

HONDA

American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
1919 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90501-2746
Phone (310) 783-2000

September 17, 2020

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

Re: Part 573, Defect Information Report
Accessory Tonneau Cover for 2017-2020 Model Year Honda Ridgeline

Dear Mr. Giuseppe:

In accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act and 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance and Responsibility Reports, Honda is submitting the enclosed Defect Information Report regarding a safety recall of Honda Genuine Accessory Tonneau Covers for 2017-2020 model year Honda Ridgeline vehicles to address a potential defect.

If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.



Jeff Chang
Senior Manager
Product Regulatory Office

JC:wvt

Defect Information Report

573.6(c)(1)

Name of manufacturer: American Honda Motor Co., Inc.

Manufacturer's agent:

Jeff Chang
American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
1919 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90501-2746

573.6(c)(2)

Identification of potentially affected vehicle equipment:

Component: Hard Tonneau Cover
Part No.: 08Z07-T6Z-100F
Country of Origin: U.S.
Manufacturer: Extang Corporation

Description of the basis for the determination of the recall population:

The recall population was determined based on manufacturing records.

Description of how the vehicles being recalled differ from similar vehicles not included in the recall:

All accessory tonneau covers for 2017–2020 MY Honda Ridgelines are subject to recall. Because accessory tonneau cover sales are not tied to specific VINs, owners of all identified vehicles will be notified of the equipment recall.

573.6(c)(3)

Total number of potentially affected vehicle equipment: 28,885

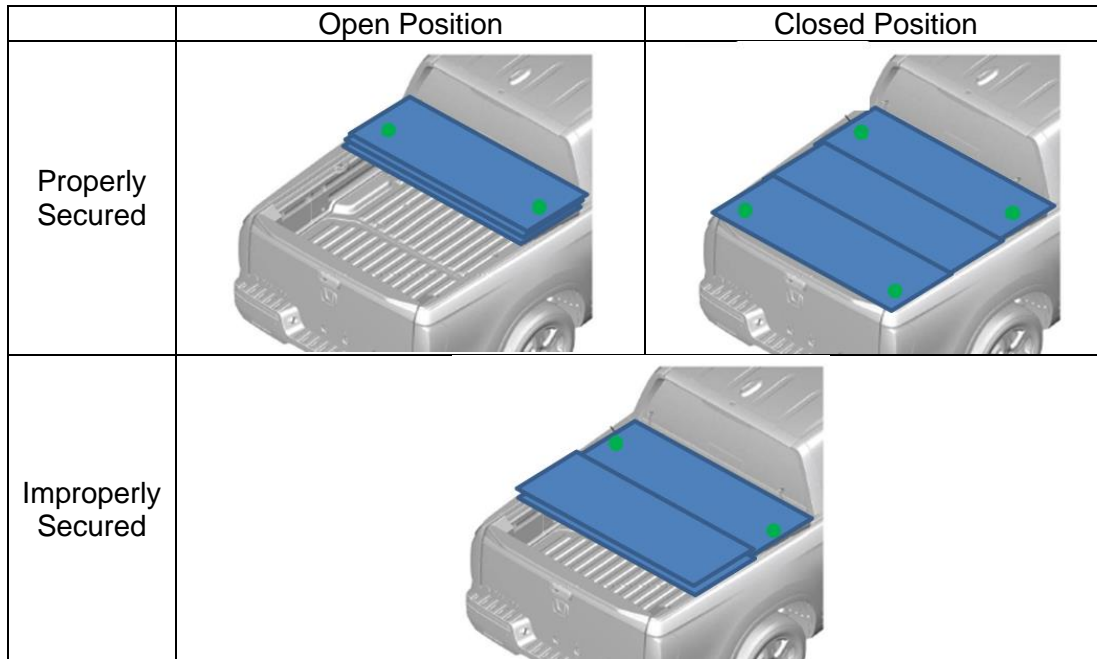
573.6(c)(4)

Percentage of affected vehicle equipment that contain the defect: 100%

573.6(c)(5)

Defect description:

The Honda Genuine Accessory tonneau cover for 2017–2020 MY Honda Ridgeline is a tri-fold design that can be positioned to either partially cover (open) or completely cover (closed) the truck bed. If the tonneau cover is not properly secured in the open or closed position, and the vehicle is operated at highway speeds, the wind resistance may cause the tonneau cover to flip and buckle, deforming the hinges between the center and rear panel. Deformed hinges could allow the rear panel to separate from the tonneau cover, creating a road hazard and increasing the risk of a crash or injury.



573.6(c)(6)

Chronology:

June 2017

Honda Canada received the first claim of a panel separating from the tonneau cover. Honda Canada reviewed the claim, found that customer misuse contributed to the failure, and decided to monitor the market for similar activity.

July 2017

Honda received another claim of a panel separating from the tonneau cover, which marked the first claim from the U.S. market. Honda reviewed the claim and performed re-creation testing, which found that the customer forcibly closed the tonneau cover on top of objects protruding from the top of the truck bed. Forcing the tonneau cover closed bent the hinges, resulting in panel separation (customer misuse). Honda decided to monitor the market for similar activity.

October to November, 2019

Honda launched an investigation into the tonneau cover panel separation issue based on increased market activity, which included interviewing customers who claimed to have experienced a failure.

December 2019

Information from the customer interviews guided Honda in re-creation testing, which identified a potential scenario for rear panel separation when the tonneau cover was not properly secured and the vehicle was operating at highway speeds. Panel separation was limited to hinge deformations on the rear panel, as the hinge design between the front and center panel was not susceptible to deformation caused by an improperly secured tonneau cover. Honda performed quality inspections at the tonneau cover's Tier-1 supplier, which did not identify any irregularities in workmanship or processes.

February 2020

A survey of customers who claimed to have experienced a failure supported the failure mode identified during the earlier interview process.

March 2020

Honda performed quality inspections at the tonneau cover's Tier-2 supplier, which did not identify any irregularities in workmanship or processes.

April to August, 2020

Honda reviewed comparable products in the market and the associated instructions for proper usage. Based on this review, Honda investigated whether modifications to the design or usage instructions were appropriate.

September 10, 2020

Honda determined that a defect related to motor vehicle safety existed and decided to conduct a safety recall.

As of September 10, 2020, Honda has received 17 warranty claims, three field reports, and no reports of injuries or crashes related to this issue.

573.6(c)(8)(i)

Program for remedying the defect:

Registered owners of all 2017–2020 MY Honda Ridgelines will be contacted by mail and asked to take their vehicle to an authorized Honda dealer. The dealer will inspect the vehicle for the Honda Genuine Accessory tonneau cover and if equipped, will install a tether between the tonneau cover's center and rear panel to prevent panel separation, and apply warning labels to the tonneau cover. In addition, the dealer will provide an updated accessory user's information manual which instructs the owner to properly secure the tonneau cover prior to vehicle operation.

Owners who have paid to have these repairs completed at their own expense will be eligible for reimbursement, according to the recall reimbursement plan on file with NHTSA.

573.6(c)(8)(ii)

The estimated date to start notification to dealers: September 18, 2020

The estimated date to start notifications to owners: October 26, 2020

573.6(c)(10)

Representative copies of all notices, bulletins and other communications:

A copy of the dealer service bulletin, the final customer notification letter, and other dealer communication will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

A draft of the owner notification letter will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

573.6(c)(11)

Manufacturer's campaign number: F8M