

## Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC

535 Marriott Dr.  
P.O. Box 140990  
Nashville, Tennessee 37214

November 1, 2008

To: Bridgestone Firestone Consumer Tire Dealers and BFS Retail & Commercial Operations (BFRC)

Subject: **Recall of Firestone FR380 P235/75R15 and LeMans Champion SE P235/75R15 Tires**

Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC (BFNT) will initiate a recall of 135,310 Firestone FR380 P235/75R15 and 26,941 LeMans Champion SE P235/75R15 tires that do not meet our internal standards. Specifically, these tires were produced with insufficient tread base gauge. Continued use of these tires may lead to vibration and groove cracking. Extended use could potentially lead to tread distortion or tread separation and possible loss of control. We are committed to quality and focused on safety and want to urge consumers to get these tires replaced free of charge.

Through March 31, 2009, authorized BFNT Consumer Tire Dealer locations and BFRC store locations will administer the tire inspection and, if necessary, tire replacement at no charge to the customer.

### **I. REASON FOR THE RECALL**

BFNT has determined that 135,310 Firestone FR380 P235/75R15 and 26,941 LeMans Champion SE P235/75R15 tires produced at the Bridgestone Firestone de Costa Rica, S.A. plant (BFRCR) do not meet our internal standards.

<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Tire</u></b>	<b><u>Article No.</u></b>	<b><u>DOT Serial Numbers</u></b>
Firestone FR380	P235/75R15	098-361	WBHL3802306 - WBHL3803507 <b>OR</b> WBUL3802306 - WBUL3803507
LeMans Champion SE P235/75R15		103-217	WBHLLC02306- WBHLLC03506

### **II. SERVICE ACTION REQUIRED BY BFRC STORES AND AUTHORIZED BFNT CONSUMER TIRE DEALER LOCATIONS**

- 1) **FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS THE REUSE OR RESALE OF RECALLED TIRES, AND VIOLATORS ARE SUBJECT TO FINES OF UP TO \$100,000 PER TIRE.** If you have not already done so, check your current NEW tire inventory. If you have tires that meet the above description and are within the DOT week and year ranges (FR380 DOT weeks 2306 through 3507 and LeMans DOT weeks 2306 through 3506), return the tires to your servicing BFNT distribution center. Contact BFRC Inventory Service or BFNT Customer Service and request that an RGA (Return Goods Authorization) be issued.
- 2) Customers who have been identified as potential purchasers of the subject tires will be sent a letter requesting that they check all tires fitting the above description to determine whether the tire is included in this action. Customers will also be instructed to examine the sidewall of their tires to determine if the DOT serial numbers are in the series of numbers shown above. Customers who are unable to determine whether their tires are part of this campaign have been instructed to check the telephone yellow pages for company owned locations or Firestone independent tire dealers. In addition, customers may use the web-based store locator [www.firestonetire.com](http://www.firestonetire.com) or call the Replacement Hotline at 1-800-465-1904 for assistance in locating a servicing location. The letter will explain that the store or dealer location, at no cost to the customer, will examine the tires to determine if they are subject to this campaign.
- 3) When a consumer brings a vehicle in for inspection in connection with this campaign, the store or dealer location must inspect all tires (including the spare) to determine whether the tire and DOT serial numbers are an exact match as indicated above. Please make sure to closely check each tire.
  - A. Tire Size: P235/75R15 105S
  - B. Tire Lines: Firestone FR380 or LeMans Champion SE
  - C. If the DOT serial numbers are not included in the series shown above, the tires are not a part of this recall.
  - D. If the DOT serial numbers are included in the series shown above, the tires are part of this recall and they must be replaced immediately.
- 4) The recalled tires must be replaced with similar tires that are appropriate for the vehicle. The only authorized replacement tires are listed on the attached page (Attachment #1). Do not assume that the recalled tire is the appropriate tire for the vehicle. Check the owner's manual for the appropriate tire fitment.
- 5) Mix of tire replacement options when 1 to 3 recalled tires are on the vehicle:
  - If all 4 tires on the vehicle are FR380 or LeMans Champion SE:
    - 1 or 2 recalled tires on vehicle – replace with 2 new tires and move the 2 existing non-recalled tires to the front-axle.
    - 3 recalled tires- replace all 4 tires with new tires.

- If the 4 tires on the vehicle are a mix of different patterns or brands:
  - 1 or 2 recalled tires on vehicle – replace with 2 new tires and move the 2 existing different pattern or brand tires to the front-axle.
  - 3 recalled tires- replace all 4 with new tires.
- 6) With respect to cross axle replacement or for an all-wheel-drive vehicle, please follow the vehicle owner’s manual recommendations for worn tire replacement.
- 7) BFNT has stated that the recalled tires will be replaced at no charge to the customer through March 31, 2009.

### **III. PROCEDURE FOR TIRES REMOVED FROM SERVICE**

- Tires which are subject to this campaign will be replaced at no charge to the customer through March 31, 2009.
- All Firestone FR380 P235/75R15 and LeMans Champion SE P235/75R15 tires removed from service under this program must be rendered unserviceable within 24 hours, per NHTSA regulations. “Unserviceable” means the tires are not capable of holding air. Accordingly, a hole must be drilled in the sidewall of the tire or it must be disabled in another comparable fashion.
- The tires will be processed as no charge tire adjustments using “RECALL” as the reason for adjustment in the POS system or listing the word “RECALL” as the reason for adjustment on the BFNT Limited Warranty Form.
- All normal tire warranty adjustment procedures will also apply to any tires replaced under this recall.
- The customer should have received a postage paid Tire Recall Notice Reply Card in the customer letter that was mailed by BFNT. If the customer has that card, please complete the card and mail it for the customer.

### **IV. PHOTO EXAMPLES**

For your assistance in identifying the tires that are subject to this campaign, we have included the photographs found below. The first photograph below shows the full 11 digit DOT lettering and stamping on the line-white sidewall side of the FR380 recalled tire. On the LeMans Champion SE tire, the full 11 digit DOT will be on the black sidewall. The second photograph shows the size stamping in the lower bead area of a tire subject to this campaign. The third photograph shows the size stamping on the line-white sidewall side of a recalled tire.

#### **PHOTO #1: SAMPLE DOT SERIAL NUMBER – RECALLED TIRE**



**PHOTO #2: P235/75R15 SIZE STAMPING IN LOWER BEAD AREA**



**PHOTO #3: SAMPLE OF THE LINE-WHITE SIDEWALL SIDE**



Thank you for your assistance,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Baratta'.

John Baratta  
President  
Consumer Replacement Tire  
Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC

**Attachment #1**

**APPROVED REPLACEMENT TIRE LINES**

The recalled tires can only be replaced with the below listed authorized replacement tires lines. Do not assume the recalled tire is the appropriate tire for the vehicle. Check the owners manual for the appropriate fitment as certain vehicles require extra load tires or A/T pattern tires.

**Firestone Brand:**

FR380

Destination LE

Destination A/T

**Primewell Brand:**

PS850

**LeMans Brand:**

Pathmaker H/T

Pathmaker A/T

**Dayton Brand:**

Timberline H/T II

Timberline A/T II

**Gillette Brand:**

Kodiak H/T II

Kodiak A/T II

**Peerless Brand:**

Widetrack Baja H/T

Widetrack Baja A/T