



April 23, 2013

Ms. Nancy Lewis
Associate Administrator of Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

Dear Ms. Lewis:

A supplier, Dometic Corporation, has notified Featherlite Trailers that it has initiated a safety recall on model 9100 Power Awnings, Weatherpro Awnings and Motor Service kits supplied to Featherlite by Dometic Corporation. Featherlite has determined that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists in an item of motor vehicle equipment listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

The manufacturer of the component to be recalled is Dometic Corporation, located at 9100 Shelbyville Rd, Suite 120, Louisville, KY 40222. We have been in contact with Dometic Corporation and a total one (1) unit was identified as being sold to Featherlite and potentially having the recalled units.

The contact at Featherlite, Inc. for Featherlite's recall of this component is:

Bruce A. McConnell, Customer Service Manager
Featherlite, Inc.
P.O. Box 320
Cresco, IA 52136-0320
Phone: 319-547-6000, ext. 1052
Fax: 319-547-6100
e-mail: bmccconnell@fthr.com

Further information, as required, is included in the attachments to this notification.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. McConnell
Customer Service Manager

CORPORATE OFFICE

563.547.6000

toll free: 800.800.1230

fax: 563.547.6099

www.fthr.com

Hwy. 63 & 9, P.O. Box 320

Cresco, IA 52136

I. Identification of Recalled Items

Generic name of item: Awning

Description: Power Awnings, Weatherpro Awnings, Motor Service Kits

Part numbers: 9100

Function: Provide shade

II. Identifying the Recall Population

Item: Dometic Corporation Power Awnings, Weatherpro Awnings and Motor Service Kits

Total number. Potentially involved: 1

Estimated percentage containing the defect: 100%

How was recall determined: Notification by Dometic Corporation

Beginning and final dates recalled items were used in manufacture: 02/13/13 to 04/09/13

III. Describe Defect or Noncompliance

Describe defect: There was a new design motor and with the new design, an important step in the installation instructions cannot be bypassed from the proper sequence.

Describe cause of defect: Installers are not following the proper sequence of the installation and are bypassing an important step in the installation.

Describe consequence of defect condition: The motor can be damaged causing the awning to unfurl unexpectedly, either while the trailer is at rest or while in transit.

Identity of supplier who furnished the component and CEO name:

Dometic Corporation
9100Shelbyville Rd, Suite 120
Louisville, KY 40222
Roger Johansson, CEO

IV. Chronology in Determining the Defect

Featherlite was notified by UPS by Dometic Corporation on April 23, 2013 of the defect in the 9100 awnings. The unit was actually the wrong size for our application and was not installed on a trailer and is being sent back to Dometic Corporation.

V. Identify the Remedy

NA

VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

NA

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

Drafts of the notification documents are attached.



April 19, 2013

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, Ret. Rec. Req.

Ms. Nancy Lewis
Associate Administrator of Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Dometic Corporation Recreation Vehicle Power Awning Recall Notification

Dear Ms. Lewis:

Please find enclosed a Notification of Defect which Dometic Corporation is submitting pursuant to 49CFR, Part 573.6. The components of this Defect Notice at this time are:

1. Notification of Defect
2. Chronology
3. OEM Letters sent out within the 5 day notification requirement
4. Aftermarket and dealer letters sent out within the 5 day notification requirement.
5. Remedy explanation
6. Remedy Verification and reimbursement card
7. Explanation of immediate and ongoing action on the part of Dometic to quarantine as much of the population as possible and repair potentially defective product before the Recreation Vehicle leaves the OEM.

Please establish a recall campaign number for Dometic Corporation to handle the campaign for this potential defect matter and notify us as soon as possible so that we can have it added to the Remedy Verification and Reimbursement Card noted in item 6.

We are continuing the preparation of the other media documents for your review or approval and the compilation of dealer and OEM lists for this population of products. This information will be submitted as soon as they are completed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Patrick N. McConnell'.

