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OFFICE OF DEFECTS  
PREVENTION

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July 27, 2006

Daniel C. Smith  
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

06 V-286  
(3 pages)

Dear Mr. Smith:

Subject: Supplement to Ford Recall No. 05S28

Summary

- Ford Action – Ford is supplementing an earlier voluntary safety recall to also include certain model year 1994-2002 F-250 through F-550 Super Duty trucks, 2000-2002 Excursions, 1994-1996 Econolines, 1996-2002 E-450 vans equipped with gasoline or natural gas engines, and 1998 Explorers and Mountaineers. A speed control system interaction can occur that may cause the speed control deactivation switch to overheat and lead to an under hood fire. In rare cases, brake fluid may leak through the speed control deactivation switch into the speed control system electrical components, potentially corroding them. This corrosion in the electrical components can lead to increasing resistance and higher electrical current flow through the system. Together, these conditions could lead to overheating and, possibly, a fire at the switch. This system interaction is the result of several contributing factors including the specific orientation of the switch on the brake master cylinder and repeated high vacuum events that may occur at the switch due to typical brake system operation in the vehicles included in this action. Over time, these vacuum events may cause some speed control deactivation switches to be susceptible to brake fluid leaks and corrosion, which may result in the switch overheating.
- Number of Vehicles Involved - Ford estimates that there are approximately 1.2 million additional affected vehicles currently registered in the U.S..
- Affect on Vehicle Operation - The speed control deactivation switch may, under certain conditions, overheat, smoke, or burn.
- Service Procedure - Owners will be instructed to return their vehicles to dealers for installation of a fused wiring harness.

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

Sincerely,

 James P. Vondale  
Attachment



49 CFR Part 573 - DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

Supplement to Ford Recall No. 05S28 – Certain 1994-2002 F-250 through F-550 Super Duty trucks, 2000-2002 Excursions, 1994-1996 Econolines and 1996-2002 E-450 vehicles equipped with speed control and gasoline or natural gas engines and 1998 Explorer and Mountaineer vehicles equipped with speed control - Speed Control System

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.

573.6 (c) (2) - Potentially Affected Vehicles

Vehicles potentially affected are certain model year 1994-2002 F-250 through F-550 Super Duty trucks, 2000-2002 Excursions, 1994-1996 Econolines, and 1996-2002 E-450 vehicles equipped with speed control and gasoline or natural gas engines and 1998 Explorer and Mountaineer vehicles equipped with speed control. Build dates are not being provided because of the number of models and assembly plants that built the vehicles included in this action. All vehicles within an identified model year are included in the action; therefore, vehicles built from Job #1 through Job last for a given model and model year are included.

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 by contacting a local Ford or Lincoln-Mercury dealer who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford On-line Automotive Service Information System (OASIS) database.

573.6 (c) (3) - Estimated Population of Vehicles Potentially Affected

Ford estimates that there are approximately 1.2 million vehicles currently registered in the United States and Federalized Territories.

573.6 (c) (4) - Estimated Percentage of Affected Vehicles with the Defect Condition  
Unknown.

573.6 (c) (5) - Description of the Defect

The speed control deactivation switch may, under certain rare conditions, overheat, smoke, or burn. As of April 2006, Ford has identified approximately 250 incidents that appear to allege a fire or smoke incident related to the speed control deactivation switch on the affected vehicles, with approximately 60 of those related only to smoking of the switch. No allegations of serious injuries or fatalities have been identified.

573.6 (c) (6) - Chronology of Events

In September 2004, Ford began investigating reports of underhood fires in the affected vehicles equipped with speed control as a result of allegations of fires related to a speed control deactivation switch. Investigation of underhood fires is complex because fires can occur for a variety of reasons, including improper vehicle modification (such as aftermarket accessories), arson, prior accident damage, lack of maintenance, or a faulty repair. Often, evidence as to the cause and origin of the fire is lost as a result of damage from the fire, or efforts to extinguish it. In December 2004, NHTSA opened an investigation into fires allegedly involving the speed control deactivation switch on 1999-2001 F-150 and Expedition vehicles resulting in recall 05S28. Some of the vehicles included in this action were "peer" vehicles in the investigation of the F-150 and

Expedition vehicles. Based upon information gathered on the "peer" vehicles during that investigation, Ford and NHTSA began an analysis of the "peer" vehicles with apparent speed control deactivation switch related fires.

As a result of this extensive investigation Ford and NHTSA recently found that a notable vacuum can occur in typical braking conditions within the hydraulic portion of the brake system on the affected vehicles. The level of vacuum that occurs, over time, can contribute to damage to internal components in some of the switches and may eventually cause a switch to leak. This leakage can result in corrosion in the switch, and in rare cases, the corrosion in the switch can lead to increased resistance and higher electrical current flow through the system. The result of this combination of events could lead to switch overheating, and, very infrequently, possibly a fire at the switch. During this investigation, switch manufacturing variability and the orientation of the switch were also identified as factors, in combination with the vacuum, as contributing to the elevated rates. The 1998 model year Explorer and Mountaineer are included in this action because they exhibit an obvious elevated rate of related fires as compared to other models. Based upon the performance it is clear that there are unique factors that are affecting its performance.

573.6 (c) (8) - Service Program

Owners will be instructed to return their vehicles to dealers for installation of a fused wiring harness.

There will be no charge to owners for this service. Mailing of owner notification letters will begin during the week of August 7, 2006.

573.6 (c) (9) -Press statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

Ford plans to make a statement to the media concerning the subject matter of this action. A copy of the notification letters to dealers and owners from Ford will be forwarded to the agency when available.

573.6 (c) (11) -Recall Number

Ford has assigned recall number 05S28 to this action.

573.13 (c) (2) - Ending Date for Reimbursement

Ford's general reimbursement plan for the cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners prior to a safety recall was provided to the agency on February 28, 2005. The ending date for reimbursement eligibility for remedies paid for by vehicle owners per Ford's general reimbursement plan is September 5, 2006.