



Toyota Extends Scope of Runaway-Acceleration Recall

Written On December 2, 2009 By [Bob Kraft](#)

The [Los Angeles Times](#) reported, "Amid widening concern over acceleration events, Toyota has cited "floor mat entrapment." Reports, however, are pointing "to another potential cause: the electronic throttles that have replaced mechanical systems." The automaker "says the gas pedal design" in "more than 4 million...Toyota and Lexus vehicles makes them vulnerable to being trapped open by floor mats." Last week, Toyota "announced a costly recall to fix the problem." The article noted that "accounts from motorists...interviews with auto safety experts and a Times review of thousands of federal traffic safety incident reports all point to another potential cause: the electronic throttles that have replaced mechanical systems in recent years."

The [AP](#) reported, "As a temporary step, Toyota will have dealers shorten the length of the gas pedals beginning in January while the company develops replacement pedals for their vehicles," stated the US Transportation Department, adding that "new pedals will be available beginning in April, and some vehicles will have brake override systems installed as a precaution." According to the [Chicago Tribune](#), "the announcement dramatically expands the scope and likely expense of the recall, which was announced Sept. 29. Toyota initially had focused on the possibility that improperly installed floor mats might be causing the unintended acceleration problems, and it urged owners of affected vehicles to remove the mats until they could be replaced."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) reported, "It's unclear whether these steps will contain or reduce Toyota's legal exposure from lawsuits already filed. 'It helps in that it looks like they're trying to do something,' said Carl

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Tobias, a University of Richmond law professor specializing in product liability law. 'In the end, it comes down to: When did the company know about the issue and did it take action voluntarily?'"

From the American Association for Justice press release.

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