



Claims of Ford Explorer Owners to Proceed as Class Action in California

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San Francisco, CA ([PRWEB](#)) February 17, 2005 -- Ford Motor Company suffered another setback in its effort to defend the Explorer sport-utility vehicle. On February 8, 2005, the California Superior Court in Sacramento certified a class-action lawsuit pending against Ford, charging that it knew of a rollover defect in its Explorer SUVs that it concealed from consumers.

The class certified by the court generally includes persons who purchased or leased Ford Explorers in California during the period from 1990 through August 2000. According to evidence presented to the court, Ford sold over 440,000 Explorers in California during that time period. It was in August 2000 that Firestone initiated a recall of tires used on the Ford Explorer because of the large number of fatalities that occurred when Explorers rolled over after the tread separated from their tires. The plaintiffs allege that further investigation revealed that Ford had suggested underinflating the tires to conceal the Explorer's rollover problems.

In deciding to certify the class, the court found that it is extremely important to avoid inconsistent decisions where a course of conduct by one defendant affecting hundreds of thousands of plaintiffs is at issue.

Accordingly, the court ruled that determining all of the claims in one forum will result in a uniform decision applicable to members of the class and that substantial benefits will accrue to both the litigants and the court from this process. The court directed the parties to propose a form of notice that would be sent to potential class members notifying them of the court's decision. The case is entitled *In Re Bridgestone/Firestone Tire Cases I & II*, Judicial Counsel Coordinated Proceedings, NOS. 4266 and 4270, pending in the Superior Court of California for the County of Sacramento.

Ford's internal documents indicate that Ford ignored its engineers' advice that the Explorer SUV needed design revisions to prevent rollover accidents and fatal injuries, according to a Bloomberg news article of February 2, 2005. In 2004, Ford lost 2 Explorer rollover cases at trial, including a verdict in San Diego of \$150 million, after reduction by the trial judge, and a \$5.3 million verdict in Fort Myers, Florida. In addition to the California class action case, there are about two dozen trials claiming defects in Explorers that are set to take place this year.

About Green Welling

Along with co-counsel, Green Welling LLP represents the named plaintiff in the lead action of the California Ford Explorer cases. Green Welling, a national class action law firm based in San Francisco, California, represents plaintiffs in product liability cases like the Ford Explorer litigation, as well as plaintiffs in consumer and financial actions, securities lawsuits, derivative cases and antitrust actions. If you wish to discuss this action with us or have any questions concerning a potential class action, please contact Robert Green or Jenelle Welling by email at gw@classcounsel.com or visit our website at www.classcounsel.com.

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