

2006 MAR 27 PM 3:43

[REDACTED]
Exeter, MO [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1054125

March 9, 2006

Sir and/or Madam:

As a future former Ford customer, I feel it is my obligation to inform you on how dissatisfied I am with my 2004 Ranger and the service involved. I have owned seven Ford vehicles, including a Galaxie 500, Mustang, F 150, Rangers and a Mazda B2000. Up to this point, I have never had problems or complaints. However, that has all changed in the last few months. At the present time, I do not trust this Ranger for safety and confidence reasons and it only has less than 27000 miles on it. It is still under factory warranty, and I am not sure that the factory knows how to fix it.

I purchased the vehicle in late March, 2005, from Sellar-Sexton in St. Robert, MO. It was purchased used with 6600 miles on the odometer. Over the summer, I noticed noises from transmission or clutch. It didn't occur steadily and I didn't obsess with it. In October, the noise became more apparent during cold mornings. There sounded like a scraping noise in the transmission, especially in 2nd gear.

I took the vehicle to [REDACTED] in Cassville, MO when the check engine light appeared and remained on for a day, approximately late October, early November. I do not have the exact dates because I was never given a receipt, work order or other paperwork to show I was at the dealership. I informed them about the noise in the transmission and asked if that was why the check engine light came on. There could be a relation between the two conditions, I was told. I took the service manager on a short drive and tried to get him to hear the noise. Being it a warm afternoon, the noise was not loud enough to be discerned from road noise. He said he could hear

Edison
3/29/06

something and said it was common to have some noise. They reset the check engine light and I left.

As the weather turned colder, the noise got worse. Second gear was so loud, people who heard me drive by would ask me what is wrong with your truck. I took it back in December and told [REDACTED] that it needed to be fixed, along with a new problem. It seems that often when the clutch is pressed to the floor to disengage gears or shift gears, the engine idle speed increases. Sometimes, it will increase by 500-600 rpm. I have been driving standard transmissions for years and all other vehicles' idle speeds decreased when the clutch is pressed in. In order to decrease the engine idle, you need to shift gears and let the clutch out, which dramatically changes idle speed. That seems like a dangerous operation. Slowing down and/or braking and the idle goes up is not what I call safe. In fact, there were times when I coasted a quarter of a mile with the vehicle out of gear and the engine idling at 2400 rpm. The vehicle was warm and had been driven 25 miles.

The service manager at [REDACTED] had informed me it could take a couple of days to figure the problem of the transmission and idle setting. I made arrangements to have the vehicle serviced the week after Christmas since I was on vacation time. They had it for several hours before they called and said it was ready to be picked up. When I talked to the service manager, he informed me that they had reset the idle to its lowest setting and that they couldn't fix the transmission because it was a design flaw and they didn't know how to fix it. He said they would contact the design engineers at Ford and that I should call back in 60 days. Apparently, the only service they performed on the transmission was to drain and refill the transmission fluid.

The noise got worse and I took the vehicle back in late January and demanded something be done. The noise was now in fourth and fifth gears, and my truck still idled wrong after it was warmed up. I suggested that they replace the transmission since they don't know what the problem is or how to fix it. No I was told, can't do that. Needless to say, they had my truck for six days, replaced almost \$800 worth of

transmission parts and made it worse. Now the noise in 2nd and 4th is louder, 3rd gear sounds like a sewing machine whirring and 5th gear makes a whistling noise. The gear shifter was replaced and now the shift pattern has so much play, it is hard to find gears and fifth is so far away, I have to lean forward to get into 5th gear.

I also found it strange when I asked for a receipt, they had me sign the work order from when I was there in December as the receipt for the work completed in late January. When I asked for a receipt for the work they had just completed, I was told to come back in a week and they would have that receipt ready. When I came back to get the receipt, showing the \$800 worth of parts, I informed them that the problem was worse and was told again that they didn't know how to fix the problem. They would contact Ford again and check with other dealers to see if they had seen similar problems with Ford transmissions.

In the meantime, I am still stuck with an unsafe and possibly an unreliable truck. I decided to try another dealership and was told that they would check into the situation and call me back. Their options were for me to take off a day from work to bring it in to have their service man look at it, then to leave it while they decide what is wrong, how to fix it and order parts. They are not sure how long it could take and in the meantime I can pay daily rates on a rental car.

