

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Longmont, Colorado
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Date: May 12, 2026

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Office of Defects Investigation

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE

Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Recall Request for 2014 KIA Sorento

Dear NHTSA,

I am writing to file a Vehicle Safety Complaint on behalf of my daughter, regarding her 2014 KIA Sorento. The attached report and supporting documents, are a compilation of her incident before, during, and after May 4, 2025. While I apologize for my delay, degrading health concerns on my part, interfered with compilation, review and submission of this complaint.

Upon review of my complaint, please keep in mind that I wanted to be as thorough as I could in describing this particular incident in hopes of helping all KIA owners for their past, present and future misfortunes and/or livelihood, while wanting to minimize the risk to the general public as well.

My further observation of the rear differential coupler on this KIA model is similar to that of a motorcycle clutch assembly. A motorcycle at least has a clutch whereas the KIA is engaged and driven by a mini hydraulic pump, which is not appropriate for use in these United States!

In closing, I would like to extend my appreciation to two members of your staff. In October of 2025 your staff member Ambrosia(?), and Jonathon in April 2026; both were very kind in answering some questions I had in submitting this complaint. Very professional! Thank you!

I thank you for your time and consideration. I would appreciate your acknowledgement for receipt of my complaint, and protocol updates following initial engagement of my complaint.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Form Approved: OMB No. 2127-0008; Expires 07/31/2026

Report a Safety Problem

Have you experienced a vehicle, tire, car seat, or equipment safety problem that could be a safety defect? If so, you can file a complaint that we will carefully review — like we do with every safety problem submitted to NHTSA.

What is a safety-related defect?

Generally, a safety defect is a problem that poses a risk to motor vehicle safety, and may exist in a group of vehicles or equipment of the same design and/or manufacturer. An example of a safety-related defect is a steering component that breaks, causing a driver to lose control. However, paint quality or cosmetic blemishes are not considered safety-related defects, because they do not pose a risk to motor vehicle safety.

Why is it important to file a complaint?

Complaints like yours help us investigate possible defects, which could lead to a safety recall. By reporting your problem, you're helping to keep vehicles — and ultimately our roads — safe.

To submit your complaint online, select your problem below and fill out the complaint form. If you don't have an email address, or you're unable to fill out the online form, contact our Vehicle Safety Hotline. We have English- and Spanish-speaking staff members, who are trained and knowledgeable, to answer questions and assist you in filing your complaint.

Vehicle Safety Hotline

888-327-4236, Monday-Friday 8am-8pm ET
Hearing Impaired (TTY): 888-275-9171

What type of problem do you want to report today?





Vehicle

This includes passenger cars, SUVs, motorcycles, trucks, RVs, trailers, or original vehicle equipment.



Car Seat (child)



Tire



Other Vehicle-Related Equipment/Product

This includes vehicle-related items not listed above, such as equipment added to a vehicle after it was manufactured, and products like helmets and brake fluid.



All the information that you submit to NHTSA will be sent securely. Complaints that we're unable to verify may be removed from searchable information.

Paperwork Reduction Act Burden Statement: A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number. The OMB Control Number for this information collection is 2127-0008. Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to be approximately 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing, and reviewing the collection of information. All responses to this collection of information are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

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Form Approved: OMB No. 2127-0008; Expires 07/31/2026

Vehicle Complaint Form

[Need Help?](#)

1. Vehicle
Information

2. Incident
Information

3. Personal
Information

4. Review and
Submit

1. Vehicle Information

Please enter then confirm your VIN.

Type your 17-character Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), then click confirm so we can associate your vehicle with this complaint.

Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) ?

[Confirm](#)

VIN Lookup: 17/17

Your VIN is protected under the Privacy Act

If the make, model or year shown does not match that of your vehicle, please contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline. ?

Form Approved: OMB No. 2127-0008; Expires 07/31/2026

Vehicle Complaint Form

Need Help?

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Information

3. Personal
Information

4. Review and
Submit

2. Incident Information

Problem Parts

Which parts of your car were affected? Select up to three vehicle components from either section below that you believe may have caused or contributed to the incident(s). If you are unsure of which components failed or the failed component is not on the list, choose "Other/I Am Not Sure." in the Standard Vehicle Components list.

Standard Vehicle Components

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Air Bags ? | ☐ Lighting ? | ☐ Suspension ? |
| ☐ Body ? | ☒ Power Train ? | ☐ Visibility/Wiper ? |
| ☐ Brakes ? | ☐ Seat Belts ? | ☐ Wheels ? |
| ☐ Electrical ? | ☐ Seats ? | ☐ Other/I Am Not Sure ? |
| ☐ Engine ? | ☐ Speed Control ? | |
| ☐ Fuel/Propulsion System ? | ☐ Steering ? | |

Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ☐ Adaptive Cruise Control ? | ☐ Forward Collision Warning ? | ☐ Parking Collision Warning ? |
| ☐ Automatic Emergency Braking ? | ☐ Lane Departure Warning ? | ☐ Rear Cross Traffic Warning ? |
| ☐ Blind Spot Warning ? | ☐ Lane Keeping Assistance ? | |

What happened?

