



U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

**DOT Auto Safety Hotline**  
**Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire**  
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects  
1-888-DASH-2-DOT  
(1-888-327-4236)  
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

Repository

107 MAY -11 AM 7: 41  
13-MAR-2007

Reference No.  
10184997

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name [REDACTED]  
Address [REDACTED]  
City SUN LAKE State AZ Zip Code [REDACTED]

Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED]

E-mail Address [REDACTED]

Evening Telephone Number [REDACTED]

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?  YES  NO  
In the absence of an authorized signature, please provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.  
Signature of Owner [REDACTED] Date 4/25/07

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side 3GKGC26U41G [REDACTED] Make GMC Model YUKON XL Model Year 2001

Date Purchased 01-NOV-01 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number JONES Engine: No: Cylinders 8 Fuel Type: Gas

Original Owner  Dealer's City State Zip Code

Transmission Type AUTOMATIC  Antilock Brakes  Cruise Control Powertrain 4 WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code 160000 STRUCTURE Multiple Failure: 1

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Incident Date(s) 01-JAN-2007 Failure Mileage 80000 Failure Speed N/A NOISE NOTICED AT IDLE & PARTICULARLY AT ACCELERATION

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE**

Tire Make Tire Model (Name or Number) Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTMAL9ABC036)  Original Equipment  Prior Repair Failure Location:

Tire Component Code Tire Failure Type

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE**

Make: Date Manufactured: Model No./Name:

Seat Type: Installation System:

Child Seat Component Code: Failed Part:

**APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION**

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es) and injury(ies).)

Crash  Yes  No Fire  Yes  No Number of Persons Injured 0 Number of Deaths 0 Reported to Police N

**Narrative Description of Incident(S), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).**  
Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

TL\*- THE CONTACT OWNS A 2001 GMC YUKON. WHILE DRIVING HE HEARD A LOUD NOISE THAT SOUNDED LIKE METAL CLASHING ON METAL. THE CONTACT TOOK IT TO THE DEALER, AND THEY STATED THAT THE FAILURE WAS DUE TO A A DEFECTIVE FLEX PLATE. HE FELT THAT THIS WAS A HUGE SAFETY PROBLEM BECAUSE THE FAILURE COULD RESULT IN A LOSS OF THE ABILITY TO STOP THE VEHICLE. ALSO, THIS WAS A HUGE CONCERN FOR ANYONE WHO WAS PULLING A TRAVEL TRAILER. THE CONTACT COULD PROVIDE PICTURES IF NEEDED. THE FAILURE WAS 80,000 MILES. \*AK

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

## GM Driveline Safety Failure

April 25, 2007

To: NHTSA, USDOT

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Flex Plate Failure, 2001 GMC Yukon XL

6.0L 2.73 Rear End

This vehicle has the chronic GM start up knock problem on which I have previously communicated with GM without satisfaction.. Recently the engine developed an additional higher pitched noise to the rear of the engine. Diagnosis by the dealer (Coulter of Tempe, AZ) determined that the Flex Plate connecting the crank to the torque converter was fractured. (Picture attached) The vehicle has only 80K miles on it.

The probable failure mode on this part is flexural fatigue which will result from misalignment of the transmission input shaft and the crankshaft, or excessive run out on the attachment surface of either the crankshaft or the converter. I had two flex plate failures on a 1974 Chevrolet Suburban when I had a dealer-installed new engine misassembled with the steel tubing to the transmission clamped between the engine and transmission bell housings. With the tubing uncompressed the flex plate failed within 500 miles. With the tubing clamped tighter and flattened to about half its original diameter the failure occurred at 2700 miles.

This failure is extremely dangerous to those of us who pull travel trailers and use the engine braking when descending steep grades. Consider the following scenario. If the failure results in complete separation all engine connection to the rear wheels will be lost along with engine braking. The failure will create loud and grinding noises that, on first reaction, would likely cause the driver to reach for the key to shut down the engine to prevent further damage. This action would result in the loss of power braking on the tow vehicle and a lock up of the steering column. Unless there were survivors of the ensuing wreck no one would ever consider a Flex Plate failure as the cause of the accident.

This problem may be an isolated incident however the GM V8 engine family/2.73 rear end combo is, I believe, widely used by the Travel Trailer towing family in both the Chevy and GMC 2500 series vehicles including SUV's and Pickups. The RV community should be made aware of this potential problem and not ignore or accept any early warning clicking/clatter noises as part of the standard GM knock problem.

I am following up on this problem by reporting it to NHTSA and request that anyone who has experienced Flex Plate failure do the same.

Attachment: Picture of retained part

c. Tech Topics Trailer Life Magazine(attn. Bob Livingston)

For Safe travel:

[REDACTED]

