

JUN 07 2010

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OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATIONS/LRD

NVS-216
1200 NEW JERSEY AVE SE
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)

I AM WRITING IN REGARDS TO A 2003 MONTANA FIFTH WHEEL CAMPER I OWN THAT HAS AL-KO AXLES UNDER IT. I HAVE HAD EXCESSIVE TIRE WEAR AND TOOK IT TO AN ALIGNMENT SHOP FOR AN ALIGNMENT. I WAS TOLD THE AXLES WERE SO BAD THEY COULD NOT BE ALIGNED AND NEEDED TO BE REPLACED. THIS UNIT WAS MANUFACTURED BY KEYSTONE RV COMPANY. AS YOU CAN SEE BY JUST A COUPLE OF ENCLOSURES THIS IS NOT AN ISOLATED PROBLEM. SINCE I FEEL THIS IS A HAZARD ON THE ROAD I WOULD ASK THAT YOU INVESTGATE THIS AND INFORM ME OF HOW I CAN GET THIS RESOLVED. THIS APPEARS TO BE AN ONGOING PROBLEM WITH UNITS MANUFACTURED BY KEYSTONE. I DON'T FEEL THAT EVERYONE WHO PURCHASES A UNIT MANUFACTURED BY KEYSTONE SHOULD HAVE TO HAVE NEW AXLES MADE FOR THEIR NEW UNIT. PLEASE ADVISE ME AS TO WHAT ACTION, IF ANY, YOU MIGHT BE TAKING IN REGARDS TO THIS MATTER

[REDACTED]
PUERLO WEST, CO. [REDACTED]

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061810
TGW

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10-10-2007, 12:41 PM

#1

Mrs. Mik

Junior Member

Join Date: Nov 2006
Location: Abbotsford, Wisconsin
Posts: 8**Al-Ko Axles: Why aren't they recalled?**

I'm frustrated, to say the least. Al-Ko has had an issue with their axles in the 2003-2004 model years and they know they have a problem. The problem is premature, uneven tire wear because of a defect in the axles.

If your rig was still under warranty, Al-Ko was replacing the axles free of charge. Unfortunately, for folks like us, who were unable to use their coach enough during the warranty period (2 years, I believe), the uneven tire wear did not show up until after the warranty.

You would think, as Al-Ko knows that they caused this problem with their faulty axles, that they are stepping up to the plate and replacing those axles and tires. Unfortunately, that is NOT what they're doing! We are one of those that was faced with faulty Al-Ko axles that were out of warranty (We had barely 3,000 miles on our 3 year old 5th wheel).

Believe it or not, Al-Ko was kind enough to advise that if we shipped the axles to them after WE paid to replace them, they would be happy to "inspect" them! Oh, please! What kind of response is that? We are one of the lucky ones. Our manufacturer replaced the axles, tires, brakes, magnets, etc. when Al-Ko refused.

Hundreds of complaints have been filed with the NTHSB for faulty Al-Ko axles, but because the complaints cannot be filed against Al-Ko directly, they're difficult to find and link together.

Is this another case of the bean counters deciding that it's cheaper to pay off a couple lawsuits than to fix the problem they caused? This is a huge safety issue and Al-Ko seems to not care. Will they care when someone is killed because of a blowout caused by uneven tire wear caused by Al-Ko's faulty axles? Apparently lives being at stake means absolutely nothing to this company.

The above is just one reason why folks are becoming disgusted with the RV Industry. Shoddy workmanship is one thing, but dangerous axles made by a company that refuses to accept responsibility is incomprehensible!

Julie

[RVing Outpost](#)

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[Keystone RV Axles Issues -Very long / insightful](#)

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Author

Topic

diamanti1

2nd Gear Member

Posted - 12 November 2007 : 5:18:04 PM



Peoria AZ
127 Posts
[Offline]

I am going to cross post this on a couple different sites and please do share this information with anyone that you know who owns a keystone product. Also there would be some value to consider whom you are going to purchase from if you are in the process of buying a RV / Toyhauler.

