dates of manufacture (month and year): 10-09 through 1-14

Body Style/Type (for non-passenger cars): Bumper Pull Cargo Trailer

Other information necessary to describe these vehicles (e.g., VIN range, GVWR or class for trucks, displacement for motorcycles, and number of passengers for buses): *See* the attached schedule of VIN numbers.

Total number of these vehicles: 247

Provide the following information as to all the groups of vehicles:

Grand total number of vehicles: 247

The percentage of the recall population you estimate actually contain the defect or noncompliance: Approx. 80%

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined (e.g., on what basis the recalled models were selected and how the inclusive dates of manufacture were determined):

All trailers equipped with Suburban furnace model SF-30FQ have a plastic intake fan which may melt under certain recurring operating circumstances. All trailers with this furnace are suspect.

Describe how the recall population is different from any similar vehicles not subject to this notification:

All other trailers manufactured by Trails West (*i.e.*, larger trailers) have a larger furnace which has a steel intake fan.

III. Description of the Defect or Noncompliance and Chronology of Events

Describe the defect or noncompliance, including a summary and detailed description of the nature and physical location (if appropriate) of the defect or noncompliance. Graphic aids should be provided where necessary.

During the week of January 13, 2014, a customer called and said he had experienced a fire in his trailer. On January 17, 2014 we received a call that another trailer had burned. We have conducted a preliminary investigation of the incidents and as of Friday, January 17, 2014, we determined that the furnace is defective.

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

It appears that under heavy use the plastic intake fan may melt, which causes the furnace to overheat, and then other plastic parts melt due to lack of air flow. In some cases this can create an open flame that can lead to a fire.

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

In most cases the furnace quits working and customer smells smoke. In the two cases that were reported to us last week the trailers caught on fire and burned.

Identify any warning(s) that may precede the defect or noncompliance condition.

Plastic burning smell in the trailer and/or smoke in the trailer.
Lack of heat when the furnace is in use.

For defects, provide a dated, chronological summary of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination that the defect is related to motor vehicle safety, including a summary of all warranty claims, field or service reports, and other information such as numbers of crashes, injuries and fatalities.

On January 17, 2014, Trails West received separate written reports from two different individuals stating that their trailers had been damaged by fire on January 4, 2014 and January 13, 2014, respectively. Prior to this, five other customers had reported defective furnaces, but with no indication of fire. Trails West replaced the five failed furnaces under warranty. There have been no fatalities and no crashes.

IV. The Remedy Program and Its Schedule

Describe the program for remedying the defect or noncompliance, including the plan for reimbursing those owners and purchasers who may have incurred costs to remedy the defect or noncompliance before receiving the manufacturer's notification concerning that defect or noncompliance. Also include, where applicable, details with dates concerning any production remedy that was conducted or will be conducted.

In order to determine the most effective remedy it will require the manufacturer of the furnace, Suburban, or some other person with expertise in this field, to specify the procedure for the removal and replacement of the furnace's plastic fan with a more robust

assembly. Trails West does not possess the expertise necessary to make this determination at this time.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which owner and purchaser notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

Trails West will provide notice as soon as an effective remedy is identified. Trails West cannot determine an estimated date because, as of the date of this Report, Suburban has not acknowledged the defect or identified a remedy.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which dealer and distributor notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

Trails West will provide notice as soon as an effective remedy is identified. Trails West cannot determine an estimated date because, as of the date of this Report, Suburban has not acknowledged the defect or identified a remedy.

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

Based on our initial, preliminary investigation, we believe that the furnaces should have a steel intake fan instead of a plastic fan.