



U.S. Department of Transportation  
**National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration**

**1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590**

April 07, 2026

26V205

Tom Single  
Ford Motor Company  
330 Town Center Drive  
Suite 500  
Dearborn, MI 48126

**Subject:** Incorrectly Installed Piston Circlips

Dear Tom Single:

This letter serves to acknowledge Ford Motor Company's notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a safety recall which will be conducted pursuant to Federal law for the product(s) listed below. Please review the following information to ensure that it conforms to your records as this information is being made available to the public. If the information does not agree with your records, please contact us immediately to discuss your concerns.

**Makes/Models/Model Years:**

FORD/EXPLORER/2026  
FORD/MUSTANG/2026

**Mfr's Report Date:** March 31, 2026

**NHTSA Campaign Number:** 26V205

**Components:**

ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING:ENGINE:HARD PARTS INTERNAL/MECHANICAL

**Potential Number of Units Affected:** 278

**Problem Description:**

Ford Motor Company (Ford) is recalling certain 2026 Explorer and Mustang vehicles. The engine piston circlips may have been incorrectly installed during manufacturing, which can result in piston failure and engine damage, leading to a loss of drive power.

**Consequence:**

An unexpected loss of drive power increases the risk of a crash.

**Remedy:**

Dealers will inspect the engine for missing or mis-installed circlips and replace the engine as necessary, free of charge. Owner notification letters are expected to be mailed April 14, 2026. Owners may contact

Ford customer service at 1-866-436-7332. Ford's number for this recall is 26S23. Vehicle Identification Numbers (VINs) involved in this recall became searchable on NHTSA.gov on April 2, 2026.

**Notes:**

Owners may also contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-888-275-9171), or go to [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov).

We have received your proposed owner notification letter and it is currently under review. You will be notified of any changes or concerns once our review is complete.

**Please be reminded of the following requirements:**

Copies of all notices, bulletins, dealer notifications, and other communications that relate to this recall, including a copy of the final owner notification letter and any subsequent owner follow-up notification letter(s), are required to be submitted to this office no later than 5 days after they are originally sent (if they are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser/owner).

Please be reminded that under 49 U.S.C. § 30112(a)(3), it is illegal for a manufacturer, to sell, offer for sale, import, or introduce or deliver into interstate commerce, a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment that contains a safety defect once the manufacturer has notified NHTSA about that safety defect. This prohibition does not apply once the motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment has been remedied according to the manufacturer's instructions.

As stated in 49 U.S.C. § 30118(f), submission of eight consecutive quarterly reports followed by three annual reports is required. As described in 573.7, submission of the first of eight consecutive quarterly status reports is required within one month after the close of the calendar quarter in which notification to purchasers occurs. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due on, or before, 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter. The first of three consecutive annual status reports will be due on, or before, 1 year after the eighth quarterly report was submitted.

Ford Motor Company's contact for this recall will be Dusty Gardner who may be reached by email at [dusty.gardner@dot.gov](mailto:dusty.gardner@dot.gov). We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

*Alex Ansley*

Alex Ansley  
Chief, Recall Management Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement