



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

Repository ☐

2004 JUN 19
19-OCT-2004

Reference No.
10097109

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City SUN CITY CENTER

State FL

Zip Code 33573

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?
In the absence of a signature, your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 10-28-04

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

4UZAABVX2

Make

WINNEBAGO

Model

JOURNEY

Model Year

2002

Date Purchased
17-JUN-02

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine

No. Cylinders

Fuel Type:

6 cyl diesel

diesel

Original Owner

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

☐ Antilock Brakes

Powertrain

☐ Cruise Control

Vehicle Component Code

138120 VISIBILITY/DEFROSTER/DEFOGGER SYSTEM: WINDSHIELD W

Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)
18-JUN-2004

Failure Mileage
9080

Failure Speed
60 MPH

Heater Core

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: DOTM19ABC036)

☐ 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), condition(s), 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).

COMPLAINT RECEIVED VIA E-MAIL. * WHILE DRIVING ON INTERSTATE 81 WITH THE BOARD GENERATOR ON, WE NOTICED A FOUL ODOR COMING INTO THE COACH. SHORTLY AFTER A LOSS OF COOLANT THE DASH LIGHT CAME ON. WHEN I OPENED THE HOOD I FOUND THE HEATER CORE HAD SPRUNG A MAJOR COOLANT LEAK WHICH WAS SPRAYING HOT COOLANT ONTO THE HOT GENERATOR. I LATER LEARNED THIS SITUATION HAS EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO START A FIRE. WINNEBAGO AND THE COMPANY THAT BUILT THE HEATER CORE WILL NOT ASSIST IN ANY WAY WITH THIS MAJOR EXPENSIVE REPAIR. OTHER JOURNEY OWNERS I HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN DIFFERENT CAMP GROUNDS HAVE HAD SIMILAR PROBLEMS WITH THE HEATER CORE. I FEEL WINNEBAGO SHOULD SHARE SOME RESPONSIBILITY BOTH FROM A NEGLIGENCE AS WELL AS A POTENTIAL VERY DANGEROUS CONDITION EXISTING FROM POOR QUALITY CONTROL. THE PART IS \$75.00, BUT THE ENTIRE FRONT END OF THE COACH HAS TO BE REMOVED IN ORDER TO REACH THE HEATER CORE. THE REPAIR WILL BE IN THE THOUSANDS. * JB

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579) 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.

My letter to Winnebago

Winnebago Customer Service
946 South 4th Street
Forest City, Iowa 50436
October 4, 2004

Sun City Center Fl
Phone
Cell

Winnebago Journey 2002 Model 32TD
Vin 4UZAABVX2C
Serial number
Delivery Date 6-17-02
Speedometer reading on this date 9080 miles
Selling Dealer Lazy Days Sefer Florida

Dear Service Manager:

I am once again writing to give you a chance to step up to a very serious problem encountered this summer with the above coach. On June 18th of this year while driving our coach with the generator on as it was a very hot day we started to smell something getting very hot, shortly thereafter the low water light came on the dash. When I investigated the reason for the warning light, I noticed coolant spraying from the heater core directly on to the hot generator. A great chance for a fire existed here given the scenario I described. There is a major coolant leak in the heater core. The only way we could continue our trip was for me to insert a fitting into the heater hose bypassing the heater core & refilling the coolant tank with a 50-50 mixture.

I called your customer service number & was promptly told sorry, you are out of warranty. I then called SCS company the manufacturer of the heater core who were very familiar with the part number, price & availability of the new heater core & also told me they had made an improvement on the core by adding a flow restrictor, however no assistance could be offered here either.

Again I contacted Winnebago customer service to determine what type of a job it would be to replace the heater core. The reply was a full days job, at times by two mechanics as the entire front cap from top to bottom has to be removed in order to reach the heater core to replace it. Few dealers even want to think about taking on this job. This is a real engineering night mare & doesn't speak well of your advertised quality & customer satisfaction.

I am a retired factory Service Representative having worked many years at Chrysler & General Motors Corporation & am very familiar with warranties & warranty periods, however I am also familiar with special policy adjustments, customer good will adjustments, call them what you will, they do exist & I am asking for you to step up & help us with this very expensive repair. In over 50 years of car & truck service the only time I ever replaced a heater core was due to severe neglect or collision, which neither applies in this case. Three other Journey owners I have talked with also claim their heater cores failed, however they had purchased an extended warranty which made the repair less costly.

If I hadn't acted as quickly as I did, we might be involved currently in a law suit as coolant does burn & it doesn't take long to lose a coach in a fire. Insurance company statement enclosed.

May I please hear from you as soon as possible as I really do not want to enlist the aid of the RV magazine publications or the N.T.S.B.



*Winnebago answer to me²
dealing*

October 13, 2004

[REDACTED]
Sun City, FL [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

This is in response to your letter we received October 11, 2004.

Winnebago Industries® regrets any difficulties you have experienced with your Journey®. Our sincere desire is to provide quality products and service to all Winnebago® owners.

The Winnebago Industries new-vehicle limited warranty provides for repair or replacement of any part or parts proven to be defective in material or workmanship within a specific time and/or mileage, 12 months or 15,000 miles, whichever occurs first, from the date of original purchase or when the vehicle is first placed into service as a demonstrator.

Our records indicate your warranty expired June 17, 2003.

Thank you for writing. We regret we were unable to assist you.

Sincerely,

Jason Kendall
Service Advisor

v10-13a2

Sun City Center Fl
10-18-04

My letter in reply to 3
to Mr. Kendall of Winnebago
Also copied the same mgr
of Winnebago Mr. Therman

Mr. Kendall:

I hope your company gives you a bonus for saving them money, losing customers & for the reply you sent in answer to my most recent letter. It is very plain to me that a customer to Winnebago is a nuisance & that none of the questions I proposed were read or answered.

Treating a customer like a pest just won't cut it here. As I mentioned in my non read letter policy adjustments do exist, you have them & use them & I am asking for some help with a very serious & expensive repair that happened as no fault of mine.

Do you think that I am so stupid that I don't know when my warranty ended? I really like to take my time & spend my money to write you for your, we don't care answer

I do have a couple of ways out of this mess. I did find a dealer who is willing to take me out of this piece of junk & put me in to a new Allegro coach, with the full knowledge of the heater core repair. Notice the brand name.

I also have asked the National Highway Traffic Safety board to get involved with the danger part of this failure, along with Motor Home Magazine. The fact that this thing could have easily caused a major fire with loss of coach & lives seems to be an interesting item in RV circles & it is time to spread the word.

I assure you I will exhaust every avenue available to me including discussion with my Attorney to see if we might have a negligence case here.

I don't feel I am being unreasonable here, only looking for some help. As much as the problems I have had with this coach for some strange reason I still like it & if all else fails it will be replaced by the above Allegro. I understand they have a real interest in their customers.

CC Marvin Neiman