



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 ☐

2007 DEC 12 AM 11:14
19 OCT 2007

Reference No.

10206284

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

TORRINGTON

State CT

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES ☒ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date / /

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

1HGCM56364

Make

HONDA

Model

ACCORD

Model Year

2004

Date Purchased

30-OCT-04

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine:

No: Cylinders 4

Fuel Type:

Gas

Original Owner

☒

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

AUTOMATIC

☒ Antilock Brakes

☒ Cruise Control

Powertrain

FRONT WHEEL DRIVE

Vehicle Component Code

191000 TIRES:TREAD/BELT

Multiple Failure: \pm 4

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

19-SEP-2007

Failure Mileage

25000

Failure Speed

0

PREMATURE WEAR OF SIPING DUE TO MOLDING
DEFECTS, TREADS NOT DEEP ENOUGH AT MANUFACTURE

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make

NOKIAN

Tire Model (Name or Number)

~~VATIVA~~ WR

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

~~LT265/75R16~~ 205 65R15

DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036)

YL6R3504 YL6A 2004

☐ Original Equipment

☐ Prior Repair

Failure Location:

TREAD SIPING, PREMATURE WEAR

Tire Component Code

191000 TIRES:TREAD/BELT

Tire Failure Type ~~TREAD SEPARATION~~

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 2004 HONDA ACCORD. THE VEHICLE HAS NOKIAN ~~VATIVA~~ SIZE LT265/75R16 C TIRES. THE CONTACT TOOK THE VEHICLE TO HAVE THE TIRES ROTATED AND NOTICED THAT THE TREAD WAS SEPARATING ON ALL FOUR TIRES. THE TREAD WAS MEASURED AND ONLY HALF OF IT REMAINED. HE SPOKE WITH THE TIRE MANUFACTURER AND THEY STATED THAT THE FAILURE WAS A BLEMISH, NOT A DEFECT. THE CURRENT MILEAGE WAS 118,000 AND FAILURE MILEAGE WAS 25,000.

THIS ISSUE DOES NOT CONCERN THE VEHICLE MANUFACTURER.
THERE HAS NOT BEEN A CATASTROPHIC FAILURE. THIS CONCERNS
PREMATURE WEAR OF SPECIFIC TREAD COMPONENTS THAT WILL
EVENTUALLY RESULT IN A LOSS OF ADVERTISED HANDLING
CHARACTERISTICS, AND AN EVENTUAL LOSS OF TRACTION. ALSO AT ISSUE:
MANUFACTURER WILL NOT ADMIT DEFECT AND HONOR REPLACEMENT WARRANTY.

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 to 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.

Mr. Dennis Gaede
President
Nokian Tyres Inc
339 Mason Rd
La Vergne, TN 37086

Oct 23, 2007

Dear Mr. Gaede,

Enclosed are several photographs of my Nokian WR's with appx 30K miles on them. At about 25K the sipes started to disappear due to what I believe must be a molding defect. I have a full set of 4 tires, from two different lots, and they are all showing the same defect.

I've had a lengthy discussion with two of your customer service people, and also with the manager of the Mallory Kotzen store in Danbury, Ct. where they were purchased. I've been assured that this condition is "isolated". No-one will admit that the tires are defective, these bare spots are being referred to as "blemishes". An isolated condition should not appear on two lots simultaneously.

I believe that this defect will eventually make the tires undriveable, even dangerous. I believe they qualify for full replacement under your warranty which states that the tire will be replaced without charge if they become unserviceable. I've been offered a rebate, or 50% credit towards new tires, but I firmly believe that although these are the best tires I've ever driven on, they were defective at manufacture and never should have made it to the road. They lived up to all of Nokian's claims, and performed beautifully in all weather conditions, but are now rapidly approaching the point where they will have to be removed from the vehicle.

I've had quite a bit of correspondence with your people, but did not include it to make this communication as brief as possible. I spoke with : Mike Potvin, mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com, and also with David Fontaine, dfontaine@nokiantyresinc.com.

