



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE08-036
Date Opened: 05/15/2008
Principal Investigator: Chris Lash
Subject: Tire Value Leaks

Manufacturer: Dill Air Controls Products
Products: Dill TR400 Series tire valves manufactured in 2006
Population: 30,000,000 (estimated)

Problem Description: The tire valves can crack and leak air. A leaking tire valve could result in tire deflation, tire damage (e.g., overheating, rupture) and possible vehicle control problems.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	1	1
Crashes/Fires:	0	1	1
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	1	1
# Fatalities:	0	1	1
Other*:	0	0	0

*Description Of Other:

Action: A Preliminary Evaluation has been opened.

Engineer: Christopher Lash *CL*
Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: On April 30, 2008, Dill Air Controls Products (DILL) met with ODI to discuss a potential defect in some of the snap-in tire valves manufactured for Dill by Topseal, a subsidiary of the Shanghai Baolong Automotive Corporation. Dill described a problem with valves leaking from cracks due to apparent ozone exposure and indicated that early investigation had traced the concern to a five month manufacturing period in 2006. Dill also indicated that it had recently been served with a lawsuit alleging that air leakage from a cracked valve installed in September 2006 in the right rear wheel of a Model Year (MY)1998 Ford Explorer resulted in a fatal rollover crash in November 2007.

On May 2, 2008, Dill issued an advisory to it's North American customers in the Tire Retail Industry describing potential concerns with ozone resistance in TR 413, TR 413 chrome, TR 414 and TR 418 Dill ACP valve stems manufactured from July 2006 through November 2006. Dill indicated that the suspect valves were shipped to North American customers from August 2006 to February 2007. According to the bulletin, Dill's analysis of tire valves returned from the field identified problems with surface cracks on the outside of the rubber near the rim hole and that initial investigation centered on ozone exposure. Dill has advised ODI that approximately 30 million valves were manufactured during the suspect manufacturing range.

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Dill's bulletin requests that its customers inspect lot numbers of stock at all levels of distribution and return all product manufactured in 2006 (lot numbers starting in 06). The bulletin also recommends that retailers inspect all valve stems installed from September 2006 through June 2007 as customers return to tire stores for regular service.

A Preliminary Evaluation has been opened to assess the scope, frequency and safety consequences of the alleged defect.

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