

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Fontaine International Warns of Potential Danger from Non-OE Parts

Irondale, Ala. (April 24, 2008) – Fontaine International has issued an advisory to warn customers about potential hazards from using non-genuine components, specifically the movable locking jaw and wedge, on their Fontaine No-Slack® line of fifth wheels.

Multiple fleets have reported failures of non-genuine replacement parts installed in Fontaine No-Slack fifth wheels, resulting in dropped trailers. All of the failures were caused by the non-genuine part's locking wedge stud falling out.

While the Genuine Fontaine locking wedge and stud are forged as a single piece, studs on the failed non-genuine parts were just glued in. (See photos.) Tests performed by an independent laboratory found that the aftermarket parts were also 25 percent softer than Genuine Fontaine Parts, resulting in premature wear.

The cost difference between the Genuine Fontaine kit (part number KIT-RPR-6000L) and the non-genuine version is about \$20.

“In this challenging economic environment, it is natural for fleets to try to cut costs wherever possible,” says Roger Crawford, president of Fontaine Parts Connection. “But no one wants to jeopardize the safety of their drivers and innocent people on the road. Clearly, all replacement fifth wheel parts are not created equal, so why take the risk?”

Fontaine advises that in addition to creating a potentially dangerous situation, using non-genuine components on its fifth wheels voids the manufacturer's warranty, transferring all liability to the component seller and end-user. The non-genuine locking jaw and wedge kits that caused the dropped trailers were imported from China and sold by a number of companies.

Genuine Fontaine No-Slack parts are easily identified. They have “Fontaine” and the model number forged into the jaw and wedge. They are sold in small brown boxes imprinted “Genuine Fontaine Parts.”

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“In some cases, customers did not realize they had been sold non-genuine parts,” Crawford explains. “We suggest that parts managers and technicians take a look at all parts before installing them, to confirm that they are genuine.”

The “Fontaine No-Slack Non-Genuine Parts Advisory” is posted on Fontaine’s home page at www.fifthwheel.com/ffw.html.

For more information about Fontaine International and its full line of fifth wheels or the complete line of Genuine Fontaine Parts available from Fontaine Parts Connection, visit www.fifthwheel.com or call (800) 874-9780.

About Fontaine

Based in Irondale, Ala., Fontaine International, Inc. is the world’s largest fifth wheel manufacturer. It has ISO 14001 registered manufacturing facilities worldwide.

Fontaine is a Marmon Highway Technologies (MHT) company. MHT companies support the transportation industry worldwide with a wide range of high-quality products and services.

MHT companies are members of The Marmon Group, an international association of more than 125 business units that operate independently within diverse business sectors. Member companies have combined revenues of \$7 billion. The Marmon Group is a Berkshire Hathaway company.

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Editor’s Note: Please see photos.



Caption: Numerous fleets have reported failures of non-genuine replacement parts installed in Fontaine No-Slack® fifth wheels, resulting in dropped trailers. The non-genuine components, including the failed wedge, are shown in the photo with the red background. Genuine Fontaine parts are shown in the photo with the green background.