



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

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

APR 22 2005

NVS-216aae
Ref. #10113407

████████████████████
████████████████████
Naugatuck, CT ██████████

Dear ██████████:

Thank you for your correspondence dated February 14, 2005, concerning problems you have encountered with your 1999 Dodge Dakota truck. Your correspondence was received on March 2, 2005. Due to limited resources we were not able to respond to you in a more timely manner. We regret any inconvenience our delay may have caused you.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to help us determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect is warranted.

A review of our database relative to problems associated transmission, brakes, steering, transfer case, and shock absorbers in 1999 Dodge Dakota trucks revealed insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation at this time. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with other reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

On July 16, 2003, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened a safety defect investigation (PE03-032) into reports alleging failure of the suspension system, specifically the upper ball joint, in 1998 through 2003 Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles (SUV). Then, on November 19, 2003, ODI upgraded that investigation to an engineering analysis (EA03-023) and narrowed the scope of the investigation to 2000 through 2002 Dodge Durango SUVs. An engineering analysis is a more detailed and complete technical analysis of the character and



DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE
888-DASH-2-DOT
888-327-4236

scope of an alleged defect. For your information, I have enclosed the closing resume for PE03-032 and the opening resume for EA03-023. Although 2000 through 2002 Dodge Dakota trucks are not formally covered by EA03-023, reports associated with the suspension system in these trucks are being reviewed in conjunction with this investigation. The investigation is continuing; however, no determinations have been reached at this time.

Our database has revealed that there are several safety-related defect recalls on the 1999 Dodge Dakota truck that may be of interest to you. We have enclosed copies of the recall summaries for your information. Please contact your local dealership or DiamlerChrysler for further details and have your make, model, model year, and vehicle identification number available for their information.

You can contact our toll-free DOT Auto Safety Hotline (Hotline) at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236). One of our representatives may be able to assist you on matters concerning motor vehicle and motor vehicle equipment safety recalls or to report an alleged safety problem. You can also request safety information. If our telephones are busy, or you call during non-working hours, you can leave your name, telephone number, and a brief subject on our recording system. A DOT Hotline representative will return your call.

Additionally, we have an Internet Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> that you may want to visit. An electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) is also available on this Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq>. This form is for vehicle owners to report safety related problems about their motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment, e.g., child safety seats, jacks, tires, brake fluid, etc. The reports submitted are transferred to our database and are used to identify safety-related defect trends that require our attention. If you do not have access to the Internet, please use the enclosed VOQ to inform this agency of any future motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment safety problems you may experience. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc., can be obtained at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems>.

If further assistance is needed, please contact Mr. Michael J. Jordan, Safety Defects Program Assistant, Correspondence Research Division, Office of Defects Investigation, at (202) 493-0576.

Sincerely,



Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement

Enclosure