I plan on replacing them within the next few weeks. I would love to drive the WR's, but I disagree with your warranty replacement policy, and feel that full replacement is the only thing that will keep me as a customer. I researched tires for months before making this purchase, and I'm disappointed that I made what appears to have been the wrong choice.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Torrington, Ct.

[REDACTED]
10/10/2007 03:23 PM

To customerservice@nokiantyresinc.com
cc
bcc
Subject Defective Nokian WR's

The following are two emails recently sent to Nokian at info@nokiantyresinc.com, and read by:
"David Fontaine" <dfontaine@nokiantyresinc.com>

The messages were opened and read, but I received no message from Mr. Fontaine. That was the only address I could find at the time. I'm hoping that this email address will get me a response. If this issue has been forwarded to you by Mr. Fontaine already, thank you for your time.

I have four Nokian WRs with about 25K miles on them, and some of the tread blocks are losing their sipes. The tires are from two different lots, and all four are showing the same problem. The tread blocks have plenty of meat left, there is no evidence of improper maintenance or alignment problems. Some are balding and some are already bald. These blocks are in random locations, and there are none that are contiguous. This is obviously a molding defect, as the treads are so shallow that they've just begun to wear out.

The factory rep has called this loss of tread "blemishes". I feel they are a defect, which will eventually, as it continues, cause a loss of traction in rain, snow, slush, etc.

I don't believe the tire is unsafe to drive, but over time these "blemishes" will significantly detract from the tires' ability to hold the road.

The rep has said that he will give me a 15% to 20% rebate, or we can go with the pro rata warrantee.

I did a great deal of research before buying these tires, and I think they are the best tire I've ever driven. But now I regard them as defective. I would think that Nokian would like to take these tires off the road, as they will soon not have the characteristics that made them such good tires. If this is truly a rare occurrence as the rep has said, I would love to have another set on my car as they are amazing. However, I don't think I should be charged for this, as this problem is an imminent safety issue.

They were purchased at Mallory Kotzen in Danbury Ct. My contact there is [REDACTED] I don't know the Rep's name or number, but I was told he was in Texas.

I then sent the following:

Thank you for responding to my email. Can you tell me what the normal course of action is when this type of message is received. Will it be turned over to a complaint department, a joint complaint/engineering/safety committee, or will it result in the store in Danbury being contacted for information.

I've been dealing with them for about six weeks with this problem, and although I'm a patient person, the tires continue to wear, and we're approaching the weather for which I bought these tires in the first place.

I'm concerned that at some point several or multiple affected tread blocks might be in contact with the road at the same time, possibly all four tires being involved, and if this happens during an avoidance maneuver in bad weather conditions, the tires will not deliver the exceptional traction and stability that they did when purchased.

The rep chose to call this loss of tread a "blemish", but we're dealing with the working surface of the tires, not raised lettering on a sidewall.

I still think that these are the best tires I've ever had, and if this defect is truly an isolated incident as communicated by your field rep, I would think that Nokian would prefer to take them off the road. I would be willing to accept the same tires as replacement.

My cellphone is [REDACTED] My address is [REDACTED] Torrington, Ct.
[REDACTED] I would appreciate any assistance you can offer. If your department is not the appropriate one to deal with this type of issue, please advise.

Thank You.

[REDACTED]



10/11/2007 10:47 AM

Subject RE: Nokian Wr's



From what I have read in your e-mails, it sounds like to me that you have run the tires for about 25,000 miles. In this situation I could do a 50% credit on each tire. I would not be able to do a free replacement, because you did get over half the mileage out of your tires. If you need me to call Mallory-kotzen tire I can for you or just have them call me and I will let them know what I am doing for you. If you have any questions for me, please feel free to call me at 1-800-852-5222.

