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July 25, 2012

Ms. Nancy Lewis  
Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W45-306  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Lewis:

Subject: Ford Motor Company (Ford) Recall No. 12S37 – Certain 2001 through 2004 model year Ford Escape vehicles equipped with 3.0L V6 engines and speed control – potential interference between the engine cover and the speed control cable connector

Summary

- Ford Action – Ford is conducting a voluntary safety recall involving certain 2001 through 2004 model year Ford Escape vehicles equipped with 3.0L V6 engines and speed control due to inadequate clearance between the engine cover and the speed control cable connector, which could result in a stuck throttle.
- Number of Vehicles Involved – Approximately 423,634 vehicles in the United States and federalized territories are potentially affected.
- Effect on Vehicle Operation – Inadequate clearance between the engine cover and the speed control cable connector could result in a stuck throttle when the accelerator pedal is fully or almost-fully depressed.
- Service Procedure – Owners will be notified by mail and instructed to take their vehicle(s) to a Ford or Lincoln dealer to have an engine cover fastener replaced to provide adequate clearance between the cover and speed control cable connector.

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

Sincerely,

  
Steven M. Kenner

Attachment



49 CFR Part 573 – DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT  
12S37 – CERTAIN 2001 THROUGH 2004 FORD ESCAPE VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH 3.0L  
V6 ENGINES AND SPEED CONTROL – POTENTIAL INTERFERENCE BETWEEN THE  
ENGINE COVER AND THE SPEED CONTROL CABLE CONNECTOR

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Non-Compliance 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 2001 through 2004 model year Ford Escape vehicles built at the Kansas City Assembly Plant (KCAP) and the Ohio Assembly Plant (OHAP) from October 22, 1999, through January 23, 2004.

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 (1-866-436-7332) or by contacting a local Ford or Lincoln 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

Approximately 423,634 vehicles in the United States and federalized territories are potentially affected.

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

Unknown.

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

In certain 2001 through 2004 model year Ford Escape vehicles equipped with 3.0L V6 engines and speed control, inadequate clearance between the engine cover and the speed control cable connector could result in a stuck throttle when the accelerator pedal is fully or almost-fully depressed.

573.6 (c) (6) – Chronology of Events

In late January or early February 2012, NHTSA made Ford aware of an incident in which it was alleged that the throttle stuck open on a 2002 model year Ford Escape. Ford was provided the opportunity to inspect the vehicle involved in the incident on June 20, 2012. As a result of the vehicle inspection, Ford began an engineering review of the related systems and a preliminary review of reports to Ford in early July 2012 to identify any similar reports and potential causes for this condition. On July 17, 2012, NHTSA opened a Preliminary Evaluation investigation (PE12-019) into the potential failure of throttles returning to idle when the accelerator pedal has been released on 2001 through 2004 Ford Escape vehicles.

Based on Ford's internal data review, Ford's Field Review Committee reviewed the concern and approved a field action on July 23, 2012.

573.6 (c) (8) – Service Program

Owners will be notified by mail and instructed to take their vehicle(s) to a Ford or Lincoln dealer to have the rear stand-off fastener for the engine cover replaced - raising the cover in the area of the speed control cable to provide adequate clearance between the cover and the speed control cable connector. If parts are not available when a vehicle is presented for service, dealers will disconnect the speed control cable to eliminate any concern of the condition presenting itself before the long-term repair is able to be completed. Ford will also remind drivers that if they experience what they believe is a stuck throttle in this, or any other vehicle, they should firmly and steadily apply the brakes, without pumping the brake pedal, shift to neutral, steer the vehicle to a safe location, shut the engine off after the vehicle is safely stopped and place the transmission in park.

Mailing of owner notification letters will occur during the week beginning August 6, 2012, and is expected to be completed by August 10, 2012. Notification to dealers will occur on July 26, 2012.

Ford's general reimbursement plan for the cost of remedies paid for by vehicle owners prior to notification of a safety recall was provided to the agency on February 24, 2011.

573.6 (c) (10) – Press Statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

Ford will work proactively with media to quickly share this information. National media attention is likely as with most Ford recalls when posted to NHTSA's safecar.gov website. Ford will provide public comments when requested.

Ford will forward a copy of the notification letters to dealers and owners to the agency when available.

573.6 (c) (11) – Recall Number

Ford has assigned recall number 12S37 to this action.

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