

Ford to fix coolant leaks in vehicles recalled for fire risk

January 3 2018, by Tom Krisher

Ford says it will repair any coolant leaks that might be found in more than 200,000 recalled vehicles that are at risk of catching fire.

The repairs, detailed in company documents posted by U.S. safety regulators in December, come 10 months after the company said it would only install a coolant level sensor "with supporting hardware and software."

In March, the automaker announced that it would recall the cars, SUVs and vans because their 1.6-liter turbocharged engines can overheat if coolant gets low, causing the cylinder head to crack and spew oil. At the time, Ford had reports of 29 engine fires with no injuries.

Ford Motor Co.'s March press release and recall documents filed with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration did not mention fixing any leaks but the company now says that was its plan all along.

In a Dec. 13 letter to dealers, Ford said mechanics should check the cars for coolant leaks, and if they find any concerns, they should make repairs that include hose replacements, a new valve and other parts. They'll also replace the coolant reservoir tank and cap if needed, reprogram control software and update messages that are sent to the dashboard. The repairs will be part of the recall, the letter stated.

NHTSA said in a December statement that it "has been in touch with Ford throughout the recall process and the remedy includes hardware

and software updates. Affected owners should take action to get the free [repair](#)."

Experts say a healthy engine should not leak or consume [coolant](#), which is often called anti-freeze and is circulated through the [engine](#) to regulate the temperature.

In North America, the recall includes Escape SUVs from the 2014 model year, plus the 2014 and 2015 compact Fiesta ST, the 2013 and 2014 Fusion midsize car and the 2013 through 2015 Transit Connect small van. Ford also conducted similar recalls in Europe and China.

The December letter to dealers said parts are available for Escapes but will not be ready for the other vehicles until January or February.

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