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AUG -2 2012

Wednesday, July 25, 2012

TO: NHTSA HEADQUARTERS

REF: POSSIBLE SAFETY HAZARD

Dear Maam or Sir,

Hello my name is [REDACTED] and I am writing to you today about a possible safety hazard/defect with the plastic intake manifold on the 2002 Ford Ranger 2.3 liter dohc engine.

Recently I was driving my 2002 Ford Ranger when suddenly without warning as I let off the gas to make a turn onto a different road, the engine rpms dropped and the truck started idling erratically and almost stalled out completely.

As I had just got some gas in the truck I assumed the problem to be water in the gas I had purchased. So I filled the tank and ran dry gas through the system, no change. I then changed the spark plugs and gas filter, no change. As I had no other clues as to the cause I then turned to the Internet Mechanics for advice and info, and this where I ran across what turned out to be the cause of my erratic idle/stall problem.

On the website it told of a plastic plug that comes out of the front of the plastic intake manifold. So I removed my power steering pump and sure enough there sat the plastic plug and about a 3/8" hole in the intake manifold. This hole caused me to loose vacuum in the system, therefore was the cause of my erratic idle/stall problem.

Next I contacted Ford to find out if there was a reason for this plug, also if there was a recommended fix for it, and finally if there was any recalls because of this. There answer was to take it to my local dealership so they could diagnois the problem, and fix it. I explained to the person on the other

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end of the line that I had the plug in my hand so I knew what my problem was, and I just was trying to find out the purpose of the plug, and if there was a recommended fix before I just J.B. Welded it back into the manifold. Take it to your local dealership was the fix.

I then took a picture that I had taken of the plug and hole, and had it made into a 8x10 photo. I took this photo to the dealership and asked the same questions. Was there a reason for this plug, such as a pressure relief outlet? Was there a recommended fix by Ford? They didn't have a clue as to the purpose for the plug and as for the fix they said replace the manifold.

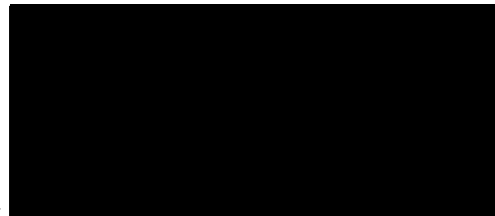
Well ain't that a fine kettle of fish. Because this little plug pops out of the manifold it means to fix it correctly according to those I talked to at the dealership I would have to spend between about \$500.00 & \$1000.00 to replace the manifold. I J.B. Welded it back in place, and got my vacuum back and my idle is again working like it should, but I am still left with the unanswered question.... **What is the purpose of this plug?** Was this plug put in for any reason other than a potential future breakdown feature so a percentage of people who couldn't glue it back in place themselves would end up taking it back to the dealership and getting soaked for a new intake manifold. Neither the local Ford Dealership nor the person I spoke to at Ford Motor Company would or could answer the question.

Why I believe this to be a safety hazard is because when this plug pops out (at least on my truck) you loose a big portion of the engine's vacuum which affects the way the vehicle operates as the rpm's fall. Take your foot off the gas, rpm's fall, and engine idles erratically and acts like it is going to stall. This could make for an extremely dangerous situation if one were on a freeway and this plug popped out and your car happened to stall with an eighteen wheeler on your butt. I don't know if there are a lot of cases where this

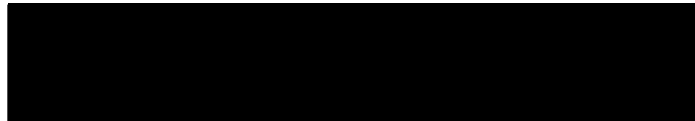
plug has popped out of these intake manifolds, but I do know I found my problem by the ones on the internet forum I had visited, so I know I am not the only one who has experienced this problem.