In your own words, tell us what happened.

WARNING: In this section, **DO NOT** include any personal information (name, street/email address, phone number, social security/driver license number, Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), etc). This description, exactly as you enter it, may appear in a public NHTSA database. ?

General Guidelines

When describing what happened, try to answer these questions as specifically as possible:

- What component or system failed or malfunctioned, and is it available for inspection upon request?
- How was your safety or the safety of others put at risk?
- Has the problem been reproduced or confirmed by a dealer or independent service center?
- Has the vehicle or component been inspected by the manufacturer, police, insurance representatives or others?
- Were there any warning lamps, messages or other symptoms of the problem prior to the failure, and when did they first appear?

If you are uncertain, simply state UNKNOWN and provide your best assessment of the incident and cause in your description.

See attached information - What happened?

PLEASE SEE
EXHIBIT A

1951 characters remaining

Additional Details

Tell us the approximate date this incident occurred.

05/04/2025

Was there a crash?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Was there a fire?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Was there an injury or fatality?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Was there a police report?

☐ Yes ☒ No

How fast were you going? (in mph)

(optional)

Speed limit 55MPH

About how many miles were on your vehicle at the time of the incident?

(optional)

161905

Upload Files (Optional)

Upload a photo or other documentation like repair invoice, police report, insurance claim, correspondence with the manufacturer or insurer, etc. If you don't already have an electronic version of the documentation, scan then upload.

What can I upload?

- Formats: JPG, JPEG, GIF, TIF, TIFF, PNG, BMP or PDF
- Maximum of 10 files, 10 MB each

Upload Files

Back

NEXT: Personal Information

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WHAT HAPPENED? (Exhibit A)

On May 4, 2025, my daughter was driving [REDACTED] from Fort Collins, Colorado to Loveland, Colorado with the speed limit of 55mph, when the rear differential imploded leaving her stranded on the side of the road. No warning lamps or messages were ever visible prior to the incident. [Several months prior, there was some sporadic indication(s) of unknown subtle noises which indicated a concern, but it was never constant and specific location could not be identified.]

She had the car towed (<\$250>) to her place of residence at her expense, and when off-loading the car by towing company, the differential exploded leaving the drain plug attached to a piece of the differential housing, along with a stream of oil on the ground the length of the vehicle.

The KIA dealer in Fort Collins, Colorado had the car towed (<\$250>) to their dealership. She had no choice but to have them replace the differential at a cost to her of \$3500. When she was told that the car was ready for pick-up, they also told her that the rear differential coupler needed to be replaced at a cost of \$1600; no specific reason(s) ever given for why it needed to be replaced. \$5,600 total cost to repair differential and coupler!!

Since she could not afford to pay, they told her that they could disconnect the electronic cable to the coupler, and with her permission, and although no documented proof, written or verbal of that conversation was given to her, they released the car to her, claiming that they "Test drove vehicle. vehicle performs as designed at this time. No further action taken!" While they state "Test drove vehicle (re: Repair Order [REDACTED] dated 5/13/25) it should be noted that mileage in, is the same as mileage out! (See Exhibit B)

"Vehicle performs as designed at this time...No further action taken" needs legal scrutiny. I have been researching the legality of what they call "as designed at this time. No further action taken" and have been able to find definitions which I believe show that what they did to my daughter's car, proves malice or willful neglect for the safety of my daughter, her passengers, other KIA owners, and the general public!! The Fort Collins Kia dealership's actions may be reflective of KIA Corporation's choice of resolve? It does, however, appear that their actions do not comply, and are in violation

with State of Colorado "Motor Vehicle Repair Act of 1977" – C.R.S. Section 42-9-101 – Short Title.

(See Exhibit C) This may even violate United States governmental safety regulations!

The phrase "vehicle performs as designed" as stated by Service Advisor on Repair Order 6735231/1 (Exhibit C), refers to how a vehicle is expected to function according to its design specifications. This includes aspects such as performance, safety, and efficiency. In automotive design, it ensures that the vehicle meets consumer expectations and regulatory standards, providing a reliable and effective driving experience". (See Exhibit D for ChatGPT definition of "Working as Designed", and "Vehicle performs as designed" - Thomasnet)

She needed her car! However, they failed to explain to my daughter the disadvantages and/or consequences of disconnecting the coupler from the rear axle and not having AWD, "as designed" by the manufacturer, or on-demand while driving, which could possibly put her and others in harm's way!!