Patrick N. McConnell

Dometic Corporation

Chief Engineer, Complimentary Products and Agency

c.c. Dan Fuller, Jim Menefee, Bryce Lemon,

POTENTIAL DEFECT NOTIFICATION

Dometic Corporation ("Dometic"), a supplier of original equipment and aftermarket products for manufacturers of recreation vehicles ("RV's") and suppliers/dealers for the RV aftermarket has determined during the week of April 15th, 2013 that a potential defect may exist in the items of motor vehicle equipment listed below. Dometic is voluntarily submitting this notification of a potential defect to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration in accordance with the applicable provisions of 49 CFR Part 573.

Dometic Corporation is a Delaware Corporation with its principal place of business at 9100 Shelbyville Road, Suite 120, Louisville, Kentucky 40222. The Dometic products affected by this notice were manufactured by Dometic Corporation, at 509 South Poplar Street, Lagrange, Indiana, 46761. The registered agent for Dometic Corporation is Corporation Trust Company, 1209 Orange Street, Wilmington, Delaware 19801.

The affected Dometic products which may contain the potential defect are motor driven recreation vehicle power awnings manufactured between February 13th, 2013 and April 9th, 2013. The potentially affected awnings have the model designations set forth below:

WeatherPro Models

805XXXXXXXXX
815XXXXXXXXX
825XXXXXXXXX
835XXXXXXXXX
845XXXXXXXXX
885XXXXXXXXX
855XXXXXXXXX
905XXXXXXXXX

9100 Power Awning Models

910XXXXXXXXX 915XXXXXXXXX
912XXXXXXXXX 916XXXXXXXXX
913XXXXXXXXX 917XXXXXXXXX
914XXXXXXXXX 918XXXXXXXXX

Awning "Motor Service Kit" Part Numbers

3307923.XXXX
3310423.XXXX

The possibly affected units will have the serial numbers that are located either on the right hand fabric or the right hand end of the fabric roller tube, beginning with the following digit combinations:

306XXXXX through 314XXXXX

THESE SERIAL NUMBERS ARE NOT LOCATED ON THE SUPPORTING ARMS

The potential defect is associated with the motor assembly of the power awnings when installed as completed power awning assemblies, and is associated with the awning installation process. (The awnings "motor service kits" are not subject to the same potential installation process; however, because the awning "motor service kits" are the same motor assemblies as are included in the power awning assemblies, Dometic recognizes that there

may be some unknown service activities that could expose the vulnerability of those awning "motor service kits" as well.)

With respect to the installation process of the completed power awning assemblies which include the subject motor assembly, it is possible that installers may unintentionally fail to strictly follow the instructions in sequence, and may not remove a torsion protective anti-rotation cotter pin from the end cap of the fabric roller tube assembly (FRTA) until after the side arms for the awning are installed on the side walls of the recreation vehicle ("RV"). In the event that the awning installation instructions are not strictly followed in sequence by the installer and the cotter pin is left in place while raising the awning to the side wall of the RV, the motor assembly screws may potentially experience abnormal torque if the attached arms are not lifted from a horizontal position to a vertical position simultaneously. This abnormal torque potentially can shear the two motor assembly screws inside the awning roller tube, which will enable the fabric of the awning to possibly unfurl while the recreation vehicle is either parked or in transit.

On February 13th, 2013 Dometic implemented a design change on its power awnings that introduced a new motor assembly. This design revision also reduced the number of parts in the motor assembly and altered the torque load on the awning motor such that the motor assembly screws absorb the rotational torque when the awning is deployed and when it is retracted. All engineering test results during the alternate motor qualifying tests were well below any failure of normal operation for the application or for the appliance. At that time there were no indications of installation sequence issues or excessive torque being experienced on any of the Dometic power awnings or motor kits such that Dometic would have been alerted to the potential failure mode.