Thanks, Mike Potvin

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2007 10:25 AM

To: Mike Potvin

Subject: Nokian Wr's


Mike,

Mr. Fontaine gave me your email address as he has turned my situation over to you. Can you give me any idea as to what the process will be, and the timeframe involved when dealing with a problem of this type. I'd like to resolve this issue before the onset of winter weather.

Thank you.

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10/11/2007 11:29 AM

To "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>@DADEEXT
cc
bcc
Subject RE: Nokian Wr's 

Mike,

I believe the tires were defective at manufacture as evidenced by the premature wear of the sipes. Calling premature wear a "blemish" is irresponsible. Your warranty states that a defective tire will be replaced free of charge minus installation charges and taxes. Nothing short of complete replacement should be discussed, as continued wear will result in the tire becoming unserviceable.

NOKIAN TYRES LIMITED WARRANTY

Workmanship and Materials

This warranty covers your new Nokian tires against manufacturing defects in workmanship or material for the life of the original usable tread down to 2/32 of remaining tread, as evidenced by the built-in wear indicators in the tread grooves, or 5 years from the date of retail purchase (proof of purchase required) or 6 years from the date of manufacture, whichever comes first. If an examination by Nokian shows that any such tire became unserviceable as a result of workmanship or material related conditions during the above stated periods, the tire will be replaced with a comparable new Nokian tire by an authorized Nokian dealer free of charge. Mounting and balancing plus any applicable taxes are payable by you.

The problem here is that noone will admit that this wear issue is a manufacturing defect, and should be covered as such. The fact that two lots were involved leads me to believe that this is not an isolated problem, and that Nokian has a quality issue that either is not being addressed, or has been addressed and the company policy is to ignore the problem because they are afraid of a recall. I would hope that Nokian would stand by their warranty.

"Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>



"Mike Potvin"
<mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
m>

To
cc

[REDACTED]
10/11/2007 03:05 PM

To "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>@DADEEXT
cc
bcc
Subject RE: Nokian Wr's

Mike,

You haven't seen the tires, the portions affected have the same amount of rubber as those not affected. The sipe depths are not uniform, therefore the wear showing up after one year. Some blocks have two sipes, a couple have none. There are no two affected areas next to one another, there is no pattern, it is random. They're on the outside, inside, and center treads. The tread depth was already measured by someone at Mallory, and I brought the car back at Mr. Sullivan's request for another examination so they could get the lot numbers. Noone mentioned uneven wear.

There is no wear pattern of any type such as those caused by poor alignment, overinflation, or underinflation. The tires are not cupped or scrubbed. I had them rotated every 5,000 miles by Mallory Kotzen as required by the warranty. You cannot make this determination without seeing the tire, so I suggest you call Mallory Kotzen and talk to Mr. Sullivan, or I will bring the car to another company representative of your choice. If this is unacceptable, I'll bring them to an independant lab of your choosing, at your expense.

I'm sorry, but this is a manufacturing defect. It happens. I've been in Manufacturing for 30 years. The sipes were not molded to the proper depth.

"Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>



"Mike Potvin"
<mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
m>
10/11/2007 02:07 PM

To [REDACTED]
cc
Subject RE: Nokian Wr's

[REDACTED]
I DON'T SEE THIS BEING A MANUFACTURE PROBLEM, IF IT WAS YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET 25,000 MILES OUT OF THE TIRE.THE TIRE WOULD HAVE WORN UNEVEN WITHIN THE FIRST FEW THOUSAND MILES ON THE TIRES.I BELIEVE THIS IS JUST A CASE OF UNEVEN WEAR,AND THAT'S WHY I AM WILLING TO DO 50% CREDIT AND NOT A FREE REPLACEMENT.

