

CL-10723883-4529

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

Portage, MI

e-mail:

July 21, 2015

Ford Motor Co.
Customer Relations Center
P.O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48126

AUG - 5 2015

Re: Safety Defect, 2005 Ford Escape,

Ford Case Number

NHTSA Confirmation 10723883

copy to NHTSA

Dear Ford Customer Relationships Centre,

We recently experienced a safety defect with our 2005 Ford Escape Hybrid. Subsequently, we brought this issue to your attention on April 6, 2015, when I spoke with Barbara at Ford Customer Relationships Centre, and was issued the above case number. The defect involves severe rusting of the right rear wheel well, which causes the top of the shock absorber to come loose.

We bring this defect to your attention because it could have resulted in our vehicle and its passengers being in a severe accident. In addition, Ford Motor Company has issued a recall on other years and other of Ford vehicles for this very same type of defect, but for some reason, it has not issued a recall on this year and model vehicle, even though the defect has obviously occurred in this vehicle.

When I called Ford Customer Relationships Centre, I was told that Ford was not aware of the problem. However, a brief search of the Internet quickly revealed that several Ford vehicles have experience the same defect, including other 2005 Escape Hybrids. I've included several websites at the end of this letter, which attest to other owners experiencing the same defect.

For several days in April 2015, we heard a thumping sound coming from the right rear wheel well of the vehicle, but could not identify the source of the issue. We finally found the source, that the wheel well was severely corroded at the point at which the shock absorber attaches. The thumping sound we heard was actually the sound of the shock absorber striking a plastic interior panel whenever the vehicle hit a bump. Had we not found the problem when we did, the shock absorber probably would have broken loose while driving, possibly at highway speed, and the vehicle might very well have lost control, perhaps resulting in potential severe injuries and even death.

The corrosion defect only occurred on the right rear wheel well, not on any of the others.

ET
8/6/15
SMD

We took the vehicle in to our local Ford dealer, Don Seelye Ford in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on April 7-8, 2015. When we called to make the appointment for the repair, they said they were very familiar with the wheel well corrosion defect on the Ford Escape. As you can see from the enclosed invoice, the vehicle had only 83,001 miles at the time. The repair cost to our family was \$884.77 a charge that we feel is unreasonably high considering this was a known safety defect.

Photographs of the severe corrosion are enclosed within this letter, in addition to a copy of the repair bill from Don Seelye Ford.

To resolve the problem, we believe Ford Motor Company should issue a recall for this known defect. In addition, we expect a refund of our repair bill to Don Seelye Ford. We have owned several Ford vehicles in the last 20 years, but because of our problems with this issue, we are hesitant to consider purchasing another product from Ford until this issue is resolved.

We look forward to your reply and a resolution of our problem and are also contacting the National Highway Safety Transportation Board so they are also aware of this issue.

Please contact me at the above address or by phone or e-mail if you have any further questions.

Some online sources that point to a number of other reports on the wheelwell rust defect on the Escape, including the same year as ours, include the following. A number of these Escape owners have reported paying \$1000 or more for their repairs, as well as low miles on the odometer, as ours has. I've included other similar recalls caused by excessive rusting on suspension components:

[REDACTED] (most owners on this site reported the same problem, including with the same year Escape as ours)

[REDACTED] (this is the same problem as ours, described by a number of owners on the [REDACTED])

[REDACTED] (one letter writer from Darien, Illinois concurs that his Ford dealer indicated that a number of 2004-06 Escapes had the same defect involving severe rusting of the wheel well at the point at which the shock absorber attaches.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Enclosure(s)

Cc: National Highway Transportation Safety Board



This is a photograph of the severe corrosion damage of our 2005 Ford Escape Hybrid. As you can see, only a small strip of corroded metal still allows the top of the shock absorber to remain attached. The white material behind the bracket is evidently a thin piece of sound insulation, and immediately behind that, you can see the black plastic interior panel that the shock absorber and bracket were thumping against, even when we hit small bumps in the road. Had the remaining small pieces of corroded metal broken away, a severe accident may have resulted.



Another photograph showing the severe corrosion on our 2005 Ford Escape Hybrid. This damage resulted in our family being charged \$884.77 for repair by Don Seelye Ford in Kalamazoo. When we called for our appointment for the repair, we were told that the Service Department is well aware of this safety issue.



This photo very clearly shows the amount of corrosion damage on our 2005 Ford Escape Hybrid. The white material appears to be a sound insulation, and the black interior panel that the shock absorber and bracket were striking over bumps is behind the insulation.



This photograph from a slightly different angle clearly shows the damage on our 2005 Ford Escape Hybrid.



This photograph shows how little metal remains connecting the right rear shock absorber and bracket to the frame. Striking any kind of bump might have torn the top of the shock absorber away, resulting in an accident.

