TOWABLES FOR 2003
The following information is intended to help motorhome owners select a vehicle that is approved by its manufacturer for flat towing. The information was gathered from automobile manufacturers and owners manuals and pertains only to model-year 2003 vehicles. The information may or may not be correct for earlier or later models. While every attempt has been made to present accurate information, keep in mind that continued vehicle improvements and production-line changes could alter the information and render it out of date.

You win some; you lose some. That seems to be a good summary of what happened with this year’s list of vehicles that manufacturers have indicated can be towed four wheels down without significant modifications. The 2003 list includes several new models, but also a few noticeable absences from previous surveys. Nevertheless, motorhomers searching for a new towed vehicle still have more than 100 models from which to choose.

Several new four-wheel-drive vehicles make their debut on this year’s list: the Hummer H2, a heavily advertised and pricey smaller version of the full-sized H1; Subaru’s smallish pickup truck, the Baja; and the Isuzu Ascender. Other additions include Nissan’s revival of the sporty Z car; the Ford Mustang; Dodge’s heavy-duty 2500 and 3500 pickups; Suzuki’s Aerio and XL-7 models; and Infiniti’s G35 Sport Coupe, which replaces the G20.

Joining the CR-V in Honda’s towable lineup for 2003 are two new offerings: the uniquely designed Element and the Pilot midsize SUV. The Acura MDX also remains on the list.

Owners manuals for other Honda vehicles still advise against towing at more than 35 mph or for more than 50 miles. However, Honda officials note that this recommendation exists primarily because the company has not conducted formal towing tests of its cars at higher speeds or for greater distances. Honda officials have indicated that they are not aware of any problems caused by towing a Honda automobile with either manual or automatic transmission, as long as proper towing preparations are made and the vehicle is towed at legal highway speeds. Instructions for towing are available in the Owner Line section of Honda’s Web site — www.honda.com — and should be available from a Honda dealer or by calling Honda customer service at (800) 999-1009.

Saturn, one of the most popular towed vehicles among FMCA members, discontinued the original S-Series cars for 2003 and introduced the ION. Only IONs equipped with the five-speed manual transmission can be towed; those with the variable-speed automatic transmission cannot. The VUE, Saturn’s second-year SUV, also is towable only when equipped with a manual transmission. L-Series Saturos still use continued
the Hydra-Matic 4T40-E automatic transmission and are approved for flat towing, as are those
equipped with manual transmissions.

Last year General Motors announced that it was retiring its venerable Oldsmobile division.
While the production of several Olds vehicles ceased in 2002, the Alero was not one of them.
Since that model is not slated to end until after the 2004 model year, it's still on the towable list.

The most substantial loss this year occurred when Mitsubishi decided that it will no longer
approve any of its vehicles for flat towing, eliminating nine models from the list. The Mercury
Mountaineer and the Kia Sportage also were removed, along with all Volvo models, which actu-
ally were stricken from last year's list shortly after it was published.

Surveys indicate that nearly 90 percent of FMCA members tow a vehicle behind their motor-
home. While some members use a trailer or a tow dolly, most choose to flat tow; that is, the towed
vehicle is connected to the motorhome with a tow bar and has all four wheels on the ground.

Before purchasing or towing a vehicle, find out from the dealer, manufacturer, and/or the
owners manual how towing will affect the vehicle's warranty. Also, keep in mind that while a
manufacturer may say a certain vehicle can be towed without significant modifications, what is
"not significant" to one person may be burdensome to another.

Before you make your purchase, consult the vehicle owners manual for specific towing pro-
cedures, such as ignition lock position, accessories, possible towing restrictions or limitations,
and other items of concern. This information often is listed in the owners manual under a head-
ing such as "Recreational Towing." You also might ask the dealer representative whether any
service bulletins have been released that relate to towing the vehicle behind a motorhome. Make
sure the person with whom you are speaking realizes you are talking about towing the vehicle
and not using it to tow a trailer. Also, when consulting the owners manual, do not confuse recre-
ational towing with emergency towing. Some vehicles can be towed four wheels down for emer-
gency purposes only.

Before purchasing a towed vehicle, weigh it if possible. The following list includes the
approximate curb weights as supplied by the manufacturers; however, optional equipment and
accessories can increase the weight of the vehicle. It is also a good idea to weigh your motor-
home (see “Understanding RV Weights,” page 78, April 2000). Because of overloading issues,
some motorhomes should not tow anything. In fact, certain motorhomes may need to have their
loads lightened before being driven solo.

You should also consult your motorhome’s owners manual for requirements and information
regarding the use of auxiliary braking systems on the towed vehicle. Some chassis, motorhome,
and automobile manufacturers recommend that supplemental brakes be used on any towed
vehicle. Not all jurisdictions mandate brakes on towed vehicles, but the laws of physics always
apply. Few drivers would consider towing a load of bricks on a trailer that was not equipped with
brakes, but some people tow a 3,000-pound vehicle without supplemental brakes. Of course, the
brakes on the motorhome cannot tell the difference between 3,000 pounds of bricks and 3,000
pounds of vehicle. Most of us have never heard a driver say the brakes on a motorhome stop it
too quickly. Nevertheless, many of us have seen what happens when brakes don’t work quick-
ly enough.

The most important issue we face as we operate our motor coaches is safety. That means the
initial installation of the towing equipment should be done by knowledgeable, qualified, and
experienced personnel. After installation, it’s imperative that all equipment be checked fre-
cently and used only in the manner for which it was designed.

As with other mechanical gear, proper maintenance can increase the lifetime of towing equip-
ment. However, there comes a time when the equipment must be replaced to prevent a danger-
ous situation. Frequent inspections will alert you to the need.

When hooking up the towed vehicle, do not let yourself be distracted. We’ve all heard stories
of someone who had a weld break or who forgot to connect safety chains but was fortunate
enough that nothing had happened. Others were not so lucky, and they know that the personal
and financial costs of a towing mishap can be enormous.

There is no single best way or best vehicle to tow. Each vehicle and method has advantages
and disadvantages. If a vehicle you already own or wish to purchase cannot be flat towed, trail-
er towing is an option, and it may be possible to tow it on a dolly or have adaptations made to
the vehicle to render it towable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Transmission</th>
<th>Drive Configuration</th>
<th>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</th>
<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dakota 4x2</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dakota 4x4</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Durango 4x4</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neon SE/SXT/RT</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>65/None</td>
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<td>Ram 1500 4x2</td>
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<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Ram 1500 4x4</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Ram 2500 4x4</td>
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<td>Ram 3500 4x2</td>
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<td>SRT-4</td>
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<td>Stratus Coupe SE</td>
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<td>Stratus Coupe RT</td>
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### FORD

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<td>Escape 4x4</td>
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<td><em>Explorer 4-door 4x4</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Explorer Sport 4x2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Explorer Sport 4x4</strong></td>
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<td>Explorer Sport Trac 4x2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Explorer Sport Trac 4x4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>****F-250/350 4x4</td>
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<td>Focus</td>
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<td>Mustang</td>
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<td>Ranger 4x2</td>
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<td>Ranger 4x4</td>
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<td>ZX2</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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<td>2,478</td>
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</table>

*With dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #1L2J7H332-AA).**

**Models with automatic transmissions require dealer-installed Neutral Tow Kit (part #3L2J7H332-AA).***

***Manual transfer case only (not electronic shift-on-the-fly 4x4). Requires that the center disconnect be locked out by capping off one of the front axle vacuum motor lines.**

****Manual transfer case only (not electronic shift-on-the-fly 4x4).**

### GMC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Description</th>
<th>Transmission Auto</th>
<th>Drive Configuration</th>
<th>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</th>
<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Envoy 4x4</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Envoy XL 4x4</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Sierra 4x4</td>
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<td>■</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yukon 4x4</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon XL 4x4</td>
<td>■</td>
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### HONDA

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<tr>
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<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>CR-V 4x2 LX</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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<td>CR-V 4x4 LX, EX</td>
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<td>■</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Element 4x2 DX, EX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Element 4x4 DX, EX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pilot LX, EX</td>
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### HUMMER

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<th>Model Description</th>
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<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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<td>H2</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Transmission</td>
<td>Drive Configuration</td>
<td>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</td>
<td>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accent</td>
<td>Auto Manual</td>
<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elantra</td>
<td>Auto Manual</td>
<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Fe 4x2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiburon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tiburon GT</td>
<td>Auto Manual</td>
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<td>3,015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
<td>55/None</td>
<td>4,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G35 Sport Coupe</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
<td>3,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*After towing 500 miles, idle the engine in “neutral” for several minutes to circulate fluids.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascender</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
<td>55/None</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Cherokee 4x4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberty 4x4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wrangler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovery</td>
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<td>Permanent 4WD</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>4,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range Rover</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Permanent 4WD</td>
<td>50 mph/6 hours</td>
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<td>Truck 4x2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Auto Manual</td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tribute DX 4x2</td>
<td>Auto Manual</td>
<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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<td>3,091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribute DX 4x4</td>
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### NISSAN

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<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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<td>350Z</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Frontier Crew Cab XE 4x2</td>
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<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frontier Crew Cab XE 4x4</td>
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<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xterra I4 XE 4x2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
<td>3,589</td>
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<tr>
<td>Xterra XE/SE 4x2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rear-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
<td>3,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xterra XE/SE 4x4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Four-wheel drive</td>
<td>60/500*</td>
<td>4,046</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*All Nissan vehicles: After towing 500 miles, idle the engine in “neutral” for several minutes to circulate fluids.*

### OLDSMOBILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Transmission Auto</th>
<th>Drive Configuration</th>
<th>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</th>
<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alero Coupe/Sedan</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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### PONTIAC

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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Transmission Auto</th>
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<th>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</th>
<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
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<td>Grand Am SE Sedan</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>65/None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Am GT Coupe/Sedan</td>
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<td>N/A Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>65/None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunfire</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>65/None</td>
<td>2,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibe (with 5-speed manual)</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
<td>65/None</td>
<td>2,701</td>
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### SATURN

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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Transmission Auto</th>
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<th>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</th>
<th>Approx. Curb Weight (lbs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>ION Coupe/Sedan</td>
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<tr>
<td>L-Series Sedan/Wagon</td>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Front-wheel drive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Transmission</td>
<td>Drive Configuration</td>
<td>Speed/Distance Limits (mph/mi.)</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUBARU</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baja</td>
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<td>All-wheel drive</td>
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<td>Forester 2.5 X/XS/XS Premium</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Outback Sport</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Stop towing after 200 miles and follow the manufacturer's instructions to circulate the oil in the transfer case and/or transmission.*

| **SUZUKI** | | | | | |
| Aerio Sedan S/GS | | Front-wheel drive | 55/200* | 2,641 |
| Aerio SX | | Front-wheel drive | 55/200* | 2,630 |
| Grand Vitara | | Four-wheel drive | 55/200* | 3,163 |
| Vitara 2-door | | Four-wheel drive | 55/200* | 2,800 |
| Vitara 4-door | | Four-wheel drive | 55/200* | 2,976 |
| XL-7 | | Four-wheel drive | 55/200* | 3,638 |

| **TOYOTA** | | | | | |
| Camry | | Front-wheel drive | None | 3,086 |
| Camry Solara (including convertible) | | Front-wheel drive | None | 3,075 |
| Celica | | Front-wheel drive | None | 2,425 |
| Corolla | | Front-wheel drive | None | 2,502 |
| Echo | | Front-wheel drive | None | 2,055 |
| Matrix 4x2 | | Front-wheel drive | None | 2,679 |
| MR2 Spyder | N/A | Rear-wheel drive | None | 2,195 |
| RAV4 2WD | | Front-wheel drive | None | 2,711 |