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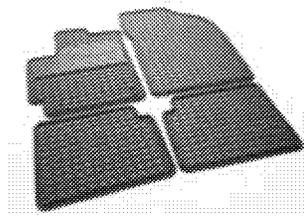
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Toyota, Lexus Dealers Will Inspect Floor Mats After Tragic Accident

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Posted: Sep. 17, 2009 10:09 a.m.



Toyota dealers nationwide have been ordered to inspect floor mats in all of their cars after a California Highway Patrol Officer and three members of his family were killed in a horrifying high-speed traffic accident apparently caused by a mismatched floor mat.

USA Today reports, "Toyota Motor Sales USA planned to issue an order Wednesday to about 1,400 Toyota and Lexus dealers nationwide to make sure each of their new, used and loaner vehicles had the proper floor mats and that

the mats were properly secured, said Brian Lyons, a spokesman for the Torrance-based company. Customers who are concerned should also make sure they have the proper mats. "If there's any doubt in their mind about the security and shape of their mat," Lyons told reporters, owners should "go ahead and visit the dealer."

Kicking Tires explains, "It's believed a floormat caused an accident that killed four people in San Diego County after becoming snagged on the vehicle's gas pedal." Four people were riding in the Lexus ES350, which a dealer had loaned to the family while their own car was serviced. Crash investigators haven't released a final conclusion, but told reporters that a driver's-side all-weather floor mat found at the scene doesn't match the ES 350.

USA Today notes that the mismatched mat "could have snared or covered the accelerator pedal." A passenger in the car "called police about a minute before the crash to say the vehicle had no brakes and the accelerator was stuck." Investigators estimate that the Lexus was travelling more than 120 miles per hour "when it hit a sport-utility vehicle, launched off an embankment, rolled several times and burst into flames."

Bloomberg notes that this isn't the first time Toyota has heard of a similar issue. "Toyota in 2007 recalled 55,000 Camrys and Lexus ES 350s in the U.S. to replace floor mats that it said could slip forward and snag the gas pedal, causing uncontrolled acceleration." The 2009 ES350 involved in the California accident was not covered by that recall.

Drivers trapped in a car with the accelerator stuck have several, very limited options. Toyota's Lyons told USA Today, "The driver could have put the car in neutral to disengage the engine from the automatic transmission." He "also could have turned off the electronically keyed car by holding down the start switch for three seconds, but that could have locked the steering wheel, turned off the headlights and cut power-assist to the brakes, Lyons said."

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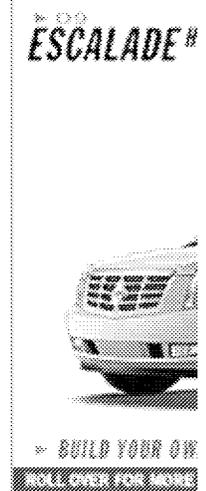
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I doubt this is just a floor mat issue. I had a harrowing experience when I rented a fairly new Toyota Corolla in SF in 2004. The brakes were delayed and not responsive at all. Even if the car did not have ABS, it would only slow down slightly despite stepping very hard on the brakes and only came to a stop when it hit another car. These are the cars that would keep on going... literally

writes:Posted: 2009-09-18 11:03:52 ([flag abuse](#))

do some research and you'll find if you want to buy american buy a Camry which has more parts built in the U.S. than any other and also assembled in the U.S. Robert, don't rest easy behind the wheel, our Camry is a 2009 4cyl. Layton, I believe surviving puts me one step closer to an expert. By the way it was in cruise control when it decided to take off and the car has floor mat pegs. I took the cruise control fuse out to reset it. The 20/20 hindsight ideas for saving yourself and others are much easier except for the panicked person behind the wheel with seconds to react may still be trying to figure out what the heck is happening while trying to avoid others. Just glad I'm here and can share with you!

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 21:49:05 ([flag abuse](#))

Not sure why you think you are an expert on this "There is no way the floor mat caused this malfunction". It happened to my mother when i was in the car with her with a diff. brand car. Why do you think all new vehicles have securing point for the floor mats??? The floor mat slides up, you step on the gas pedal for a hard acceleration, and boom, the pedal passes the mat and then the mat holds it down. The driver should have had the sense to put his car in to neutral, or worse case, it is a rental, i'd have thrown that car into park before i let my family get killed.

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 18:51:37 ([flag abuse](#))

I had a 2008 Camry SE V6. That I had high idle/surging problems with. I had the Camry looked at 2x. The first time they told me it was the mats. The second time it happened it was at start up that the rpms "pegged" out. I checked the mats and they were not the issue. I took it to the dealer and they "didn't know". 3rd time it happened I was in the car by myself (mechanically inclined and aware of the mat issue). When it happened, I immediately grabbed the mat and the car continue to race to 110 mph before I put it in N and turn the engine off. Toyota needs to own up to this problem. The mats may cause some of the problems. At least with mine it was not the issue. I ended up trading it in for a 2009 4cyl. I hope nobody gets killed in my old car. However, it is a matter of time and I would love to testify.

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 14:21:51 ([flag abuse](#))

how about this tip: stop buying piece of s..t toyotas

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 14:06:46 ([flag abuse](#))

I've experienced the Toyota floor mats sliding on an older Corolla. Why Toyota doesn't secure their mats like Honda does, I have no idea!! I was able to dislodge the mat after I'd stuck the car in neutral. Since my Corolla was a manual, it was easy to pop into neutral.

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 14:06:36 ([flag abuse](#))

good job toyota.....-out of a job yet, keep buying foreign

writes:Posted: 2009-09-17 11:55:39 ([flag abuse](#))

I have experienced this feature first hand, the dealership has tried to convince me of the "floor mat" theory. There is no way the floor mat caused this malfunction, if it did then why didn't the motor govern itself with the brake depressed and the throttle stuck open. We were not killed because I turned the key off. Parked on the side of the road trying to restart the throttle remained stuck wide open and could have blown the engine if the key was not used, at some point it reset itself.

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