



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 335

Date Received: 2004 FEB 19 AM 10:20
08-JAN-2004
Repository
Reference No. 10053692

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name: [Redacted]
Address: [Redacted]
City: ACWORTH State: GA Zip Code: [Redacted]

Daytime Telephone Number: [Redacted]
Evening 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 authorized signature, provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner: [Redacted] Date: 01/22/04

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 2MEFM76W71X688310
Make: MERCURY Model: GRAND MARQUIS Model Year: 2001
Date Purchased: 11-MAY-03 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: Jim Tidwell World Ford 770-427-5531 Engine: No. Cylinders: 8 Fuel Type: GAS
Original Owner: Dealer's City: Kennesaw, GA 30144 State: GA Zip Code: 30144
Transmission Type: Antilock Brakes Powertrain Vehicle Component Code: 060000 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING
 Cruise Control Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s): Failure Mileage: Failure Speed:

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make: Tire Model (Name or Number): Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)
DOT No. (Example: DOTM4LSABC038) Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location:
Tire Component Code: Tire Failure Type:

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

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

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

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

Crash: Yes No Fire: Yes No
Number of Persons Injured: Number of Deaths: 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).

WHEN STOPPING OR BRAKING VEHICLE SHUT OFF. TOOK VEHICLE TO DEALER, AND DEALER INDICATED THE WARRANTY EXPIRED. WILL NOT LOOK AT VEHICLE. *AK

Vehicle was under warranty when first incident started.

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 Act 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.

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

See Attached Letter

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use \$300



NO POSTAGE
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IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation, NVS-216
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590



**VEHICLE
OWNER'S
QUESTIONNAIRE**

DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE

TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS
COMPLETE THIS FORM
OR

DASH2DOT

and dial toll free at

1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
(DASH) & DOT



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Washington, D.C. 20590
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

Acworth, GA

January 14, 2004

Mr. William C. Ford, Jr., President
Ford Motor Company
16800 Executive Plaza Dr.
P.O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48121

Dear Sir:

I am hoping that you can intervene and help me with a problem I am having with one of your dealers.

Recently, I had the most disappointing experience that I have had in the more than ten years I have been a customer at Jim Tidwell World Ford in Marietta, Georgia. In May of 2003, I purchased a used 2001 Mercury Grand Marquis, VIN 2MEFM75W71X669310.

This past October, when the car had about 34,000 miles on it, and was still under factory warranty, I returned it to the dealer because it started skipping, lurching, and losing power at low speeds, such as in stop and go traffic, and going up hills at slow speeds. The Service department kept the car for a few days, and called to tell me that the problem had been taken care of. It wasn't—the car was doing the exact same thing before I got off the lot.

A few days later, I returned the car, they kept it a few days, and said they had repaired it. The explanation given was that the part they had replaced on the previous repair visit was defective. It still wasn't fixed. Actually, it ran worse than when I first brought it in. In addition to the skipping, now it was going dead.

During this time, the mileage turned over 36,000 miles, and the factory warranty expired. I discussed the expired warranty with the Service Advisor and he advised me that since the problem started while the car was still under factory warranty, the car would still be covered until the problem was fixed.

I returned the car to the dealer for the third time. The dealer kept it a week, and it runs worse now than it ever did. I wanted to bring it back in, but first I wanted to make sure they would still honor the original factory warranty, and that is where the problems started.

I talked to both the Service Manager and Service Assistant and they told me basically the same thing, that the car was now out of warranty and that I would have to pay for repairs.

I brought up the part where I was told that since the problem started while the car was under warranty, it would be repaired under warranty. Now, the Service Manager and Service Assistant have changed their tune and are telling me that this is a new problem. The claim they fixed the original problem while the car was still under factory warranty, and this is something new that has developed. Both the Service Manager and Service Assistant know that this is not true. They both know the car was never repaired, but will not admit it.

The reason I know this is because, when I first brought the car in, I was told that the diagnostic machine did not show a defect, but that a certain component would cause the problems I was having, so they would replace this component. Now, they have changed their story and claim the diagnostic computer did originally show a defect, and now that it doesn't, they have repaired the problem. That isn't what I was originally told.

