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Office of Defects Investigation

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Consumer Information

* Denotes required field

2005 MAY 20 AM 5:05

Org. Name

Title :

First Name : *

Last Name : *

Address 1 : *

Address 2 : *

City : * North

State : * PENNSYLVANIA

Daytime Phone : * Ext : *

Fax : *

Email : *

Zip Code

Country USA

Evening Phone

There are occasions when NHTSA would like to provide automobile manufacturers with co including personally identifiable information (e.g. name, address, telephone number, etc.). NHTSA, use these questionnaires to identify safety-related defects, analyze alleged problem defects. By providing manufacturers with questionnaires that contain personally identifiable manufacturers can contact owners to seek clarity, obtain additional details, and in some cases owners of actions being taken to rectify the problem.

If you would like to authorize NHTSA to release this questionnaire (including your personal information) to the manufacturer of your vehicle, please check the "YES" box. Your personal information will be used only for the purposes described above. If you do not wish to authorize please check the "NO" box and your personally identifiable information will not be released.

See Privacy Statement below.

I hereby consent to the release of the personally identifiable information contained in this questionnaire to the manufacturer of my vehicle.

Edison
 5/24/05

5/11/03

NHTSA:

The following is a history of our vehicle that I started putting together in 8/03. Never in a million years would I ever have thought it would get so long. I'm sorry that it is so long to read but it's a long history. I am fixing this but will also mail a copy.

Thank-you

8/18/03

I have an on-going problem I was hoping you can help me with.

In Sept. of 2002 we started shopping for a vehicle and we went to Don Breon in Jersey Shore. We live in Morris about 30 min. N. of Don Breon's dealership. We decided on a used 2002 Ford Explorer with around 25,000 miles on it. I kept questioning the salesman why a 2002 in 2002 would have so many miles on it, and I was leery of the mileage and it didn't sit right with me how high it was already and he said it must've been bought in 2001 and that the owner of the dealership actually bought it for his dentist but the dentist didn't want it. So we put a lot of money down so we would have low payments and a car to last longer than the payments. Plus it was certified by the dealer as being in A-1 condition.

Well, during the winter we couldn't get the 4WD to work, we didn't try it to many times but I even took out the manual to see if we were doing something wrong because all we had to do is push a button—so we didn't use it. The O/D light would flash on once in awhile and shut off when the car was shut off and didn't come back on when the car was turned back on. We thought it was a fluke, we never thought in a million years an almost new car would have major problems. The car also smelled like rotten eggs, which they did put an exhaust wrap on it, which didn't help, and when we mentioned the problem again they couldn't duplicate the smell so it didn't exist. By now we mentioned the O/D light about a year after we purchased it, it was coming on more frequently and my son-in-law said it could be a tranny problem, we still didn't think a newer car would have those problems. Because of the travel distances up here the miles were adding up too. So we took it in and told Breon's about the front-end problems and the 4 WD problem too. Even though we had rental coverage they gave us a hard time about that too. They found the 4 WD module wasn't working, they also replaced the driveshaft (because of the O/D light) and both front wheel bearings and the rotors were out of round. The O/D light continued off and on and it was joined by the service engine light. We were then sent to Quality Care on 4th in Williamsport and I cannot say enough about the people there, they're great people and have tried to make this easier for us. They should be applauded for their efforts, as this has been frustrating for them too. Well these are the repairs they did to it. After every repair the O/D light would come back on. Fixed 5th gear ratio, then replaced the tranny valve body and solenoid pack, then a new tranny and then the wiring harness, then the processor. When the processor was done we were told that's pretty much the last thing to change for that problem. Well guess where the car is now? Back at Quality care with the tranny ripped out again because a Ford Engineer told them to check for a problem in the tranny that already has been addressed. After the last repair, which I believe, was the processor the O/D light didn't take a week and it was back on. There was no pattern to when it would come on.

