



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

Date Received

2004 JUL 15 PM 5:52

Oid_or _____

rt_dt _____

ad_rt _____

up_ltr _____

Reference No.

10082052

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Street No.

Apt. No.

City

Statesville

NC

Zip Code

Daytime 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 an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 07/02/04

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Vehicle Identification No. (VIN) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side)

1FMZU73W63

Make

Ford

Model

4-wheel drive Explorer XLT

Year

2003

Purchased Date

7-24-03

Dealer's Name

Jack Morris Ford Lincoln Toyota

Engine Size (CID/CC/L)

281

☐ Turbo☐ Diesel☒ Gas☐ Fuel Injection☒ New ☐ Used

Dealer's City

Plainview

State

TX

Zip Code

79872

Manufacture Date (on driver's door or pillar)

01/03

Transmission Type

☐ Manual☒ Automatic

Restraint System

☒ Driver's Side Air Bag☐ Motorized☒ Passenger's Side Air Bag☐ 2-Point Belt☐ 3-Point Belt

Cruise Control

☒ Yes☐ No

Drivetrain

☐ Front☐ Rear☒ 4-wheel

Vehicle Type

☐ Car☐ Van☐ Minivan☐ Other☒ Sport Utility☐ Truck☐ Motorcycle☐ Other

Body Style

☐ 2-Door☒ 4-Door☐ Station Wagon☐ Pick Up Truck☐ Other

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Part Name(s)

Too many to list - See attached

Location

☐ Left☐ Front☐ Right☐ Rear

Failed Part(s)

☒ Original☐ Replacement

Handicap Adaptive Equip

☐ Yes☐ No

TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Brand

Tire Name

Complete Tire Size

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

Number of Fatalities

Reported to Manufacturer

☐ Yes ☐ No

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

See attached copies of complaints, repairs regarding noise believed to be from rear. First told it was a rear suspension that would need to be replaced whenever assembly was manufactured. Now am awaiting a new axle assembly. Also transfer casing was replaced, along with leaking axle seals, bearings, etc.

Continued on back.

The Privacy Act of 1974 - Public Law 93-579 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 administration 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

July 2, 2004

Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Jimenez,

Thank you, so much, for your correspondence dated June 28th addressing my on-going problems with my Ford Explorer SUV. I have completed and returned the *Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire* as requested.

This has been an unbelievable experience. I have received mixed opinions on the rear suspension mechanism. To date bearings in the *front and rear* suspensions were replaced, the transfer casing assembly has been replaced, seals in the rear axle replaced due to leaks and now I'm awaiting an entirely new axle assembly to be replaced. As a reminder, I bought this vehicle brand new less than a year ago. A representative from Ford's headquarters has placed a few follow-up calls to me in an effort to assist, but has assured me that in no way was Ford willing to replace this malfunctioning vehicle. Their reasoning is that the service departments wouldn't allow me to drive something that wasn't safe, so I'm expected to be satisfied with driving a vehicle that isn't repaired and hope they are correct that it is still safe! Granted, once the rep from Ford called the service department who refused to address the problem when I took it back a second time, has now taken me more seriously. A mechanic ~~rode~~ with me, heard the noise and felt the shimmy and hence the order for the new axle assembly. If this doesn't repair the problem, I don't know what to do. There is no way I can financially afford to trade for another SUV of this size. Ford doesn't care - they have their \$34,000 for a vehicle that wasn't built safely.

Thank you for your help and for taking this problem seriously. If they have finally diagnosed this problem correctly, what would have happened when the axle assembly gave way?

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender.

Enclosure: Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
Copies of Paper Index

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**