10115084

NVS-200

[redacted]
Englewood Cliffs, NJ [redacted]

January 24, 2005

Ford Motor Company
16800 Executive Plaza Drive
Dearborn, MI 48121

Re: Coolant leakage at intake manifold cross-over

Dear Sir/Madam::

Last year I had the unfortunate experience of having a considerable amount of anti-freeze leak from the intake manifold cross-over on my '97 Mercury Grand Marquis. This necessitated having the vehicle transported to a Mercury dealer for repair at a cost of $1,142.47. When I contacted your Consumer Affairs Department I was informed that I was not covered under a no-charge service program which was extended to police and commercial vehicles but not civilian vehicles.

Your technical service bulletins refer to this failure as a fatigue crack rather than a **manufacturing** defect which is the case in all of these **failures**. This was confirmed when a college friend who is a member of the Plastics Hall Of Fame submitted my failed unit to the Chair - Plastics Engineering Department and Professor - Department Head of Plastics Engineering of the most prestigious Plastics Engineering School in North America.

They identified the material as nylon filled glass fiber and the molding process as "lost core" injection molding. The plastic compound is molded around a low melting metal core in order to achieve the hollow structure and the molded piece is then placed in a hot oil bath that melts the solder like metal insert.

The location of the resin gates in molding is such that there is inadequate flow line adhesion in the cross-over area resulting in these failures. Changing the location of the gates would require the design of a new mold. A more realistic suggestion would be to reduce the thickness of the metal insert behind the failure area, which would increase the thickness of the plastic in the critical cross-over area. This would reduce the volume of coolant capacity, which would have to be evaluated.

I have enclosed a copy of my repair charges for which I would appreciate being reimbursed. Also enclosed is a copy of your technical service bulletins covering this problem.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours truly,

[redacted]

cc: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

NVS aad 2/17/05

Engine: All Technical Service Bulletins
Intake Manifold - Cross-Over Channel Coolant Seepage

Article No.
02-2-2

02/04/02

^ COOLANT - COOLANT SEEPAGE AT INTAKE MANIFOLD CROSS-OVER - VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH 4.6L 2V ENGINE ONLY

^ ENGINE - 4.6L 2V - COOLANT SEEPAGE AT INTAKE MANIFOLD CROSS-OVER

FORD:
1996-1997 THUNDERBIRD
1996-2001 CROWN VICTORIA, MUSTANG
2002 EXPLORER

LINCOLN:
1996-2001 TOWN CAR

MERCURY:
1996-1997 COUGAR
1996-2001 GRAND MARQUIS

ISSUE
Some vehicles may exhibit an Intake Manifold crossover (first runner) coolant seepage condition. This may be caused by a crack in the Intak Manifold coolant crossover.

