

07/09/2022

[REDACTED]
Tulsa, Oklahoma [REDACTED]

Consumer Assistance Center
Kia Motors America, Inc.
P. O. Box 52410
Irvine, CA 92619-2410

Kia Customer Service Representative,

The enclosed letter was sent to our Kia dealer, Midtown of Tulsa, on 06/09/2022. To date, there has been no response Mr. Sullivan – Owner/Dealer Principle.

Could you please inform us which best course of action should be taken to resolve the issue with my daughter-in-law's 2016 Kia Soul, VIN KNDJX3A56G [REDACTED].

Thank you for any direction, assistance, or information that you can provide.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
CC Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue,
S.E., Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Mike Sullivan
Owner/Dealer Principle
MidTown Kia of Tulsa
4747 S Yale Ave
Tulsa, OK 74135

BR

06/09/2022

Tulsa, OK

Mr. Mike Sullivan
Owner/Dealer Principle
MidTown Kia of Tulsa
4747 S Yale Ave
Tulsa, OK 74135

Mr. Sullivan,

My son [REDACTED] and daughter-in-law [REDACTED] have requested that I act as their representative in the matter of the recent catastrophic engine failure of their 2016 Kia Soul, on Thursday, May 19th, 2022. The vehicle was purchased from Midtown Kia of Tulsa. VIN: KNDJX3A56G7 [REDACTED]

To the best of her recollection, [REDACTED] describes her experience while the Theta II, GDI 2.0L motor failed in her 2016 Kia Soul:

"I was heading home on the highway when I noticed the car was having trouble accelerating. I was taking the exit to my house when I heard the knocking in the engine start. I was half a mile from my house so I continued slowly as the acceleration issues continued. As I was getting closer to my house the oil light came on. I parked the car in the driveway and turned it off immediately."

My experience is 42+ years of maintaining and rebuilding various makes and models of automobile engines and transmissions. I am presently working in the capacity of engineer and my services are presently rendered toward design and testing of components for military aircraft, military ground vehicles, and runway components for the Department of Defense and the Federal Aviation Administration.

A cursory external inspection indicates that the engine has suffered catastrophic damage. There is a high end "tapping" sound coming from the top side of the engine at idle indicating damaged lifter/s and/or camshaft lobe/s. We also observed excessive pressure coming from the crankcase when the oil filler cap is removed while the engine is at idle. This is consistent with the GDI engine failure mode - lack of lubrication between piston rings and cylinder walls due to fuel thinned oil caused by high pressure fuel pump (i.e. Delphi HM10060, 2000 to 2800 psi). Inspection of the remaining fuel/engine oil mixture presents an abundance of metallic particles.

Fortunately, since [REDACTED] exited the highway and the failure occurred close to home, the dangerous stall condition that is a typical failure mode of the GDI engine did not occur. Nevertheless, severe damage to the motor *has* been externally observed. [REDACTED] statement indicates that the engine began "knocking" *prior* to the low oil indicator illuminating. This would indicate that the engine components, i.e. piston rings, were damaged due to the thinning oil/fuel mixture, first, rather than the engine being completely deficient of lubricating liquid.

Likely sequence of events that caused failure of Kia, Theta II, GDI engine:

1. Fuel is directly injected into the cylinders during the highly pressurized compression cycle (Intentional design).
2. Fuel pump pressure of 2,000 to 2,800 psi is required to overcome compression cycle pressure. (Over time, piston rings may be gradually damaged by the high additional pressure produced by the fuel pump.)
3. Fuel is forced past 4 sets of piston rings which migrate into the crank case.
4. Engine oil viscosity is gradually reduced by fuel and proper engine lubrication is lost.
5. Premature engine (piston ring) ware then occurs over a comparatively short period of time.
6. The fuel/oil mixture/vapor is gradually burned via the Positive Crankcase Ventilation (PCV) and Emission Gas Recirculating (EGR) systems.
7. Subsequent catastrophic engine damage occurs. (If engine seizes or "stalls", fire may occur.)

Internet research has brought to our attention the issues, and the precedent setting class action lawsuits, that Hundai/Kia Inc. has been forced to contend with due to the inherent design problems of the Theta II, GDI 1.6L and 2.0L, and 2.4L engines - direct injection (DI) system and high pressure fuel pump issues causing the engine failure through piston ring "blowby" and subsequent thinning of the engine oil. (See links attached)

My understanding is that MKT has regular oil change records for this vehicle, while recent regular oil change records have been obtained from Firestone Auto Care.

We are contacting you in hopes that Midtown and/or Hyundai/Kia will resolve this matter quickly and amicably. Our expectations are that we will be contacted by Midtown Kia of Tulsa, Hyundai/Kia Inc., and/or The NHTSA, regarding how this issue will be resolved. We look forward to hearing from your representative in a timely manner. We agree to meet with you regarding this matter at a time and location of your choosing if necessary.

A complaint, regarding this matter, has been file with the NHTSA .

Please respond by mail to: [REDACTED] Tulsa, OK [REDACTED]

(Please retain this first contact letter as discovery.)

Regards,

[REDACTED]

CC Ms. Kathey Cooper
Branch Manager/Loan Officer
EnergyOne Federal Credit Union,
6100 S Yale Ave #100
Tulsa, OK 74136

Encl Related Internet Links

Related Internet Links

Hyundai-Kia's Billion Dollar Engine Problem that Broke the NHTSA Civil Penalty Barrier (includes Soul)

[REDACTED]

“On May 11, (2021) U.S. District Judge Josephine L. Staton approved a \$1.3 billion settlement that consolidated several 2017 and 2018 nationwide class action lawsuits, alleging that **Hyundai KIA refused to recall vehicles with the Theta II GDI engine, even though the automaker knew the engine was defective.**”

Pamphlet – Software Update and Lifetime Engine Warranty (Excluding KIA Soul, but including 2.0L engine)

[REDACTED]

Lawsuit says not enough vehicles were covered in the Theta II recalls

[REDACTED]

Theta II GDI Engine Stalls and Seizes

[REDACTED]

NHTSA shows 0 un-repaired recalls on the KIA Soul KNDJX3A56G [REDACTED]

[Redacted]
Tulsa, Oklahoma



7021 0950 0000 8422 8008

NEF

Department of Transportation

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Administrator
NHTSA
1200 New Jersey Avenue,
S.E., Washington, DC 20590



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