They released the vehicle to her, knowing that they had purposefully modified the drive train, and they knew or should have known, that she would be vulnerable when AWD was in demand!? They also released the vehicle to her with no clear, tangible, or specific feedback, verbal, written or any explanation for their actions or why, and/or how, it would impact her driving without AWD! Now it was personal for me! The life of my daughter, her passengers and the general public are truly a matter of life and death!!

In the best interest of my daughter, her family, friends, and the innocent general public, along with the explosive nature of the rear differential or coupler locking up and/or becoming disconnected from the drive train at a critical time, injuring anyone with airborne shrapnel parts, in, near, or following the vehicle and the possibility of an out of control motor vehicle, I authorized and paid for replacement of a new rear differential coupler at a cost of \$1600. It should be noted that the new differential and the new coupler, each was warranted for one year by the dealer. However, the original warranty on the vehicle when new, was 100K miles on the power train. Not fair to 2014 KIA Sorento owners now!!

Prior to, and upon completion of the rear differential coupler replacement, I asked (Service Manager?)

why the coupler had to be replaced, and no specific professional reason was ever given as to why? When I ordered the replacement of the coupler, and went to pay for the repair, the dealer still gave me not one iota of a reason as to why replacement was necessary, other than he did say, that they "replace many"!

Their response(s) does raise the question of greed!? Instead of offering to rebuild the original coupler at a lower cost, they charge the customer for a new one! Perhaps, per KIA Corporation mandates?? New, used and rebuilt couplers are much cheaper on the internet!

Fort Collins KIA dealership didn't even examine or disassemble the coupler before telling my daughter she needed a new one!? Consequently, I paid for the new coupler to be installed, and asked for the old coupler of which I have in my possession. My intent is to pay a repair shop to professionally disassemble the coupler while recording the process, for possible use as evidence in a court of law.

With my daughter's KIA Sorento Limited finally repaired to "as designed by manufacturer" and, with federal and state laws governing automobile manufactures mandates, I can now rest assured that her safety and the safety of others, has been eliminated – for now.

While the incident of May 4, 2025 was a single car event, any other party that could have been involved as a result of the above scenario, would have included insurance company claims, with possible liability lawsuits.

Please consider the above evidence as compelling, in favor of recalls for both the rear differential as well as the rear differential coupler on affected 2014 models of KIA Sorentos as documented through NHTSA complaints, and other published websites. (See Exhibit E)

As of now, the NHTSA, nor the KIA Corporation has yet to mandate a recall to all KIA owners regarding this problem. What is it going to take to realize the danger that KIA Corporation has created for both owners and bystanders by not addressing this problem? Additionally, recalls should mandate restitution for all out-of-pocket expenditures for the replacement of both differential and/or coupler, including towing, all parts, labor, and car rental, by the manufacturer and/or the dealer. And

other restitution mandates the NHTSA deem necessary.

This is just one more reason for wanting to pursue this concern for ALL the people who own and drive vehicles with this rear differential configuration, and who have paid thousands of dollars out-of-pocket, through no fault of their own, because of the poor design, quality and service from the Kia Corporation! That's not right!! Some of my research reads that in one/some instances, owners have paid multiple times for this same repair.

The problem(s) and resolve are with the KIA Corporation because they "knew or should have known" that the design of the rear differential and coupler was questionable, for which the differential and/or coupler could explode and possibly cause a one car accident, or multiple car accidents, with perhaps, multiple deaths!! I'm not so sure if this hasn't happened already?? We need your help!



2849 South College Avenue - Fort Collins, CO 80525
Phone: (970) 377-6900

SERVICE DEPARTMENT HOURS
7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday

R/O Open Date	05/13/25	
R/O Close Date	06/13/25	
Mileage In	161905	Mileage Out
161905		
Service Advisor / Tag #		
Bryce Lundahl/009		
Vehicle Identification Number		
5		
Delivery Date	07/31/17	In-Service Date
07/31/17		07/31/17
Color		License Number