That is where I draw the line. I refuse to pay what could amount to an additional car payment for rent on a vehicle while mine is being evaluated and possibly fixed. The last dealership had my truck for six days, but provided me with a loner. I'm not sure, though, that I want to take my truck back to mechanics who openly admit that they don't know what they are doing. Other dealers have their own policies on loners; unless you buy your vehicle at that dealership, you cannot have a loner but a rental. There is no way that I would pay unlimited days of rental, even if I could. I do not make that much money to pay two vehicle payments per month. If the transmission (and now clutch) were being entirely replaced, I would pay one day rental, since that is how long it would take qualified and knowledgeable mechanics to replace

the parts. I will not pay for anything longer. It is not my fault that Ford designed a defective vehicle and it should not be my responsibility to pay added expenses for owning a Ford.

I have been informed that if I pay more money and get the Extended Service Contract, the rental would be paid for. My question is why do I need extra service when my vehicle is still covered under new vehicle factory warranty. This just seems like a scam to cover the fact that Ford vehicles are likely to break down. It seems Ford itself doesn't have confidence in its own products or it would offer similar programs with 60000-70000-100000 mile, 5-7 years warranty programs like its competitors.

I have contacted the Ford Customer Relation Center and was given similar run arounds. I called to complain, was not given satisfaction and was told a supervisor would contact me. I was left a message saying the supervisor would call back on a Monday. When she called, she said she didn't have any information and would call back Tuesday. When she called back Tuesday, she said she didn't have any information and that is when I said stop. I am not going to wait around for a third day to get another call telling me nothing. I told her I expected results and to call me at 5:00 pm on Friday. She called back at 3:47 Thursday (I was at work and was left a message on the machine). She called back at 6:30 Friday, telling that I could take it a dealer and pay for rentals. Sorry, that is the best we can do unless you would like to purchase the Ford Extended Service Contract. That message does not satisfy me.

Now that I have explained the problem and my dissatisfaction, let me get to the purpose of this letter. First, within the next few months, before the factory warranty expires, I will get rid of this vehicle to a competitor and let them get it repaired. The only money I will ever spend on a Ford vehicle would be the loss I take on disposing of this unsafe and untrustworthy truck. And as the weather gets warmer and the problem is not as noticeable, I'm sure the mechanics will tell me there is no problem and wait until it gets worse. The vehicle will probably run out of factory warranty and then it's still my problem.

Figuring that I still have another 30-40 years of buying vehicles, and had never considered certain competitors (I have never owned a Chevy and only one Plymouth-Duster 340), I know that I will never think about buying Ford. For me, that is a minor difficulty and for Ford the loss of hundreds of thousands of profits. It seems like a stiff penalty for the cost of a rental.

At my job, I have the opportunity to influence future vehicle owners. I will not have many complimentary things to say about Ford and its service. If I can persuade just one person not to buy Ford, that again is a loss of several hundred thousand of profit. Imagine if I convince dozens of prospective buyers, the profit loss could go to the millions over the next dozen years or so. It seems to me that Ford has been losing profits and customers at a consistent rate recently that I'm not sure they need to be alienating loyal customers.

Besides sending this letter to Ford executives, copies will also be sent to other agencies that deal with consumer complaints. Among those will be Missouri Attorney General to discuss the lemon law and the fact that Ford's number one goal is customer satisfaction. I am not satisfied. It seems to me that Ford is using false advertising in purporting such statements and deceptive practice in allowing those messages to be used in their advertising and slogans. As to any legal ramifications, that will be up to the legal departments.


Another copy will be sent to Missouri Better Business Bureau. Design Flaws and run arounds on getting satisfaction seems to violate the adage that the customer is right.

Still other copies will go to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Inspector General's Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline, Consumer Response Center, and Center for Auto Safety.

As this letter gets circulated and dozens of people start dealing with this problem, it occurs to me that the amount of time, energy and salaries that are being expended, along with the profit loss from vehicles not being bought, that Ford could have arranged a loner. It seems that as a business that is having financial and consumer difficulties, Ford could not afford this kind of loss and negative publicity. However, that is

not my concern. My concern is what I can now drive that would be comparable to a Ford.

Thank you for your time

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the text that would follow the signature. The box is solid black and obscures the name and any other identifying information of the sender.