

[REDACTED]
Arlington, Virginia
[REDACTED]

2005 AUG 12 AM 4: 40

July 26, 2005

United States Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation
NSA-1001, 400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

*Add to
10130047*

Re: Complaint: Filed 7/26/05, Confirmation Number: 10130047

Per my discussion with Cathy of your office, I am forwarding copies of the information we discussed with regard to the above referenced complaint. I have discussed this matter with DaimlerChrysler and I was instructed to send the ORIGINAL receipts for the repairs made to my 1998 Dodge Durango for two replacements of failed lower ball joints and one replacement of upper ball joints, including replacement of two new front tires – twice – as a direct result of the ball joint failures, so that they may consider reimbursement for the costs.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the above address and phone number. Thank you, in advance, for your prompt response to this complaint.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Encl/5

*Edison
8/19/05*

[REDACTED]
Arlington, Virginia
[REDACTED]

July 12, 2005

DaimlerChrysler
Warranty Reimbursement
P.O. Box 21-8004
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-8004

On the direction of Ashlyn at the DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance Center, I am attaching two repair bills for the replacement of both upper and lower ball joints in my 1998 Dodge Durango, VIN number: 1B4HS28Y1WF [REDACTED]. This also includes the replacement of four new front tires, required as a direct result of both ball joint failures.

The first ball joint replacement (for the lower ball joints) occurred November 21, 2002, at 27,280 miles, at which time I also needed to replace two tires in the front because they had worn down on one side only, which was a direct result of the ball joint failure. In February, 2005, at 43,908 miles, only 18,000 miles later, I took the same vehicle for a routine checkup and mentioned that the front end was responding strangely and making squeaking noises and was told that both the upper and lower ball joints failed and would require replacement, as well as replacing another two front tires. That work was completed February 22, 2005, at 43,908 miles, only 18,000 miles and two years after the first ball joint failure. Having purchased my new Durango September, 1998, it has been used solely as a family vehicle and has been well maintained with all dealer recommended maintenance. Therefore, I find it difficult to understand why my vehicle would experience a ball joint failure at 27,280 miles and again at 43,908 miles. It appears strange that the same problem of ball joint failures (both upper and lower) reoccurs with such regularity.

I am fully aware of the recalls of over 600,000 Dodge Durango SUVs and Dakota pickup trucks for ball joint failure that could cause their wheels to fall off. Even though my vehicle is not within the 2000-2004 year scope of those recalls, it certainly appears that the problems I have encountered are identical. I am also concerned that the first ball joint repairs may have been made with "recall ball joints", since it was within the recall timeframe. Moreover, I have been informed, that, due to the design of the Durango, I can anticipate this problem to resurface again in approximately two years. That means that I can expect another large repair bill and the replacement of yet another two new tires in approximately two more years.

The first ball joint failure occurred and was repaired at Koons Dodge, Falls Church, Virginia, October 24, 2002 at 27,280 miles. The required repairs totaled \$1,140.54, including the replacement of the two front tires, worn bald on one side only as a direct result of the first ball joint failure. The second incident of ball joint failure occurred and was repaired by Lee Lex Service Center, Arlington, Virginia, February 22, 2005 at 43,908 miles, only 18,000 miles after the first ball joint failure. The cost of those repairs totaled \$1,068.39, with an additional cost, yet again, of two more new front tires required to replace, yet again, the two front tires worn bald on one side only as a direct result of the second ball joint failure. Those tires were purchased at Merchants Tire, Arlington, Virginia, and the additional cost for the additional two new tires to be replaced was \$365.13. This comes to a total of \$2,574.06. I have attached herewith, repair bills for both ball joint replacements, as well as tire replacement for four new tires.

I have been a loyal customer for a period of many years, having purchased a Chrysler LeBaron in 1991, a used Dodge pickup truck in 1996 and a new Durango in 1998. As a loyal and valuable customer, I respectfully request full reimbursement for both ball joint repairs, as well as reimbursement for the now four new tires I have had to replace as a direct result of those ball joint failures.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the above address and phone number. I hope to hear from you soon. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

cc NHTSA

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).