SEELYE

AUTO GROUP

"BETTER SEE SEELYE"

Seelye Ford

3820 Stadium Dr. Kalamazoo, MI 49008

(269) 375-3820

Michigan Facility No. F-103996



CUSTOMER NO.	ADVISOR KEVIN HOPP	907063	TAG NO.	INVOICE DATE 04/08/15	CELL:
	LABOR RATE	LICENSE NO.	MILEAGE 83,001	COLOR OXFORD WHIT	STOCK NO.
KALAMAZOO, MI	YEAR / MAKE / MODEL 05/FORD TRUCK/ESCAPE/4DR 4WD HYBRID			DELIVERY DATE 01/22/05	DELIVERY MILES 5
	VEHICLE I.D. NO. 1 F M C U 9 6 H 7 5 K			SELLING DEALER NO.	PRODUCTION DATE
	F.T.E. NO.	P.O. NO.	R.O. DATE 04/06/15		
RE: [REDACTED] COMMENTS					

JOB# 1 CHARGES

LABOR # 1 35FOZBODY1 REPAIR PER ESTIMATE TECH(S): 901608 902250 561.91

RT REAR WHEEL WELL RUSTED OUT
REPLACED RT REAR WHEELHOUSE PANEL.

PARTS	QTY	FP NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	
	1	7L8Z-7827886-B	PANEL AND WHEEL	304.58	304.58
				TOTAL - PARTS	304.58

JOB# 1 TOTALS

LABOR 561.91
PARTS 304.58

JOB# 1 JOURNAL PREFIX FOCB JOB# 1 TOTAL 866.49

ESTIMATE

CUSTOMER HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIVING ORIGINAL ESTIMATE OF \$884.77 (+TAX)

TOTALS

* NEXT RECOMMENDED SERVICE: *
* 04/06/2015 / 83001 MI 01FOZFF REPLACE FUEL FILTER *

ALL REPAIRS AND PARTS LISTED WERE FURNISHED IN COMPLIANCE WITH MICHIGAN AUTO REPAIR ACT (P.A. 300).
CASH [] CHECK [] CHECK #.....
VISA/MASTERCARD [] AMERICAN EXPRESS [] DISCOVER []
WORKMANSHIP OF ALL LABOR SERVICES PROVIDED IS WARRANTED FOR 12 MONTHS OR 12000 MILES WHICHEVER COMES FIRST
ALL PARTS INSTALLED ARE NEW UNLESS STATED USED/REMAN (RM)
FORD MOTOR COMPANY WARRANTS TO THE ORIGINAL PURCHASER THAT NEW FORD PARTS FOUND TO BE DEFECTIVE IN FACTORY SUPPLIED MATERIAL OR WORKMANSHIP WILL BE REPAIRED, REPLACED, OR EXCHANGED FOR 24 MONTHS OR UNLIMITED MILES!!
USED AND REBUILT PARTS CARRY NO WARRANTY UNLESS STATED ELSEWHERE ON THIS INVOICE.

TOTAL LABOR.... 561.91
TOTAL PARTS.... 304.58
TOTAL SUBLET... 0.00
TOTAL G.O.G.... 0.00
TOTAL MISC CHG. 0.00
TOTAL MISC DISC 0.00
TOTAL TAX..... 18.28

TOTAL INVOICE \$ 884.77

CERTIFICATION
ALL REPAIRS AND PARTS LISTED WERE FURNISHED IN COMPLIANCE WITH MICHIGAN AUTO REPAIR ACT. (P.A. 300)

REPAIRS PROPERLY COMPLETED AND CHECKED BY

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES
The only warranties, if any, applying to the part(s) and/or service are those offered by the manufacturer. The selling dealer hereby expressly disclaims all warranties, either expressed or implied, including any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and neither assumes nor authorizes any other person to assume for it any liability in connection with the sale of this part(s) and/or service. Buyer shall not be entitled to recover from the selling dealer any consequential damages, damages to property, damages for loss of use, loss of time, loss of profits or income, or any other incidental damages.

SHOP MATERIALS
MISC. SHOP SUPPLIES AND/OR ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGE: MISC. SHOP SUPPLIES ARE INCLUDED AS A PROPORTION OF LABOR FOR SUPPLIES. APPLICABLE ITEMS MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: NUTS, BOLTS, WASHERS, TAPE, PINS, SOLVENTS, LUBRICANTS, MATS, TOWELS, RAGS, CARBURETOR CLEANER, BATTERY CLEANER, WINDOW SEALER, ETC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH EPA REGULATIONS, AN ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGE TO DISPOSE OF HAZARD WASTE MAY BE CHARGED. THIS FEE IS BASED UPON THE SERVICE OPERATION PERFORMED IN OUR SHOP AND CAN VARY DEPENDING UPON THE ACTUAL DISPOSAL WASTE CREATED.

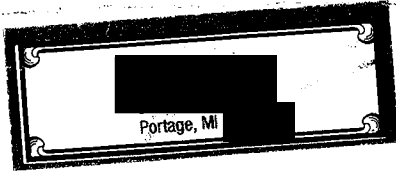
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The Reynolds and Reynolds Company EBANTS/VE CC61B059 Q (01/14)



GRAND RAPIDS MI 495

30 JUL 2015 PM 5.1



US DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION
NHTSA
1200 NEW JERSEY AVE SE
WASHINGTON DC 20590

W40-304

20590