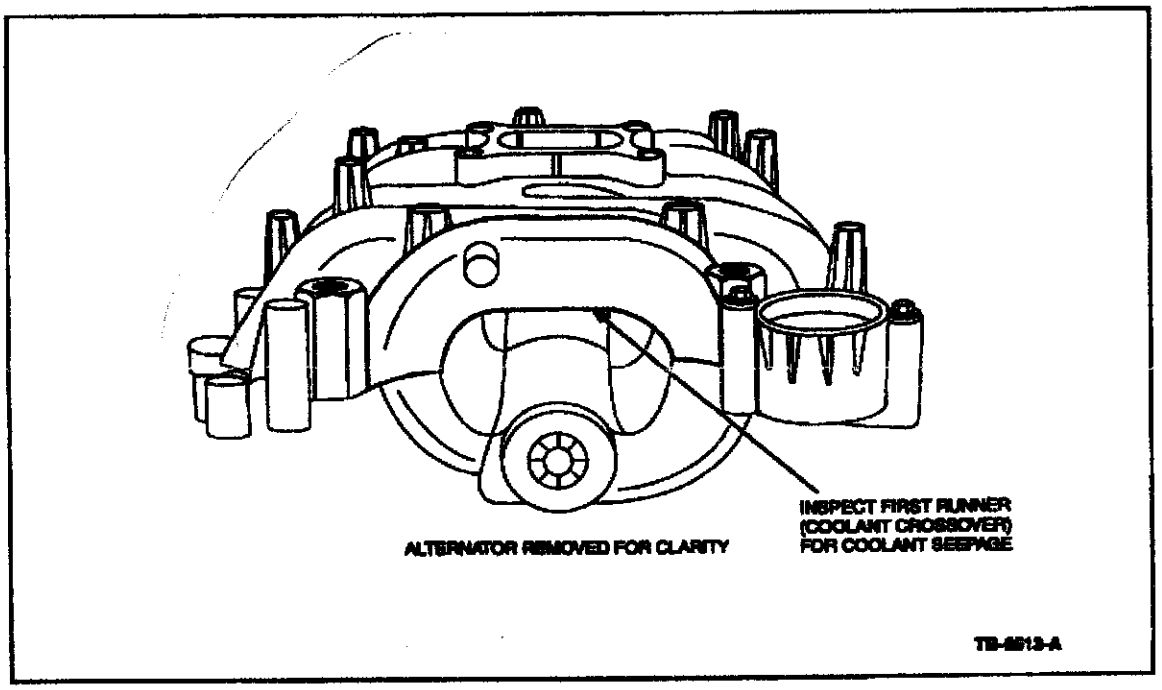

Figure 1

ACTION
Inspect the suspect Intake Manifold for a coolant leak at the first runner cross-over area (Figure 1). If coolant seepage is found in this area, order the appropriate Service Kit and install parts, by referring to the appropriate Model Year Workshop Manual (Section 303-01).

4.6L 2V INTAKE MANIFOLD

Intake Manifold: All Technical Service Bulletins
Owner Letter

A.R. O'Neill
Director
Vehicle Service and Programs
Ford Customer Service Division

Ford Motor Company
P.O. Box 1904
Dearborn, Michigan 48121

April, 1999

Serial Number: 12345678901234567 97M91

Mr. John Sample
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 12345

Ford Motor Company is providing a no-charge Service Program Number 97M91, to owners of certain 1996 through 1998 Crown Victoria Taxi, Town Car Limo Prep & Livery Package, 1996 and 1997 Thunderbird, Cougar and Mustang vehicles equipped with 4.6L SOHC engines. This service program provides additional coverage for the intake manifold.

REASON FOR THIS PROGRAM
Fatigue cracks may develop in some of the composite intake manifolds used on the 4.6L SOHC engines installed in the affected cars. This condition may result in engine coolant leakage which, if not detected or ignored, will cause engine overheating. Complete loss of coolant may result in engine damage or engine failure.

WHAT WE WILL DO
If the engine of your car should develop a coolant leak at the intake manifold cross over coolant passage, located directly behind the alternator, your dealer will verify the condition. If the coolant leakage is from the location described above, your dealer will replace the engine intake manifold assembly free of charge.

This no charge coverage is available for 7 years from the vehicle's warranty start date (no mileage limitation) and is automatically transferred to subsequent owners.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
PLEASE KEEP THIS LETTER. If your car's engine intake manifold should exhibit the above condition within the 7 year coverage described above, contact your dealer. Show the dealer this letter. The dealer will replace the intake manifold assembly after verification of this specific condition. If you should lose this letter the dealer will still honor the provisions of this program.

REFUNDS
If you paid to have the engine intake manifold replaced due to a leak at the cross over coolant passage before the date of this letter, Ford is offering a full refund. For the refund, please give your paid original receipt to your Ford or Lincoln Mercury dealer. To avoid delays, do not send receipts to Ford Motor Company.

CHANGED ADDRESS OR SOLD THE VEHICLE?
Please fill out the enclosed prepaid postcard and mail it to us if you have changed your address or sold the vehicle.

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).