

Part 573 Safety Recall Report

17V-048

Manufacturer Name : Walker Stainless Equipment Company LLC

Submission Date : JAN 20, 2017

NHTSA Recall No. : 17V-048

Manufacturer Recall No. : W-6225 – W-6279



Manufacturer Information :

Population :

Manufacturer Name : Walker Stainless Equipment Company LLC

Number of potentially involved : 543

Address : 625 State Street

Estimated percentage with defect : 100 %

New Lisbon WI 53950

Company phone : 800 356 5734

Vehicle Information :

Vehicle 1 : 2014-2017 Walker TTT

Vehicle Type : TRAILERS

Body Style : OTHER

Power Train : NR

Descriptive Information : The impacted vehicles are food grade tank trailers.

Production Dates : APR 11, 2013 - MAY 19, 2016

VIN Range 1 : Begin : 5WSAA4328EN045181 **End :** 5WSAA4320HN048872 Not sequential

Description of Defect :

Description of the Defect : Cracks in the welds and joints attaching the frame to the underride guard.

FMVSS 1 : NR

FMVSS 2 : NR

Description of the Safety Risk : If the welds or joints attaching the vehicle frame to the underride guard develop cracks, the structural integrity of the underride guard could be impaired. If a crack is left unattended and propagates, the rear underride guard could eventually detach from the vehicle frame, increasing the risk of a crash.

Description of the Cause : Due to the geometry of the connection of the underride guard to the trailer frame, excessive vibration from the tires can lead to fatigue cracks in the welds and joints attaching the frame to the underride guard. If left unattended, the cracks can propagate.

Identification of Any Warning that can Occur : Cracks in the welds and/or at the joint attaching the underride guard to the frame are visible upon inspection.

Supplier Identification :

Component Manufacturer

Name : NR

Address : NR

NR

Country : NR

Chronology :

Walker began production of the subject trailer design, the underride guard was located further back than previous designs for this type of trailer, in 2014. Walker has two fleet customers for this trailer design. In May, 2016, one of the two customers reported problems with the light boxes on certain trailers manufactured in 2016. Walker provided a repair, but the same customer noted in September, 2016 that cracks were now developing in the metal near the weld point and joint where the underride guard attaches to the trailer frame. Walker inspected the trailers and provided repairs as needed. The prevalence and severity of the cracks were associated with the customer's tire maintenance practices and the more severe use to which this customer places its trailers.

In early December, 2016, Walker also inspected the trailers sold to the other fleet customer. The trailers in the second customer's fleet were in service longer (manufactured in 2014-2017) and put to less severe use. Walker identified some superficial cracks on the underride guards associated with normal wear and tear, but the cracks found in the first customer's fleet did not appear to be replicated in this fleet.

Late in December 2016 Walker was informed of new cracks on the first customer's fleet on trailers that had already been repaired. Upon further inspection and review, Walker has determined that due to the geometry of the connection of the underride guard to the trailer frame, excessive and repeated tire vibration can lead to fatigue cracks in the welds and joints attaching the frame to the underride guard. With continued use, this condition could cause the underride guard to detach from the vehicle frame.

On January 13, 2017, Walker decided to conduct a safety recall to inspect the subject vehicles and to relocate the bumper assembly and include additional structural supports to reduce the impact of tire vibration placed upon the rear underride guard connection points.

Description of Remedy :

Description of Remedy Program : All trailers with this configuration will be inspected for cracks surrounding the weld points and joints at which the underride guard is attached to the frame. Walker will re-weld and repair the trailers as needed. Walker will additionally relocate the point at which the bumper assembly is attached to the frame and additional structural supports will be installed.

How Remedy Component Differs from Recalled Component : The components are identical except for the physical mounting location. The modified mounting location will be consistent with our standard design.

Identify How/When Recall Condition Walker will update the design location of the underride guard to alleviate

was Corrected in Production : the impact of tire vibration on the connection points on the rear underride guard on any additional orders for this trailer configuration.

Recall Schedule :

Description of Recall Schedule : Walker intends to begin the inspection and repair campaign in January, 2017 upon receiving approval from NHTSA for its customer letter. The subject vehicles are owned by two fleet customers, both of whom are aware of the issue. Walker will notify the customers formally of the safety recall campaign upon approval of the customer letter by NHTSA.

Planned Dealer Notification Date : NR - NR

Planned Owner Notification Date : MAR 20, 2017 - MAR 20, 2017

* NR - Not Reported