

[REDACTED]
Berlin, MD [REDACTED]

May 23, 2006

Automotive Safety Enforcement Division
Maryland State Police
6601 Ritchie Highway
Glen Burnie, MD 21062

Continental Tire, North America
1800 Continental Blvd.
Charlotte, NC 28273
ATTN: Customer Relations

10159459

2006 JUN - 1 3 6 16

Chrysler Motors Customer Center
P.O. Box 21-8004
Auburn Hills, MI 48321-8004

Home & Park Motor Homes
Warranty & Service Department
100 Shirley Ave.
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, N2B 2E1

NHTSA
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Sirs:

In April I purchased a 1999 Dodge/Roadtrek 190-Popular, Vehicle I.D. Number 2B6KB31YXXK [REDACTED] from [REDACTED], Md. As part of the sale, she was to have the vehicle inspected. This she did at Carlton Massey of Pocomoke, Md. During the inspection, the tires were found to be "dry rotted" and replaced.

When I picked up the vehicle from [REDACTED] and drove it home, I noticed it "wandering" and it ran off the main roadbed onto the shoulder twice.

-Per 94
6/5/06

Because it was a windy day and I hadn't driven the vehicle that much, I wanted a second opinion, which led to a third and a fourth test drive by Croppers Auto Center of Berlin, Md. Croppers checked the suspension and evaluated it as sound. Their diagnosis focused on the tires, particularly that the tires were "AT", "All Terrain" tires. They thought that these tires, with their deep tread, were causing the handling problems, and no adjustment to the suspension could remedy the problem. On the tires is the following: General Grabber AT 2, Radial LT 245/75R16, 120/116S, M*S, Tread & Tires-2 Polyester & 2 steel & 2 nylon, Sidewall 2 ply Polyester, Max load single 3042 lbs. at 80 PSI cold, Load Range E, 16", Made in Mexico.

I called [REDACTED] and asked her to call [REDACTED]. She did so and told me to call them and speak with Bernie Stout, Service Manager, at 410-957-3333. I did so, explained my experience with the vehicle, as well as Cropper's diagnosis, and he said he would investigate and call me back. He did so and told me that the vehicle had the correct tires on it. I asked him to test drive the vehicle. He said that they didn't need to test drive the vehicle because tires could not cause the vehicle to "go to the left or the right." I reiterated Cropper's diagnosis and asked again if he would please test drive the vehicle. Again he refused; but this time he made an offer—[REDACTED] still had the old tires; so, in lieu of a simple test drive, I could pick up the old dry rotted tires and have Croppers put them back on the vehicle so I could "prove to myself" that the tires weren't causing the "wandering" problem. I declined, and explained to [REDACTED] that I had driven the vehicle with the original tires before I had decided to purchase it, and that it had driven fine. I asked him why they put "AT" tires on the vehicle rather than regular road tires and he said that the original tires were "AT" tires. I told him that I thought that the original tires were All Weather, not All Terrain; he disagreed. However, he did concede that the tread on the original tires was not as deep as that on the replacement tires.

Other things were said but brevity prevents their inclusion. I ended the conversation with a third "please just test drive it." Again he refused and insisted that tires could not make the vehicle wander to the right or left. He even said that if I ask the State Police that they will tell me that tires can not cause the vehicle to wander to the right and left.

I told Croppers and they said to contact General tire, the State Police, and the vehicle manufacturer. My attorney, Charles Stoner of Westminster MD, told me the same. He also told me that, because I was told that the vehicle

was unsafe to drive as such, I was absolutely not drive the vehicle until the tires were changed. He had difficulty understanding [REDACTED] refusal to test drive the vehicle, especially, as he put it, in our post Ford Explorer/Firestone world.

Now, I have a lot difficulty understanding [REDACTED] refusal as well. I'm not going to risk my welfare or any one else's because of a set of tires, especially since a simple test drive could remedy the situation.

I am open to all comments and suggestions regarding this matter. My phone number is [REDACTED] My address is [REDACTED] Berlin, MD.

Sincerely,

Encl:

1. Copy of [REDACTED] Invoice.
2. Copy of Original Purchase Invoice.
3. Cropper Auto Business Card.
4. Copy of page 103 of 1999 Ram Van Owner's Manual.

Automotive Marine & Trailers

24 HOUR

TOWING



Parts, Sales, & Diagnostic Services

Year Round Boat Storage & Trailer Sales

MARYLAND STATE INSPECTION

Joe Geiger

Croppers Auto Center

Racetrack Auto Body & Sales

10834 Ocean Gateway Berlin, MD

Ofc. (410) 641-3200

Fax (410) 641-9192

Racetrack Auto Center

10436 Racetrack Rd

Berlin, MD 21811

Ofc. (410) 641-5262

Fax (410) 208-1083

1999 Ram Van & Wagon

Owner's Manual



The New Dodge

Poor suspension alignment may result in:

- fast tire wear;
- uneven tire wear, such as feathering and one-sided wear;
- vehicle pull to the right or left.

Tires may also cause the vehicle to pull left or right. Alignment will not correct this condition. See your dealer for proper diagnosis.

Improper alignment will not cause vehicle vibration, which may be a result of tire and wheel out-of-balance. Proper balancing will reduce vibration and avoid tire cupping and spotty wear.

Replacement Tires

The tires on your new vehicle provide a balance of many characteristics. They should be inspected regularly for wear and correct inflation pressure. Chrysler Corporation strongly recommends that you use tires equivalent to the

originals in quality and performance when replacement is needed (see section on tread wear indicators). Failure to use equivalent replacement tires may adversely affect the safety, handling, and ride of your vehicle. We recommend that you contact your original equipment tire dealer on any questions you may have on tire specifications or capability.

WARNINGS

- Never use a tire smaller than the minimum tire size listed on your vehicle's tire placard. Using a smaller tire could result in tire overloading and failure.
- Failure to equip your vehicle with tires having adequate speed capability can result in sudden tire failure and loss of vehicle control.
- Overloading your tires is dangerous. Like under inflation, overloading can cause tire failure. Use tires of the recommended load capacity for your vehicle. Never overload them.

**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).**