The problem with the car isn't something new—in the three times they had my car in the shop, they never repaired the original problem. Each time they worked on it, it ran worse, and both the Service Assistant, Service Manager, and mechanic who worked on it know this.

My position is, the car was never repaired while it was still under the factory warranty, and since this is an ongoing problem that started when the car had about 34,000 miles on it, Ford is obligated to honor their warranty. I know this to be true, because, as mentioned earlier, the first time the car was in the shop, they replaced a component, but that did not fix the problem. The second time I brought the car in the service assistant said the replaced component was defective. It wasn't. The component they replaced wasn't what was wrong with the car. That is the reason the car is still not repaired.

A few days ago, I contacted the Ford Customer Relations Center and explained the problem. He contacted Jim Tidwell World Ford, but before he contacted them, I told him what they were going to say—that this is a new problem and, since the original warranty has expired, the car is not covered. That is exactly what the Service Manager told him, and he came back on the line and told me that there was nothing Customer Relations could do.

I did not call the Customer Relations Center to have him agree with the local dealer. I called Customer Relations to resolve a problem where I am being given false information and being given the run-around. It seems that if there is a conflict between a Ford dealer and a customer, Customer Relations is going to side with the dealer no matter the conditions or circumstances. That is what happened here.

You might say, well, it is your word against the dealer's. Yes it is, but I can back up my allegations. Everything the dealer did to this car is documented in your computer.

That is the reason I included the VIN, so that you check the records and see for yourself that the car was never repaired.

I am very dissatisfied and disappointed with the service I have received from this Ford dealership, and also the way the Service Manager has represented this dealership. I kept my end of the bargain when I bought and paid for the car, and now, the dealership will not honor their part of the contract.

Ford has been in business for about 100 years, but if they treated every customer the way I have been treated, you would never have had a repeat customer.

You are probably wondering why it has taken this long to get around to doing something. This problem started in October, and with the holidays coming up, I needed the car, and I didn't want to be making constant trips back and forth to the repair center during this time. The car doesn't run good, but it was usable during this time.

I knew the warranty was getting close to running out, but when the Service Assistant told me that the original problem started while the car was under warranty, the original warranty would carry over until the car was fixed. Now, after the warranty has expired, he is claiming the car was repaired while it was still under factory warranty.

What I actually want is the car repaired. The Service Manager said that I would have to pay for repairs, and I was agreeable to that, even though the repairs should have been covered under warranty. But, if I paid for repairs, I wanted a guarantee that the car would be fixed. I did not have any confidence that the car would be properly repaired, because it wasn't during the three previous attempts. The Service Manager would not guarantee the work. One reason given was that the mechanic would still have to be paid. I guess she meant that the mechanic would still get paid even if he didn't fix the car.

I also purchased an extended warranty before the original factory expired, and here is where it really, really gets complicated. I was told the extended warranty would not apply because the present defect might have occurred while the car was still under factory warranty, and that the extended warranty company would not pay for it. I told him that I was sure it did happen while the car was still under factory warranty, so fix it under that, and that is wasn't my fault they didn't find and repair the problem while it was still under factory warranty. They won't do that, either.

By their own admission, they know, from the above statement, that the original defect occurred while the car was under warranty.

This dealer has not been honest with me, nor have I been treated fairly. Had I know I would be treated this way, I would never have patronized this Ford dealer. As it stands now, the car is still skipping, lurching, going dead, losing power at low speeds, and runs worse than it ever has.

The car hasn't been fixed, because I am still trying to resolve the issue of whether the car will be repaired under the original factory warranty. As mentioned earlier, I would even pay for repairs, if I could have a guarantee that it would be repaired. The service department must not have any confidence in their work if they will not guarantee it.

I hope you can help me with this. Surely, it is not corporate policy to treat all Ford customers this way. Ford wouldn't still be in business if you treated everyone this way.

Sincerely,

