

Automotive News

Toyota will recall 2.3 million more vehicles for sticking accelerators

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LOS ANGELES -- Toyota Motor Corp. said Thursday it would recall millions more vehicles in the United States, its second large recall in four months, this time to fix potentially faulty accelerator pedals.

The newest recall, covering 2.3 million vehicles, means some Toyota owners will be affected by both notices. In last fall's action, owners of 2005-10 Avalons and 2007-10 Camrys were among the owners told that floor mats could entrap the accelerator pedal, causing unintended acceleration.

Now those same owners will be told their accelerator pedals could stick for other reasons.

The latest recall involves Toyota Division models only. It is separate from last fall's recall of 4.2 million Toyota and Lexus vehicles involved in the floor mat issue and follows a year when Toyota recalled more vehicles than any other automaker in the United States.

Toyota spokesman John Hanson said the first recall has to do with pedal entrapment and the second involves a faulty pedal design by a supplier.

In the latest recall, all of the vehicles were built in North America and the pedal mechanism was from a North American supplier. "We're finding that they prematurely wear," Hanson said.

In addition to the Avalon and Camry, the second recall involves 2007-10 Tundras; 2008-10 Sequoias; 2009-10 Corollas, RAV4s and Matrixes; and 2010 Highlanders.

Hanson did not name the supplier involved. A second supplier also builds the same pedal mechanism for these vehicles.

"There was no evidence of a similar situation with the other supplier," Hanson said. "Those not affected have the same pedal but built by a different supplier."

He said he did not have the number of complaints and no mileage information of when the pedal mechanism starts to wear. "It's extremely rare, but it is a wear issue," Hanson said. "We wanted to get out in front of this."

Dealership trend

Hanson said all of the complaints came from the field.

Ralf Nilsen, parts manager at Piercey Toyota in Milpitas, Calif., said his dealership has not received any complaints of unintended acceleration.

He added that Toyota has full-time quality control employees who visit all Toyota dealerships on a regular basis. "That's his job to catch problems before they become big problems," he said. "He's Toyota's eyes in the field."

Dave Conant, a Toyota dealer in the Los Angeles region, noted that in the first recall, Toyota is reshaping the pedal to prevent the floor mat from entrapping it. He said the second recall may be more complicated and may involve re-engineering.

On Jan. 11 at the Detroit auto show, Yoshi Inaba, president of Toyota North America Inc., said the company will install a brake override system on all new Toyota, Lexus and Scion vehicles beginning this month.

He said the new system and reshaped pedals "absolutely" should resolve the problem of unintended acceleration. "We must be closer to the market," he said. Every day is a lesson. This is one we learned the hard way."

Hanson says the company does not yet have a remedy for the second recall. "We're working on a fix," he said. "We found a trend we don't like."

Reuters and Neil Roland contributed to this report



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