

# Ford issues safety recall for 4.6 million vehicles

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## Faulty cruise control switch systems can cause engine fires.

From the Associated Press

Owners of about 4.6 million Ford vehicles were warned Thursday to bring their cars and trucks to dealerships immediately so that cruise control switch systems that might cause engine fires could be disconnected.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is-

sued the consumer advisory to owners of certain unrecalled Ford, Lincoln and Mercury sport utility vehicles, pickup trucks, vans and passenger cars who have not responded to past recalls.

The recalls have affected Ford Motor Co.'s popular F-Series pickups, prompting hundreds of complaints and dozens of lawsuits over engine fires. Three deaths have been tied to the fires and Ford has struggled to produce enough parts to fix the problem.

An estimated 9.6 million Ford vehicles have been recalled since 1999 and about

5 million have been fixed, raising concerns about the remaining vehicles on the road. The federal agency said it has received about 60 complaints of engine fires in the Ford vehicles since August.

Dearborn, Mich.-based Ford said it supported the action and that its dealers would soon offer a more permanent fix.

"We absolutely want everybody to come in as soon as they can because we can eliminate the risk of fire for anyone with a vehicle in this recall," said company spokesman Wes Sherwood. He said Ford would have

an "ample supply" of the replacement parts by June.

Many dealers will disconnect the cruise control switch as a drive-through service so owners do not have to leave their vehicles at the dealership or schedule an appointment, the NHTSA said.

Dealers have installed a fused wiring harness into the speed control electrical system as part of the recall, but replacement parts have not been widely available. Owners can take their vehicle to a dealer to have the cruise control deactivated until the parts arrive.

A complete list of vehicles

covered by the recall is available at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov).

The Ford recalls have run into problems. This month, the automaker recalled about 225,000 vehicles that had already been repaired because some wiring harnesses appeared to be defective.

Ford also faces more than 100 lawsuits nationwide because of fires linked to the cruise control deactivation switch. Many owners have alleged the fires began after the vehicles were turned off, and there have been three deaths attributed to that problem in Arkansas, Georgia and Iowa.

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