



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

August 15, 2013

[REDACTED]
Perrysburg, OH [REDACTED]

NVS-216 rrr
Ref. No. 10535620

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your model year (MY) 2010 Dodge Ram 1500 truck. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation has looked into this issue and are pleased to respond.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

You indicate the rear wheels on your MY 2010 Dodge Ram 1500 truck locked up while towing a small trailer. At the time, you were traveling on vacation so a local dealer made a temporary repair and you continued on your trip. When you arrived at your destination you located a local dealer and took your truck in for further repairs. They gave you a rental car and told you the repair would be covered under the warranty. However, the dealer could not secure the parts to perform the repair. To avoid further delays, you asked Chrysler if they would offer a discount towards the purchase of another truck, but they declined. You decided to trade the truck for another vehicle to make your return trip home and have sent receipts for all your expenses to Chrysler for reimbursement. Later, you found that Chrysler issued a recall (NHTSA Safety Recall Campaign No. 12V-474) that addresses a problem for rear axle pinion nuts backing off. This problem causes the rear axle to lock up which is the same problem you experienced.

According to your report, your vehicle experienced the rear axle failure in June 2012, which is before the recall was announced on September 27, 2012. The dealer repaired the rear axle under warranty so there was no charge to you. NHTSA does not have authority to intervene in reimbursement matters that are associated with a vehicle warranty. Furthermore, our statute does not require manufacturers to reimburse owners for additional costs associated with a safety recall (e.g., lost wages while the vehicle is being repaired, car rentals, damage caused by the defect, etc.). Nor does the statute authorize the Federal government to reimburse vehicle owners for any additional costs associated with safety recalls or assist vehicle owners in obtaining reimbursements for costs associated with an alleged defect.

We contacted Chrysler on your behalf regarding your requests for reimbursement. The Chrysler Call Center is still waiting for your receipts and wants to review them before they consider your reimbursement requests. We recommend that you continue to work with Chrysler for further assistance regarding this matter. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency or the Ohio Office of the Attorney General regarding your problem and rights under the State laws. You may also ask your dealership for a meeting with a Chrysler district manager regarding your problem.

In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

You may also consider contacting the Better Business Bureau (BBB) Auto Line. The BBB offers free mediation/arbitration to resolve warranty disputes under guidelines established by the FTC. Remedies include repair, reimbursement, repurchase or replacement, depending on program eligibility. You can visit their web site at www.bbb.org to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB Auto Line at 1-800-955-5100.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or of motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.gov or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at our web site.

Sincerely,



Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement