



U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

**Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire**  
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects  
1-888-DASH-2-DOT  
(1-888-327-4236)  
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 1367

Date Received: 2003 NOV 19 PM 4:22  
23-OCT-2003  
Reference No.: 2004586

Repository   
Reference No. 2004586

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name: [Redacted]  
Address: [Redacted]  
City: MADISON HEIGHTS State: MI Zip Code: [Redacted]

Director Telephone Number: [Redacted] E-mail Address: [Redacted]

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?  YES  NO  
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.  
Signature of Owner: [Redacted] Date: 11/15/2003

VEHICLE INFORMATION

T7 digit vehicle identification number located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 1B7HF16Y7V0554125  
Make: DODGE Model: RAM Model Year: 1997  
Date Purchased: 1/30/98 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: Bob Saks Dodge 248-478-0500  
Original Owner:  Dealer's City: Farmington Hills State: MI Zip Code: 48336 Engine: 8 Fuel Type: Gasoline (not diesel)  
Transmission Type: 4 Wheel drive/automatic  Antilock Brakes  Cruise Control Powertrain: 4-speed overdrive Automatic trans. Vehicle Component Code: 103000 POWER TRAIN: AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s): approx 9/30/03 Failure Mileage: 65000 Failure Speed: 35 Transmission failure (see notes below)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

The Make: [Redacted] The Model (Name or Number): [Redacted] Tire Size (Example P215/65R15): [Redacted]  
DOT No. (Example: DOTM1A9AC036)  Original Equipment  Prior Repair Failure Location: [Redacted]  
Tire Component Code: [Redacted] Tire Failure Type: [Redacted]

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make: [Redacted] Date Manufactured: [Redacted] Model No./Name: [Redacted]  
Seat Type: [Redacted] Installation System: [Redacted]  
Child Seat Component Code: [Redacted] Failed Part: [Redacted]

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident's Pathway, Cause(s), and Injury(ies).)

Crash  Yes  No Fire  Yes  No Number of Persons Injured: None Number of Deaths: None Reported to Police: N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

WHILE DRIVING AT 35-45 MPH VEHICLE SUDDENLY STOPPED ACCELERATING. THE VEHICLE FELT AS IF IT WAS IN NEUTRAL. TRANSMISSION BURNED FLUID, CAUSING IT TO FAIL. DEALERSHIP INDICATED THAT THIS WAS DUE TO THE COOLANT NOT CIRCULATING THROUGH THE TRANSMISSION WHEN VEHICLE WAS IDLING IN THE PARK GEAR. TRANSMISSION NEEDED TO BE REBUILT.\*AK

The above information is all correct and accurate except it was not the dealership who told me this was due to the coolant not circulating - it was a mechanics at the transmission repair shop (Multi-State). \*Receipts and copies of repair bills were sent to Chrysler along with the enclosed letter.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-502) This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Madison Hgts., MI

October 24, 2003

DaimlerChrysler  
Customer Service Assistance Center  
P.O. Box 21-8004  
Auburn Hills, MI 48321-8004

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Transmission Failure  
VIN # 1B7HF16Y7VJ554125

I own a 1997 Dodge Ram 1500 V-8 4x4 which I purchased new in January, 1998 from Bob Saks Dodge in Farmington Hills, Michigan. I am very disappointed because I recently had to have the transmission completely rebuilt --- after only 65,000 miles. The total cost of the repair was \$2,395.32. Considering the mileage on the truck and the fact that I take my truck *regularly* to the dealership for maintenance, I think this is completely unacceptable. I believe Chrysler has misrepresented itself.

I was told by two different mechanics that on all *rear-wheel drive* Chrysler vehicles if the engine is *running* and the shifter lever is set to 'PARK', the coolant does not circulate to the transmission. While I have always thought very highly of Chrysler products, I was quite disturbed by what I was hearing. Who doesn't warm their vehicles up each morning in the cold weather? Before I mailed this letter, I called the Consumer Protection Division and explained what had happened. They advised me to call the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's hotline to see if there were any recalls regarding the transmission. They found that there was a recall for the trans coolant connect, which I did have replaced (see enclosed copy of receipt). The fluid was checked before my truck was towed and it was thick and brown --- a result of being burnt. This was the ultimate cause of my transmission being ruined.

I think a fair resolution would be for Chrysler to reimburse me for at *least* half of the cost of the repairs to rebuild my transmission. Enclosed are copies of my receipts for *regular maintenance* as well as a copy of the bill to repair the transmission. I look forward to your reply and a resolution and I will wait until December 31st of this year (2003) before seeking help from the Consumer Protection Division or the Better Business Bureau.

Please contact me at the above address or by phone at [REDACTED] (office).

(home) [REDACTED]

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

Enclosures