REUTERS

sponsored by

UPDATE 1-Toyota to recall floor mats in '07 Lexus. Camrys

Wed Sep 26, 2007 12:39pm EDT

(Recasts; adds vehicle numbers, defect investigation)

WASHINGTON, Sept 26 (Reuters) - Toyota Motor Corp (7203.T: Quote, Profile, Research)(TM.N: Quote, Profile, Research) will recall "all-weather" floor mats used in 2007 Lexus ES 350 and Camry vehicles due to complaints that they can slip forward and trap the accelerator pedal, U.S. highway regulators said on Wednesday.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration also urged drivers of other Toyota vehicles, including the Prius and Avalon hybrids, to check the accessory mats to ensure they are properly installed.

The recall involves more than 30,000 mats for the ES 350 and more than 24,000 mats for the Camry.

Highway safety investigators concluded no defect with the product. The problem occurs when the all-weather mats are placed on top of standard mats. Stacking prevents the top mat from being secured properly, allowing it to slip forward and possibly cause unintended acceleration.

NHTSA data show 40 complaints believed to be related to the problem. There were seven crashes and 12 injuries due to unintended acceleration. Unsecured floor mats were found in the majority of vehicles involved in crashes, NHTSA said.

In some reports, drivers traveled for miles and reached speeds exceeding 90 miles per hour before the car stopped, safety officials said.

In April, Toyota acknowledged some of the complaints were probably related to improper installation of floor mats. The manufacturer said it had alerted vehicle owners and described label changes on floor mat packaging that highlighted proper installation.

The company told safety authorities at the time that those steps should resolve the problem.

© Reuters 2006. All rights reserved. Republication or redistribution of Reuters content, including by caching, framing or similar means, is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Reuters. Reuters and the Reuters sphere logo are registered trademarks and trademarks of the Reuters group of companies around the world.

Reuters journalists are subject to the Reuters Editorial Handbook which requires fair presentation and disclosure of relevant interests.