

BRIDGESTONE FIRESTONE NORTH AMERICAN TIRE, LLC

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FIRESTONE TO TAKE NEW, ADDITIONAL STEPS TO RECOVER RECALLED TIRES

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (July 21, 2006) – Notwithstanding a recovery rate that exceeded 95% of the tires anticipated to be in service at the time, in an effort to try to recover the small percentage of tires that may still remain in the marketplace following the August 2000 voluntary tire recall and October 2001 voluntary replacement program, Firestone will take action to again reach out to consumers, urging them to replace the small number of recalled tires that may still be in use. In the six years since the recall, the company has continued to replace affected tires and has reached out to drivers through its stores, dealers and media campaigns to raise awareness and educate consumers on how to get their tires replaced free of charge.

The Firestone voluntary tire recall in 2000 and the voluntary replacement program in 2001 were among the most effectively administered automotive product safety recalls in history and were supported by comprehensive advertising and consumer outreach campaigns. Of the 6.5 million tires estimated to be on the road at the time, over 6.3 million were recovered.

“Despite these efforts and the success of these two programs, recall campaigns rarely recover 100 percent of the products involved,” said Mike Kane, vice president, Quality Assurance, Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC. “Consequently, even though there are only a small percentage of these tires believed to be still in use, we are continuing to put safety first and are implementing this communications campaign to try to reach out to a group of consumers whose tires have not yet been recovered.”

The company will be taking the following actions:

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- **Sending letters to current registered owners of Ford Explorer, Mercury Mountaineer - and Mazda Navajo SUVs** located in the United States, U.S. territories, Puerto Rico and Canada, as many of these vehicles were originally equipped with the affected tires. The letters urge consumers to check their tires, including the spare position, to determine if they have a tire covered in either program and to get those tires replaced free of charge at any Firestone Complete Auto Care, ExpertTire, Tires Plus, Hibdon Tire and Wheel Works locations or any participating authorized Firestone dealer. The simplest and most reliable way for a consumer to determine if they have a tire covered by either program is to take their vehicle to a convenient Firestone Complete Auto Care, ExpertTire, Tires Plus, Hibdon Tire or Wheel Works location or any participating authorized Firestone dealer for a free inspection. Consumers can call 1.800.465.1904 for the location of the nearest participating store (1.877.287.2368 in Puerto Rico).
- **Sending letters to every Firestone company-owned store as well as participating authorized Firestone dealers** to provide these retailers with another reminder to look for these tires, to regularly check the spare position, to alert consumers if they have an affected tire, and to replace, mount and balance that tire free of charge.

The 2000 voluntary safety recall and the 2001 voluntary replacement program applied to P235/75R15 Radial ATX and Radial ATX II tires, and certain P235/75R15 and P255/70R16 Wilderness AT tires, most of which were supplied as original equipment on Ford Explorer, Mercury Mountaineer or Mazda Navajo vehicles. The programs included consumers in the United States, U.S. territories, Puerto Rico and Canada. To determine if a tire is subject to either of the programs, consumers can look for the name, size and DOT serial number on their tires. The serial number is located on either the inside or outside of the tire in the lower sidewall area near the wheel and is preceded by the letters "DOT." The following tires are covered by these programs:

<u>Brand Name</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>DOT Serial Numbers</u>
Radial ATX	P235/75R15	Any
Radial ATX II	P235/75R15	Any
Wilderness AT	P235/75R15	All numbers beginning with "VD"
Wilderness AT	P235/75R15	Numbers beginning with "HY", W2," or "VN" if the tire was manufactured before May 1998 (please see a retailer for them to determine the date the tire was manufactured)
Wilderness AT	P255/70R16	Numbers beginning with "HY", W2," or "VN" if the tire was manufactured before May 1998 (please see a retailer for them to determine the date the tire was manufactured)

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The simplest way for a consumer to confirm whether a tire is covered by either program is to take their vehicle to a convenient Firestone Complete Auto Care, ExpertTire, Tires Plus, Hibdon Tire or Wheel Works location or any participating authorized Firestone dealer for a free inspection. Consumers can call 1.800.465.1904 for the location of the nearest participating store (1.877.287.2368 in Puerto Rico).

“We are proud of our ongoing efforts to educate consumers about tire safety and to get these affected tires off the road,” Kane said. “With the enormous amount of publicity surrounding these programs, the excellent recovery rate of these tires, and the fact that with the passage of time many more of these tires have simply been taken out of service for wear and other issues, we believe we are talking about a very small percentage of affected tires remaining in the field. But we are committed to reaching out to these consumers to get the remaining tires off the road.”

About Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC:

Nashville-based Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc., whose parent company, Bridgestone Corporation, is the world's largest tire and rubber company. BFNT develops, manufactures and markets Bridgestone, Firestone, Dayton and associate brand tires. The company is focused on wholesale and original equipment markets, supplying passenger, light truck, commercial vehicle, off-road, motorcycle, agricultural and other tires to its customers in North America.

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