On April 9th, 2013 during an in-house product review meeting, Dometic received reports and samples from the field of failed motor assemblies still mounted in the end cap of the FRTA and immediately began to examine them for cause. Dometic observed in these samples that the motor assembly screws and the motor housing "locating spur" were broken or sheared off. Dometic did not know the root cause of failure and began to test to determine how a failure could occur.

Dometic was only able to duplicate failures when the torsion protective anti-rotation cotter pins were left in during installation beyond the sequence point as noted in the assembly instructions. Dometic then ran torque tests to determine the difference between the torque at normal conditions and those experienced if the installation instructions are not followed in sequence and the torsion protective anti-rotation cotter pin is left in place beyond the sequence point, as instructed. Dometic discovered that if the torsion protective anti-rotation cotter pin is not pulled out until the product is fully installed on the RV exterior wall, instead of at the appropriate step as set out in the instructions, there is a potential that the motor assembly may become compromised such that the torque applied to the motor assembly screws may exceed their shear strength. Such failure may not be immediately visible, or known to the installer.

For the service part replacement awning "motor service kits" that are sold for service purposes, Dometic does not believe that there is a likelihood of the installation-related defect occurring because the awnings that these awning "motor service kits" are installed on are already on the RV and the side arms are in a fixed position, in the same plane, on the side of the RV. However, in light of the potential of a defect-related failure if unknown or unpredictable steps are taken during the replacement of the awning "motor service kit", Dometic is pursuing the return of these components as well.

The products in question are power awnings used in original manufacture of RV's, or as replacement power awnings for RV's, or as motor assembly kits for the replacement aftermarket. The total population of power awnings or kits that can potentially exhibit this installation defect condition is 27,098.

Dometic has prepared this notice upon the determination of the possibility that the motor assembly screws may unexpectedly fail, and the condition, if existing within an awning assembly, may not be apparent. Dometic is

continuing to gather information on the potential defect and will forward any and all relevant information as it become available.

Dometic has immediately acted and has issued a bulletin to all OEM customers to **stop shipment**. Dometic has also notified all aftermarket suppliers and dealers of the potential condition, and that inspection and repair must be undertaken. We believe that a large proportion of the population of products of this design, which may be vulnerable to an installation issue, are still within the OEM's possession, or in the possession of their dealers; the remainder of the awning assemblies or motor kits have been shipped to the aftermarket and Dometic is in the process of working with aftermarket suppliers and dealers to identify any customers which may have had replacement awnings or kits installed since February 13th 2013. Therefore we feel that by acting quickly we may be able to prevent exposure for a large number of instances in which end users may have a compromised motor assembly in place.

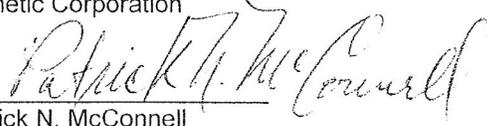
Dometic's remedial action is to replace the motor assembly with another model that is not subject to an out-of-sequence installation problem, and does not have screws holding the motor assembly together in such a way as to be vulnerable to torque-shearing. Dometic currently has in excess of 20 teams that are deployed at various OEM's starting with the highest users and are working our way through the population of product on their lots.

Dometic has prepared an Aftermarket Notice and other appropriate notifications that will cover all Dometic service centers and replacement product outlets. A list of Original Equipment Manufacturers and Aftermarket suppliers to whom Dometic has sold the population of these power awnings is being prepared and all will be provided to the NHTSA either herewith or upon completion.

This notice was prepared by and inquiries should be sent to:

Mr. Patrick N. McConnell
Chief Engineer Complimentary Products and Agency
Dometic Corporation
509 South Poplar St.
Lagrange, IN 46761
Phone: 260-463-2191
Fax: 260-463-7627

Dated this 18th day of April, 2013
Dometic Corporation

By: 
Patrick N. McConnell
Chief Engineer, Complimentary Products and Agency