At the beginning of this year (04) I did an on-line car report and found out the reason the car had so many miles on it was because it was a Hertz Rental from Chicago. The salesman at Breon told us a car-fax was done on it and there was nothing on it—wouldn't the fact it was a lease car be on it? My report had it on. I then did a Car-Fax and it was on there too. We would've never bought a lease because of a previous experience but we weren't even given that choice. I then did a Title search and it told me the same thing. I tried to get a service history report from Hertz but was told the only one that could see the service report was anyone interested in the car before auction otherwise the record is sealed forever so to speak.

2002 is the first year Ford has a sealed tranny. They're now saying we probably had 2 bad tranny's with the same problem—what are the chances of that? Unless Ford has a problem with that particular tranny. When we took the car in for the 30,000-mile checkup we were billed for a tranny fluid change. When down the road we told Breons service center about the O/D light they said well, you should've changed the tranny fluid on it, like it was our fault, now I was confused because I thought it was changed, we told them THEY did it. I told them according to the maintenance schedule for it, it only calls for the fluid to be changed under bad driving conditions not normal driving condition and he said I was right, he checked the records and said it wasn't changed. I said the tranny fluid wasn't changed? He checked the computer again and said no. I went and checked my records and we were charged for tranny fluid, when I questioned them they couldn't give me an answer other than we wouldn't charge you for something we didn't do. Well which is it?

I have filed a complaint with Ford and Don Breon's dealership is more that aware of our problem, do you think anyone calls??? Now there is a Ford tranny engineer involved—big deal where was he when this started???? My husband wanted to get rid of this car at the beginning of the problems, but how in my right conscience could we sell this to someone else or trade it in and the dealer sells it to an unsuspecting person, that's not right either. We went to one of Breon's car sales 2 weekend's ago, we started to tell one of the salesman what happened, I was very polite and nice, he told us they don't have to tell us it's a rental and then he took off at a fast pace and disappeared. We then spoke to another salesman (Rick Barnes) who looked at the car and gave us a low trade-in value because we now have 70,000 miles on it——well where has it been the last 30,000? In and out of the shop trying to get a problem fixed that obviously can't be fixed. There is a PA used car lemon law and when I told the salesman that he said they deduct mileage and we wouldn't get anything. He told us he would talk to Breon's and call us Tues. He didn't say what Tues or what year because we didn't hear from him either. They think I'm going to go away, well now I'm not going to. Shouldn't we have expected to have reasonable enjoyment from our vehicle and not always in and out of the shop trying to be fixed? it wasn't even worth it sometimes to take it anywhere cause we never knew what would happen next.

Luckily we took out an after market extended warranty otherwise we would be paying for an undriveable car because we can't afford all those repairs. The dealership could care less—Ford could care less—all they're concerned is that they got their money/they made a sale. How about backing up a product you sell? I am so disgusted with the whole thing and the whole vehicle I can't even tell you. I truly believe this was a problem from day 1 with that car but there is no way to prove it and as a rental if the person driving it saw the

O/D light come on and then off when it's shut off and they don't see it again they would probably think it's a fluke too. It wasn't like they owned it and saw a pattern. We cannot afford to replace the car, when we bought it we expected to be able to use it and enjoy it; I could care less if I ever see it again. We did not get what we paid for and Rick Barnes told us 1 in 300 new cars have a problem and it's not just us and to basically deal with it because it's no big deal. When we purchased the vehicle we were assured it was in excellent mechanical condition. I'm wondering why the dealership owner's dentist didn't want it—did they know about the problem and decided to dump it on someone? Early on when the 4 WD wasn't working we kidded around about now we know why the dentist didn't want it—little did we know what was ahead of us. At the time of purchase we overheard 2 salesmen talking and they said they couldn't believe that car was on line to be sold because they don't do that with Explorers because they always know someone waiting for one.

The dealership has said it's not their problem, Ford keeps telling Quality Care what to do next and I feel Ford is wasting my time and Quality Care's time.

Someone needs to take responsibility, why are we the ones out here? How many other people is this happening too. Breon sells a lot of vehicles and this is the way they treat people. Ford manufactured the vehicle but I guess 1 out of 300 isn't bad odds for them. It should be 0 out of 300 why is the consumer always the ones that suffer for it?

