

Ford Motor Company

James P. Vondale, Director
Automotive Safety Office
Environmental & Safety Engineering

August 3, 2001

01V-258 ①

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Re: Ford Recall No. 01S24 – 2000-2001 Model Year Focus, Continental, Taurus, Sable, Town Car, Excursion, Expedition, Navigator, and F150 to F750 for Windshield Wiper Motor Cover Replacement

Summary

- **Ford Action** – Ford is conducting a voluntary safety recall to replace wiper motor cover assemblies on certain 2000/2001 model year Ford Focus, Lincoln Continental, Ford Taurus, Mercury Sable, Lincoln Town Car, Ford Expedition, Lincoln Navigator, Ford Excursion, Ford F-150, F250, F-350, F-450, F-550, F-650 and F-750 vehicles. These vehicles were built from February 11, 2000 through September 4, 2000.
- **Number of Vehicles Involved** – Approximately 1,207,855 vehicles (approximately 1,083,000 in the U.S., 85,000 in Canada, and 31,337 in Mexico).
- **Effect on Vehicle Operation** – The condition could result in loss of intermittent or park wiper function, complete loss of wiper function, and potentially, melting of the wiper motor cover that could result in smoke and/or fire.
- **Service Procedure** – Dealers will inspect the date code on the wiper motor. Motors built within the suspect time frame will have the wiper motor gear case cover replaced.

Attached is the detailed information required by the applicable portions of 49 CFR Part 573 – Defect and Non-Compliance Information Report.

Sincerely,



James P. Vondale

Attachment
01S24 6d/rjw/ae



49 CFR Part 573 – DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT
01S24 – 2000-2001 MODEL YEAR FOCUS, CONTINENTAL, TAURUS, SABLE, TOWN CAR,
EXPEDITION, NAVIGATOR, EXCURSION, F-150, F250, F-350, F-450, F-550, F-650 AND F-750
WINDSHIELD WIPER MOTOR COVER REPLACEMENT

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Ford Motor Company submits the following information concerning a safety recall action that it is voluntarily initiating.

573.5 (c) (2) – Potentially Affected Vehicles

Certain 2000-2001 model year Ford Focus, Lincoln Continental, Ford Taurus, Mercury Sable, Lincoln Town Car, Ford Expedition, Lincoln Navigator, Ford Excursion, Ford F-150, F250, F-350, F-450, F-550, F-650 and F-750. These vehicles were built at the following assembly plants during the dates specified below:

Canada	Ontario Truck Assembly from February 17, 2000 through August 3, 2000
Mexico	Cuautitlan Assembly from February 25, 2000 through August 7, 2000
Mexico	Hermosillo Stamping and Assembly from February 28, 2000 through July 25, 2000
USA	Atlanta Assembly from February 11, 2000 through July 31, 2000
USA	Chicago Assembly from February 14, 2000 through August 4, 2000
USA	Kansas City Assembly from February 26, 2000 to September 4, 2000
USA	Kentucky Truck Assembly from February 18, 2000 through August 31, 2000
USA	Michigan Truck Assembly from February 23, 2000 through August 3, 2000
USA	Norfolk Assembly from February 21, 2000 through July 27, 2000
USA	Wayne Stamping and Assembly from February 25, 2000 through August 15, 2000
USA	Wixom Assembly from February 15, 2000 through August 8, 2000

Only North American built Focus vehicles are affected. European produced Focus vehicles use a different wiper motor.

The wiper motors mentioned later in this letter were manufactured by Visteon Corporation. Visteon's address is Visteon Product Safety Office, Suite 2E184, 5500 Auto Club Drive, Dearborn MI 48126. Visteon's phone number is (313) 755-8269. The motors were then assembled into wiper modules supplied to Ford by Visteon, Valeo, and Trico.

Because these vehicles are not produced in VIN order, information as to the applicability of this action to specific vehicles can best be obtained by either calling Ford's toll-free line (1-800-392-3673) or contacting a local Ford dealer, who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford On-line Automotive Service Information System (OASIS) database.

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573.5 (c) (3) – Estimated Population of Vehicles Potentially Affected

Approximately 1,083,000 vehicles.

573.5 (c) (4) – Estimated Percentage of Affected Vehicles with the Defect Condition

Unknown.

573.5 (c) (5) – Description of the Defect

A switch located in the plastic cover of the wiper motor gear case may malfunction and overheat, potentially resulting in loss of intermittent wiper function, loss of wiper park function, complete loss of wiper function, smoke or, potentially, ignition of the plastic cover material. Switch malfunction is most likely to occur when the intermittent setting of the wipers is being used, or when snow or ice obstructs the blades from returning to the "parked" position at the bottom of the windshield.

As of June 27, 2001, Ford is aware of 284 reports of thermal damage to the wiper motor cover. Forty of the reports allege that a fire occurred. None of the reports indicate that the fire progressed beyond the cowl area or that the fire entered the passenger compartment. None of the reports allege that an accident or injury occurred.

573.5 (c) (6) – Chronology of Events

A Ford dealership reported a fire in a wiper motor to the wiper motor supplier on December 15, 2000. The supplier began retrieving wiper motors from dealers on January 8, 2001. Ford began investigating this condition on January 23, 2001. After a review of field return parts, an extensive Design of Experiments test program was conducted during the spring of 2001 to confirm the root cause of the park switch malfunctions. This testing confirmed that motors with a revised park switch disk incorporated in production at the supplier during the period from February 10, 2000 through June 26, 2000 are potentially involved.

573.5 (c) (8) – Service Program

Owners of record of affected vehicles will be notified by first class mail to return vehicles to dealers for inspection of the wiper motor date code. Approximately 75% of the vehicles will have a suspect motor and will have a new wiper motor gear case cover with a more robust park switch disc installed. There will be no charge to owners for this service. In addition, owners will be advised that they can minimize risk prior to the recall service being performed by not using the intermittent mode and by clearing any snow, ice or other obstruction that can prevent the wipers from reaching the park position at the base of the windshield.

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573.5 (c) (9) – Press Statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

Ford does not plan to make a public statement concerning this action.

Ford currently plans to begin notifying owners on or about the week of August 13, 2001. Notification of Focus owners will be delayed due to parts availability and is currently scheduled to begin on or about the week of September 17, 2001 (Focus uses a unique wiper motor cover with a different electrical connector orientation).

573.5 (c) (11) – Recall Number

Ford has assigned recall number 01S24 to this action.

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