

Safety Recall 10S13

Certain 1998-2003 Model Year Windstar Vehicles Operated in Corrosion States
Rear Axle Inspection and Repair

Dealer Q & A**Q1. What is the problem?**

A. Ford is voluntarily recalling 1998-2003 Model Year Windstar vehicles produced between September, 1 1997 and February, 28 2003 to address concerns relating to rear axle corrosion. In some of the affected vehicles, the rear axle could potentially fracture when operated in high corrosion areas for an extended period of time. If the rear axle should fracture, vehicle handling may be affected which could increase the risk of a crash.

Q2. Why are you only recalling vehicles in corrosion states?

A. The affected vehicles have been on the road for a number of years and, in many cases, have been driven well over a 100,000 miles. The overwhelming majority of reports of cracks are from high-corrosion states. Corrosion may weaken the axle making it susceptible to torsional stress. We will continue to monitor the performance of vehicles in all states as we always do.

Q3. How many axles does Ford expect to replace?

A. We believe the vast majority of vehicles will not have cracked axles and can be reinforced when parts are available.

Q4. What should I do if an owner believes their vehicle has been operated in a high corrosion environment and requests their vehicle be inspected?

A. If the vehicle is not in the program, but is a 1998 through 2003 model year Windstar produced between September 1, 1997 and February, 28 2003, contact the Special Service Support Center at 1-800-325-5621 to request approval to be covered by Safety Recall 10S13.

Q5. Are the vehicles with a crack safe to drive? Can people continue to drive the vehicle if the dealer cannot provide a permanent repair soon?

A. Ford is recommending customers accept our offer of alternative transportation until their vehicle can be repaired. There is a small risk that the rear axle may fracture and potentially affect vehicle handling, which increases the risk of a crash.

Q6. How will customers with unique transportation issues be handled?

A. Dealers should contact the Special Service Support Center at 1-800-325-5621 for assistance.

Q7. Do you have an estimate of when the parts will be available?

A. We are working quickly to make parts available but do not have an exact date at this point.

Q8. Are you offering to repurchase vehicles and how much will you pay customers?

A. In most cases, we will offer to repair the vehicles and/or provide alternative transportation until a repair becomes available. At our discretion, the remedy we offer may involve repurchasing a customer's vehicle at a price we believe either matches or exceeds market value.

Q9. What if the customer refuses to leave their vehicle at the dealership even though they have been advised a crack was found in the rear axle?

A. The dealer should document on the repair order with a statement that reads: "Customer advised eligible for rental vehicle but the customer declined the offer and elected to remain in their own vehicle."