Thank-you so much for any help you can give us.

Morris, PA

Nak

Update: 9/13/04

We finally got the car back 9/1/04 approx. 4pm. We went and took the grandchildren out around 6pm and didn't get much further than the driveway when I told my husband to listen to the loud "noise" he thought it was because it was cold and we just got it back so there can't be anything wrong with it. We stopped the car and the noise was quite obvious so we cut the trip short and went home. My husband said he was going to take it back to Quality Care in the AM. In the morning there was a fairly large puddle of tranny fluid under the car. It's a sealed tranny so he couldn't even check the fluid before he left to make sure it wasn't empty. I called Quality Care to let them know it was on it's way back and I wasn't sure he would make it but have him call me when he gets there so I know he made it.

We stopped at Quality Care on 9/7/04 to see what was going on with it and to drop the registration off since it had expired while it was there and they said they are waiting for a Torque Converter from Ford in Pittsburgh because our Torque Converter was making all the noise. We were dumbfounded (of course by now anything with that car should not be a surprise) so we're waiting for that to be replaced. WHAT IS GOING TO BE NEXT? WHEN IS ENOUGH ENOUGH????

9/16/04: Went this morning to pick it up. It's not running like it did it just doesn't have the "umphh" it used to.

10/06/04: Last night on the way home the O/D light started flashing again, I just can't believe it—The car is now not driving right either when we let our foot off the acceleration pedal it pulls back. When we accelerate it whines. We are now getting our old car fixed so we don't have to use the Explorer. I called Quality Care this morning and they are going to call the Ford Engineer person again. I told them I am not bringing it back in till someone can give me an answer or solution.

10/10/04: Service Engine Light is now on too. It's going in to Quality Care 10/19/04, as I said previously Quality Care has been great, they have done everything and anything that they possibly could in this situation. They know the true meaning of customer service.

10/25/04: The vehicle is now waiting for another transmission and the cooling system. The error codes on this tranny was the same as the original tranny. It seems we had 2 transmissions with the same problem and we have to get another remanufactured one because they don't make these anymore. So what does that tell you? Ford has a problem with that tranny and they know about it.

1/10/05: Another update: As expected the O/D light came back on—we now have had 3 transmissions with the same exact problem. What are the odds on that if there's not a problem? Ford is now saying it's a problem with the tranny fluid, the manufacturer had a problem so currently the vehicle is in for a transmission flush. Ford said their only responsibility is to keep repairing it because we bought it used. I feel they're going to keep trying different things till the warranty runs out or till the car no longer runs. Please don't let other consumers go through what we have. Ford needs to let Explorer owners know there's a problem.

1/18/05: On our way to Williamsport we experienced a serious driving problem to where we almost pulled over and called Quality Care to see if they could tow us but we were in a non-cell phone area. We took it in to Quality Care where they put it up on the lift and the left rear wheel bearing was gone which caused damage to the axle and brakes and the tire was barely holding on, how dangerous is that? We had our g-daughter in the car too. Well they checked the right side and that wheel bearing was shot also. It's funny that one of the first things that were done after purchase of the vehicle was the front wheel bearings.

1/24/05: The O/D light is back on. We're now using our other car a 96 Intrepid more frequently. We've been trying to get to visit my elderly Aunt and Uncle in Fla. We wanted to go last year but can't trust the Explorer so now we're renting a vehicle to go. Can't wait to see what "theory" Ford comes up with next for the O/D light.

4/05: While we were in Fla. All they found was that is was the transmission case and they cleared the codes and it was gone. April 5th we got the car back.

4/25/05: The O/D light and Service engine light are back on; the error code is now the solenoid, which has already been changed once.

5/03/05: Car went in for Solenoid—it was done in 1 day and now the Air Conditioner isn't working, it was working a month ago and one of the Air-bag lights are on. With all the other problems it has had we haven't even addressed that yet with Quality Care.