



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

(1-888-327-4238)

INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

Date Received

2003 NOV -5 PM 12: 27

Od. or

rt_dt _____
od_rt _____
up_lr _____

Reference No.

10046538

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Street No.

Apt. No.

CITY **BELLINGHAM**

State **WASH**

Zip Code

Residing Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO
In the absence of _____ address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date

17 Oct 03

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Vehicle Identification No. (VIN)
(17 Digits)

(Located at bottom of
windshield on driver's side)

1MELM6ZV6VH6155RZ

Make

MERCURY

Model

COUGAR
30th ANN

Year

1997

Purchased Date

JULY 01

Dealer's Name

DALE SHARP INC DEALERSHIP

Engine Size
(CID/GCL)

4.6

Turbo

Diesel

Gas

Fuel Injection

New Used

Dealer's City

TOPEKA

State

KAN

Zip Code

66612

No. Cylinders

8

Manufacture Date
(on driver's door or pillar)

Transmission Type

Manual

Automatic

Restraint System

Driver's Air Bag

Motorbelt

Passenger's Air Bag

2-Point Belt

3-Point Belt

Cruise Control

Yes

No

Drivetrain

Front

Rear

4-Wheel

Vehicle Type

Car

Sport Utility

Van

Truck

Minivan

Motorcycle

Other

Body Style

2-Door

4-Door

Stationwagon

Pick Up Truck

Other

FRONT FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Part Name(s)

LOWER LEFT
BALL JOINT

Location

Left

Right

Front

Rear

Failed Part(s)

Original

Replacement

Handicap Adaptive Equip

Yes

No

N/A

TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Brand

N/A

Tire Name

Complete Tire Size

N/A

DOT No.

No. of Failures

Date(s) of Failure(s)

Mileage at Failure(s)

Vehicle Speed at Failure(s)

Failed Part(s)
Available?

Yes No

NHTSA Previously
Contacted?

Yes No

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies). Attach photos if available.)

Crash

Yes No

Fire

Yes No

Number of Persons Injured

0

Number of Fatalities

0

Reported to Manufacturer

Yes No

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).

Continue on back.

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-578 This information is requested pursuant to 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If 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.

Mail postage free or fax to 202-366-7882

18 Oct '03

RE: AUTO DESIGN

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

My 1997 Cougar (30th year Anniversary Model, VIN # 1MELM62W6VH615522) broke a left front lower ball joint after hitting a chuck-hole on Interstate 270 in Denver, Colo. on Saturday, 20th July '03. I was in Denver city limits traveling at approximately 25-30 mph changing from I 70 to I 270. I missed the first chuck-hole but the 2nd one got me. "Boom", the car stopped immediately, grinding to a halt.

I pulled over to the shoulder of the road and got out to inspect what had happened. The inside of the left wheel rim showed extensive grinding damage.

I got a tow truck & got towed to a small repair shop, who agreed to take on job (Sab-nite).

We raised car front-end up on jacks to further inspect problem. Didn't see any other damage evidence other than some tire wear - outside

left front tire & inside of right front tire.

Moved front tires to rear, & rear tires to front before I left repair shop. Car had no wobbles or vibrations when I returned to travel at midnight on interstate.

Factory publications claim no lubrication is needed for 100,000 miles.

Thus no grease zerks are on either ball joint, upper or lower, right or left side of auto.

I have had grease zerks installed as soon as I got back to Bellingham, Wash., my home, at my personal expense.

If this incident would have occurred out on country interstate at country interstate speeds, the results would have been very very different - disastrous for the auto, and most likely me personally.

This would not have happened under old Company policy of greasing friction points instead of cost cutting measures & thinking "Dam the Customer - Get their money & run."

Respectfully