In a nutshell I purchased a Keystone Raptor 3712TS in October of 2006 from Beaudry RV. After our first trip to the Beaudry RV park in Tucson we had gone through 4 tires. I was first accused on hitting curbs, locking up trailer brakes, etc. But finally they replace the tires. This was after they had my trailer held captive for 7 weeks with little to no work being completed. Now lets fast forward to September 2007. I now had 5 tires that were showing significant wear with less than 1500 miles on these tires so I scheduled my RV to go back to Beaudry RV for "Warranty" work. On the day before my appointment I went to the storage facility and picked up my trailer. On the way home my trailer brakes locked up when the turn signal was turned on. Upon further investigation I found that the charge line from the truck into the trailer wiring harness had shorted out and had melted the wiring harness. The short occurred near the batteries on the toyhauler. So this was another items that was added to the fix it list for the warranty idiots at Beaudry. So I take my trailer in on September 4 and I leave a list of repairs. I then proceeded to contact Beaudry on a weekly basis to check the status of my trailer as we had plans on going to dunes for Halloween. So now lets fast forward from 9/4/2007 to 10/10/2007. I am called and told that my trailer is ready for pick up. I go down to the dealership and am told that nothing is wrong with the axles and that they only measured the mounting tabs and all was square. I asked about the wiring repair and was told it was done as well. So backed my truck up to pull away and well no trailer lights. The idiots, I mean technicians, didn't even touch my trailer. In fact in the 7 weeks they had my trailer they did nothing. I picked my trailer up and went straight to spec track for alignment. Bill there is great and very thorough. My axles were

grossly misaligned. So now onto the information below. Please share it with anyone you know that owns a keystone product. It sounds like no attention is paid to the axles / wheels as the product leaves their factory.

A couple questions. First has anyone else had a similar experience? Second, Are there any attorneys that deal with product liability / defect issues on RV's?

Mr. Cole Davis, President and CEO Keystone RV,

It is unfortunate that I have to share the letters below with you but I feel that you as the leader of your organization need to know and understand some of the frustrations that buyers of your products are having. I find it particularly disturbing that after paying nearly \$70k for my RV that I now find

out that when it left the factory that the tires aren't balanced or aligned. Please see the comments from Ms. Denise Roach in the letters below. How can a manufacturer of a product not assure that the product will perform appropriately before letting it leave the factory? This baffles me and I am curious how many other owners have been given the same information that I have recently been given.

Customer service and superior products are what keep people coming back in the future. I would hope that you would look at my information below and share it with others in your organization as a lesson of what QA / QC on a product is not. When the RV leaves your factory it shouldn't "almost" be ready for the road.

Should you like to discuss further please feel free to contact me at

[REDACTED]
> Subject: Re: 800622 -- Please See attached documentation
> Date: Mon, 12 Nov 2007 18:45:15 -0500
> From: [REDACTED] <>
> To: roacd@keystonerv.com
> cc:
>
> This is very reassuring to know that Keystone does not care if the axles are

properly set up on trailers as they leave the manufacture. I am going to take the information you have shared with me and share it with my peers as it relates to the quality of construction with my keystone product. I am also going to do further research on product liability as it relates to RV's. Knowingly selling a

product that can have a defect, ie axles not properly aligned, is malicious and

negligent. With the premature wear I was getting on my tires on my coach how

would a response below sound in court should an accident have happened. I truly

find this statement hard to believe. "When the units

> leave Keystone they are not aligned or tires balanced.". To me this type of disclaimer should be provided to the buyer.

>

> The measurements that were taken on my coach have nothing to do with the camber / toe of the axles. They purely mounted the axles that were defective.

>

> thank you for your time and I am going to be in touch with keystone further in regards to this matter

>

>

> Thanks,

>

>

> Regional Director

>

>

> Sent from my wireless blackberry device

>

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: Denise Roach <roacd@keystonerv.com>

> To:

> Sent: Mon Nov 12 15:45:16 2007

> Subject: FW: 800622 -- Please See attached documentation

>

> Mr.

> As you can see in the previous email, which was the wrong email address,

> Keystone does not warranty/reimburse for wheel alignments or tire

> balance. I got with the warranty manager and supervisor and they

> agreed, as stated in the Keystone Owner's Manual, wheel alignments and

> tire balance are not warranty and not covered by Keystone RV.

> Thank you,

> Denise

> Customer Relations Specialist

> Keystone RV

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Denise Roach

> Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2007 9:01 AM

> To:

> Subject: FW: 800622 -- Please See attached documentation

> Importance: High

>

> Dear Mr.

> Since receiving your email I have had time to review your file and

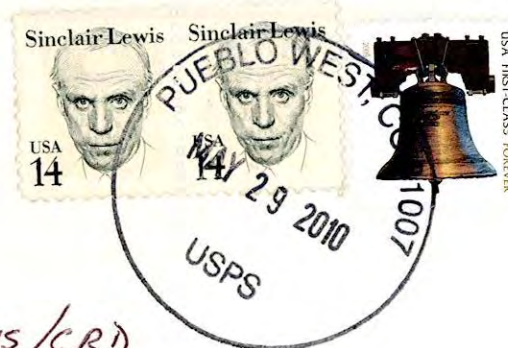
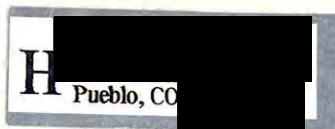
> discuss your input with the warranty team. Keystone's warranty team was