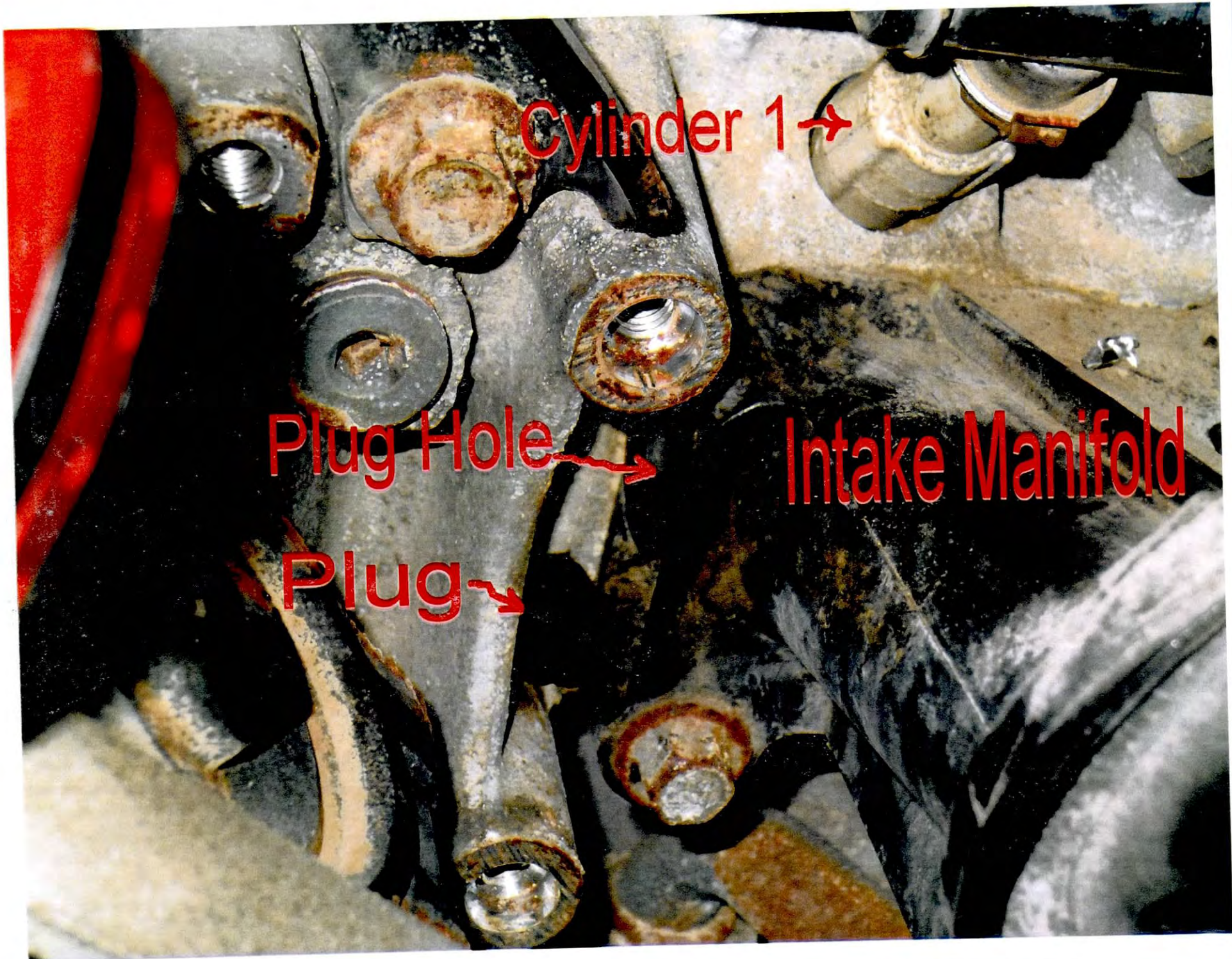
With that I will say Thank You for your time, and I hope if nothing else comes from this letter.... I hope you can find an answer to **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PLUG AND WHY DOES IT POP OR FALL OUT?** Thanks Again.

Sincerely:



Traverse City, Mi.





Cylinder 1 →

Plug Hole →

Plug →

Intake Manifold

**2.3L DOHC plastic intake manifold problem** - Ford Truck Enthusiasts ...

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10 posts - 8 authors - Jan 26, 2011

2.3L DOHC plastic intake manifold problem Ranger & B-Series. ... Just had this same thing happen on my 2002 Ranger - idle suddenly went ...

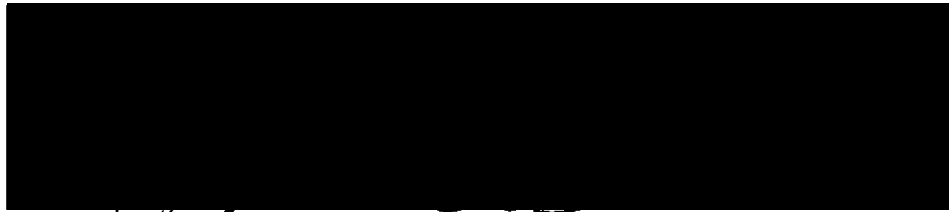
[Intake Plenum Gaskets Codes P0171 & P0174](#) - 14 posts - Feb 1, 2010

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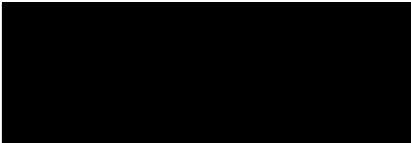
[code p1537 problems on 01 ranger](#) - 15 posts - May 18, 2007

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