GOSHEN STAMPING CO. INC.
SINCE 1923
DESIGNERS & MANUFACTURERS OF PRECISION STAMPED PARTS

(574)
AREA ~~219~~ • 533-4108
FAX ~~219~~ • 534-4189

RECEIVED
2002 AUG 13 P 2:56
OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

July 30, 2002

Mr. Jon White, Chief
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation
400 7th Street, SW NSA-11
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Starcraft 02V-034

Dear Mr. White:

In early December of 2001 we found five (5) winches with an inadequate weld attaching a gear to a shaft. At first we thought it was a fluke, but 3 weeks later five more were found. We alerted Dutton-Lainson, the manufacturer of the winch, and we decided to do an immediate check of all winches in our inventory and all winches still in the possession of all our customers.

Within 3 days we checked over 1,000 and found about 30 defective winches in the above inventory. In further conversation with Dutton-Lainson it was decided that even though we had not found many bad welds that we should do an immediate recall for all winches manufactured in 2001.

Mr. Ron Haase, Vice President of Dutton-Lainson spoke with your Pat Wallace (letter enclosed) and her evaluation was that it did not fall under NHTSA's purview. At that point Dutton-Lainson initiated their own recall. However, Starcraft felt they should do their own recall.

The companies we supplied and the warranty people involved are listed below along with the number of units we sold to them in 2001.

Joyce Skinner
Starcraft
P.O. Box 458
Topeka, IN 46571
Phone – (260) 593-2550, ext. 214
Fax – (260) 593-2173
Sold 3,783 to them in 2001.

Mike Buyers
Forest River
201 W. Elm Street
Millersburg, IN 46543
Phone – (574) 642-2640
Fax – (574) 642-2611
Sold 5,886 to them in 2001.

1025 SOUTH TENTH STREET • ~~POST OFFICE BOX 802~~ • GOSHEN, INDIANA 46527

Kim Dobson
Vanguard Industries
31450 M-86 West
Colon, MI 49040
Phone – (616) 432-3271
Fax – (616) 432-2516
Sold 2,100 to them in 2001.

Ron Greenburg
Viking R.V. Inc.
580 West Burr Oak Rd.
Centerville, MI 49032
Phone – 800-368-2829
Fax – (616) 467-6021
Sold 3,477 to them in 2001.

Dutton-Lainson contacted all the dealers from a list given by each of the manufacturers and all the retail customers that had bought units. This recall commenced in January of this year. Due to the slow response it is still on-going but should be concluded soon. The last I knew they found about 30 more, but had replaced many others that were not faulty, but it made the customer feel better. They kept very detailed records. You are welcome to call Bruce Dillin at Dutton-Lainson who has all the records.

We are sorry the defect occurred, but we reacted immediately and I am satisfied Dutton-Lainson not only corrected the manufacturing problem, but took immediate steps to get the defective parts out of service.

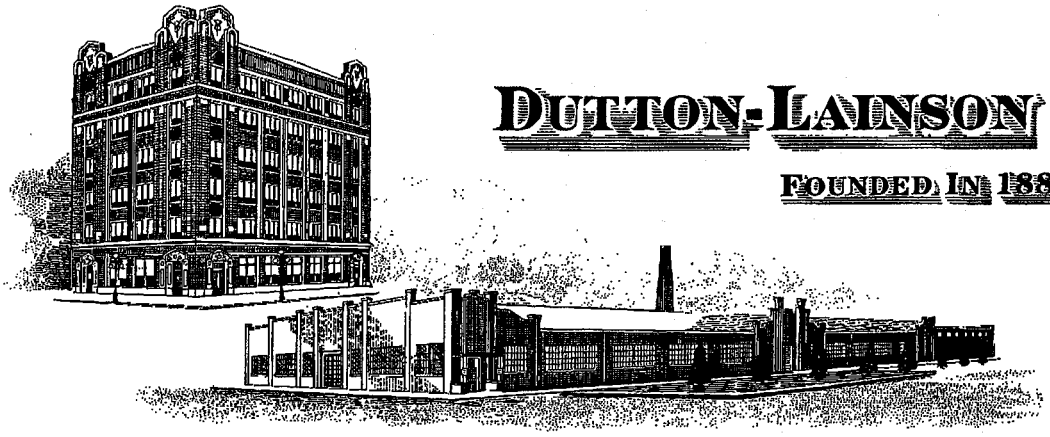
Very truly yours,

GOSHEN STAMPING CO., INC.

Gerald A. Trolz, President

GAT/bdo

Enclosures (2)



DUTTON-LAINSON COMPANY

FOUNDED IN 1886

MANUFACTURING DIVISION
1601 WEST 2ND ST.
TEL (402) • 462-4141
FAX (402) • 460-4615

HASTINGS, NEBRASKA 68902-0729

January 24, 2002

Mr. Jerry Troltz
Goshen Stamping Company
1025 South 10th Street
P.O. Box 802
Goshen, IN 46527-0802

REF: DLB1200A Winches

Dear Jerry:

After our telephone conversation on January 23, 2002, I contacted the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in order to begin the process of following their prescribed methods and reporting for the program of testing winches in campers, which have already been sold. I spoke with Patricia Wallace at NHTSA and explained the circumstances we are dealing with. I explained that there is no possible way that a winch failure can have any adverse effect on the safety of the trailer, while it is being towed. I also explained, that no one would be inside of the trailer while the roof was being raised or lowered, but that there was some potential for injury, if a winch failure occurred while the roof was being lowered and someone was tucking canvas into the trailer, placing their arms under the roof. Ms. Wallace concluded that this problem does not fall within the purview of NHTSA. I asked for her to provide this to me in writing, and a copy is attached.

We believe that we need to contact the four trailer manufacturers with this new information to make certain that we have consensus concerning our program for contacting camper owners to have winches tested. Nothing has changed with regard to our intent to undertake this campaign, except that it does not need to be done with the oversight of NHTSA.

Enclosed is a sample of the letter we would propose to send to camper owners determined to have the potential for a winch problem. We also, visualize a somewhat more detailed set of instructions for the dealers concerning how to perform the test and dealing with issues concerning replacement winches and recording of serial numbers when tests are complete, etc.

When you receive this, please give me a call so that we can discuss this new information and our next step.

Very truly yours,

DUTTON-LAINSON COMPANY
MANUFACTURING DIVISION

Ron Haase
Vice President and Plant Manager

RH/pcj

c Bruce Dillin

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
Recall Analysis Division
400 7th Street, SW NSA-11
Washington, DC 20590
FAX #: (202) 366-7882

FAX Transmission	No. of Pages: 1 (Includes cover sheet)	Date: 1-23-02

To: Mr. Ron Haase	From: Patricia Wallace Pat W.
Company:	Recall Analysis Division
FAX: (402) 460-4615	Telephone: (202) 366-5232

This is in reference to our conversation today involving pop-up trailers. As we discussed, it does not appear that the problem involving the pop-up trailer's lifting mechanism would fall within the purview of NHTSA. As I understand it, this problem only occurs after the trailer has been placed in position at the camping site, the trailer operator is located outside of the trailer, and no one is within the interior of the trailer. NHTSA would only be involved if the problem would be considered safety-related and injuries could possibly occur, i.e., a trailer occupant was injured if the pop-up top suddenly caved in, or the pop-up mechanism failed allowing the camper top to lift or move while the trailer was being towed.

I hope this clears up any questions you may have concerning NHTSA's responsibility.