>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: [REDACTED]
> Sent: Sunday, September 30, 2007 2:20 PM
> To: CS Service/Parts/Warranty
> Subject: 800622
>
>
> Host: ip72-222-139-222.ph.ph.cox.net
> -----
> email: [REDACTED]
> realname: [REDACTED]
> Address:
> City: Peoria
> State: AZ
> ZipCode: 8
> PhoneNumber: 62
> division: RP
> SerialNumber: 4ydf371247r [REDACTED]
> VINNumber: 4ydf371247 [REDACTED]
> Comments: I am writing this note to you customer service dept out of
> frustration and disappointment in the manner in which my recent warranty
> work is being handled by Beaudry RV in Chandler Arizona. I purchased my
> 2007 Raptor 3712 Last October and have had the trailer in on two other
> occasions for concerns over the axles / tires. After our first trip
> (approximately 300 miles) on the toyhauler I went through 4 tires and I
> took the unit into the dealer for this concern and after endless
> arguments and ~ 6 weeks of my trailer being at the service department
> they replaced the 4 damaged / worn tires and said there were no axle
> issues. This still didn't explain why the tires are wearing so
> rapidly. So now to the recent trip for the same issue I dropped my
> trailer off 1 month ago for tire / axle issues among other things that
> needed to be repaired (trailer wiring harness shorted and burned, warped
> counter top, fuel station leak, etc) This time they sent my trailer to
> "spe
> c track" for axle evaluation and they have found that there are
> problems with the axles. But the story I am getting from the dealer is
> that Keystone and the Axle supplier are pointing fingers at each other
> trying to determine who is responsible for the repairs. Here is my
> dilemma. I have brought this issue to the attention of the dealer back
> in December of 2006...and they chose not to look at repairing the axles
> or even evaluating them for problems. What is it going to take to get
> this problem resolved? I need my trailer, in running condition, by
> October 15. I don't think expecting to have my trailer back 6 weeks
> after dropping it at the dealer should be expecting to much?? Who at
> Keystone can I speak to in order to get this resolved? Fix my trailer
> then work out the warranty issues within your company. Please have
> someone call me ASAP at 623-
>
> Thank you.
> [REDACTED]
> B1: Submit Request
> -----
> 09/30/2007, 02:19 PM
> <http://keyperformance-raptor.com/?page=service>

> in contact with your dealership, Beaudry RV, and they sent in the
> measurement sheets that are required when an "axle issue" is presented
> to them. The service advisor and Robert from Beaudry reviewed the
> measurements and all the measurements were within specs per the axle
> manufacturer. Being that the axle is fine the next issue would be a
> wheel alignment. Per the Keystone Owner's Manual, wheel alignments or
> tire balance are not covered under warranty. It is the responsibility
> of the owner to have the wheels aligned or balanced. When the units
> leave Keystone they are not aligned or tires balanced.
> Your documentation, input as well as this response has been added to
> your permanent file.
> Sincerely,
> Denise
> Customer Relations Specialist
> Keystone RV
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From:]
> Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2007 11:54 AM
> To: Denise Roach
> Cc: [REDACTED]
> Subject: FW: 800622 -- Please See attached documentation
> Importance: High
>
> Denise,
>
> Please see the attached documentation of axle repairs / alignment that
> were completed recently on my Raptor 3712TS. Axles were the primary
> reason that I took my toyhauler into Beaudry RV for warranty work in
> December of 2006 and then again in September of 2007. During the recent

> repairs I was assured by my service advisor that the coach would be
> taken to spectrac for axle evaluation. Spectrac is a service center
> that specializes in trailer axles and they are the best equipped
> facility in Phoenix area to handle this type of evaluation. The end
> result was that my trailer never left Beaudry RV and all that was done
> was axle hangers were measured. This clearly did not get to the root of
> the problem for premature tire wear. I think you will see in reading
> the attached documents that my axles were clearly not aligned properly
> and the axle where the most significant tire wear occurred was grossly
> aligned (axle #3). I am curious why this would not be considered a
> warranty repair on my trailer? It is very disappointing that after
> spending nearly \$70K on a coach that I cannot have any confidence in the
> construction and operation. I have been concerned with the tire wear on
> this coach since it has gone through 8 tires in less than 1 year. It is
> my opinion that Keystone Raptor has an obligation to provide me
> reimbursement for my out of pocket expenses as it relates to my axle
> repairs (\$622.58). I have provided adequate documentation that clearly
> shows a problem and I would like to hear from you and your company how

> you are going to proceed in reimbursing me for this expense. If this is
> not a "warranty" type issue I would like some documentation that
> provides accepted tolerances on axle alignment. Specifically what are
> the QA / QC specs for camber and toe on each of the axles prior to the
> coach leaving your factory.



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JUN 04 2010
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