From [REDACTED] **mailto:** [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2007 11:30 AM
To: Mike Potvin
Subject: RE: Nokian Wr's

Mike,

[REDACTED]
10/17/2007 10:56 AM

To "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>@DADEEXT
cc
bcc
Subject RE: Nokian WR's

I'm sorry, but that's unacceptable. I no longer have confidence in your brand, because you won't admit that my tires are defective. I've decided I don't want replacements. Steve said that he was offered a rebate by the rep. I'll accept a 30% rebate of the purchase price, and drive the tires until such time as they are used up, or I have an incident due to loss of traction, whichever comes first.

"Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>



"Mike Potvin"
<mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
m>
10/17/2007 10:09 AM

To [REDACTED]
cc
Subject RE: Nokian WR's

MORNING [REDACTED] I DID JUST TALK TO STEVE AT MALLORY-KOTZEN THIS MORNING. WE ARE BOTH IN AGREEMENT THAT THE BEST WE WILL DO IS 50% CREDIT ON EACH TIRE, BECAUSE YOU DID GET OVER HALF THE LIFE OF THE TIRES. IF YOU HAVE ANY MORE QUESTIONS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL ME AT 1-800-852-5222, IF NOT PLEASE GO SEE STEVE AND HE WILL HANDLE THE ADJUSTMENTS FOR YOU.

THANKS, MIKE POTVIN

From [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 9:54 AM
To: Mike Potvin
Subject: Nokian WR's

Mike,

Have you had a chance to speak with [REDACTED] at Mallory Kotzen? He's been waiting for your call.

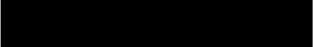
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To: Mike Potvin
Subject: Response

Mike,

I've sent you several messages which you've opened and read, and yet I've gotten no response. If discussions are ended, and you're not going to connect me to your Public Relations department, please advise. If I don't receive a response by 10/26 one way or the other on either issue, I'll take that as a yes on both counts, and I'll have to find another way to connect with your PR people.

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THE INFORMATION FROM THE RECIPIENT, PLEASE CONTACT THE SENDER
BY REPLY E-MAIL AND DELETE ALL COPIES OF THIS MESSAGE.


10/19/2007 06:53 AM

To "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
cc
bcc
Subject Public Relations

Mike,

Please forward the name and email of Nokian's Public Relations Supervisor. If you're not allowed to do that, then please forward this message to him/her so that I can discuss the situation with them.

Thank you.

[REDACTED]
10/22/2007 12:15 PM

To "David Fontaine"
<dfontaine@nokiantyresinc.com>@DADEEXT
cc "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
bcc
Subject RE: Response

David,

I'm sorry, but just because my tires' defect doesn't fall within the legalese of your carefully crafted warranty, this doesn't mean that they're not defective. They are losing and will gradually lose more of the unique properties which they get from the Haka siping. They will no longer be the tires that I purchased. Catastrophic failure should not be the only criteria, there are other ways that tires fail. Failing to provide the advertised properties throughout the life of the tire is a more gradual, insidious type of defect that I can't expose myself or my family to much longer.

I believe that we've exhausted the possibility of settling this matter through the channels provided by your company.

Thank you for yours and especially Mike's time.

"David Fontaine" <dfontaine@nokiantyresinc.com>



"David Fontaine"
<dfontaine@nokiantyresinc.com>
10/22/2007 10:44 AM

To [REDACTED]
cc "Mike Potvin" <mpotvin@nokiantyresinc.com>
Subject RE: Response

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm in charge of technical customer service and consumer affairs. Being familiar with your case I'm quite surprised that this hasn't been resolved yet. I know Mike has been talking with your tire dealer and they are both in agreement that the generous offer of 50% warranty is all that can be offered. I trust Mike's knowledge of our warranty and his ability to determine proper compensation. He has been working in this area for 8 years. The condition you've experienced does not render the tires unserviceable which is the criteria for free replacement. Belt shifting, belt separation, tread de-lamination, and excessive cracking are examples of conditions that would warrant free replacement.

I hope that you will accept their offer as it is more than fair for this case.

Best regards,
David Fontaine
Nokian Tyres, Inc.

From [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, October 20, 2007 6:01 AM