FORT COLLINS, CO

Year	Make	Model	Body	Color	License Number
2014	KIA	SORENTO			

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE AND PARTS	AMOUNT
Cell: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]	
#1 - OTHER: OTHER OPTIONS NOT LISTED OTHER DIAGNOSIS - C/S: CS VEHICLE MADE A VERY LOUD NOISE, THEN WOULD NOT DRIVE, CAN REVERSE, LARGE OIL LEAK, CA	
Verified vehicle concern. Found during test drive vehicle makes a knocking noise but not coming from the engine. Racked vehicle and drove on the rack. Found rear diff binded up while customer was driving and the loud noise that was heard, was the rear diff blowing a hole through its case. Recommend replacing rear diff and coupler at this time.	
Tech: Garrett Lockhart (651)	
Installed 53000 3B500 :CARRIER ASSY-DIFFERE	1@2870.45 440.02
Installed UM024 CH279 :75W85 GEAR OIL LSD	1@45.45 2870.45
Performed rear differential replacement on vehicle. Disassembled vehicle and removed rear diff. Swapped 4wd coupler to new diff and installed new diff assy in vehicle. Reassembled all removed components and refilled rear diff to spec with 90wt gear oil. Test drove vehicle. vehicle performs as designed at this time. no further action taken.	45.45
12 month/12000 mile warranty (BP)	

TERMS: STRICTLY CASH UNLESS ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE. I hereby authorize the repair work hereinafter to be done along with the necessary material and agree that you are not responsible for loss or damage to vehicle or articles left in the vehicle in case of fire, theft, or any other cause beyond your control or for any delays caused by unavailability of parts or delays in parts shipments by the supplier or transporter. I hereby grant you or your employees permission to operate the vehicle herein described on streets, highways, or elsewhere for the purpose of testing and/or inspection. An express mechanic's lien is hereby acknowledged on above vehicle to secure the amount of repairs thereto.

Colorado law provides for the imposition of a lien in favor of any person who repairs or bestows labor on personal property such as motor vehicles. If the repair order is not paid for or paid with check, draft or order which is subsequently dishonored for any reason, or is charged to an account which is not paid when due, the law gives the motor vehicle repair facility the right to take possession of the motor vehicle and/or commence an action in court to foreclose the lien which may result in the vehicle being sold pursuant to court order. A charge equivalent to 10% of the labor charge will be added to the first invoice for materials and supplies used in conjunction with the repair/maintenance of your vehicle with a maximum charge of \$49 and a minimum of \$1.00. Section 25-17-202, C.R.S. requires motor vehicle repair facilities to collect a waste fee equaling the cost of disposal of used motor vehicle tires.

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES: Any warranties on the products sold hereby are those made by the manufacturer. The seller hereby expressly disclaims all warranties either express or implied, including any implied warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and the seller neither assumes nor authorizes any other person to assume for it any liability in connection with the sale of said products. Any limitation contained herein does not apply where prohibited by law.

NO PARTS OR LABOR WARRANTY WILL BE OFFERED WHEN USED PARTS ARE INSTALLED

NO RETURN ON ELECTRICAL OR SAFETY ITEMS OR SPECIAL ORDERS.

X



FORT COLLINS

9 South College Avenue - Fort Collins, CO 80525
Phone: (970) 377-6900

SERVICE DEPARTMENT HOURS
7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday

R/O Open Date	05/13/25	
R/O Close Date	06/13/25	Status
Mileage In	161905	Mileage Out
Service Advisor / Tag #	Bryce Lundahl/009	
Delivery Date	07/31/17	In-Service Date
Color		License Number



Year	Make	Model
2014	KIA	SORENTO



Work Phone	
Vehicle License	

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE AND PARTS

Please Note: CREATED 2025-05-12 03:39:00PM TAKEN BY LIAM POPPAW

* @ FT COLLINS KIA "WHERE IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO SEE YA *

AMOUNT

TERMS: STRICTLY CASH UNLESS ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE. "I hereby authorize the repair work hereinafter to be done along with the necessary material and agree that you are not responsible for loss or damage to vehicle or articles left in the vehicle in case of fire, theft, or any other cause beyond your control or for any delays caused by unavailability of parts or delays in parts shipments by the supplier or transporter. I hereby grant you or your employees permission to operate the vehicle herein described on streets, highways, or elsewhere for the purpose of testing and/or inspection. An express mechanic's lien is hereby acknowledged on above vehicle to secure the amount of repairs thereto."

Colorado law provides for the imposition of a lien in favor of any person/business that repairs or bestows labor on personal property such as motor vehicles. If the repair order is not paid for or paid with check, draft or order which is subsequently dishonored for any reason, or is charged to an account which is not paid when due, the law gives the motor vehicle repair facility the right to take possession of the motor vehicle and/or commence an action in court to foreclose the lien which may result in the vehicle being sold pursuant to court order. A charge equivalent to 10% of the labor charge will be added to the final invoice for materials and supplies used in conjunction with the repair/maintenance of your vehicle with a maximum charge of \$49 and a minimum of \$1.00. Section 25-17-202, R.S., requires retailers to collect a waste tire recycling developmental fee on the sale of each new motor vehicle tire.

DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTIES. Any warranties on the products sold hereby are those made by the manufacturer. The seller hereby expressly disclaims all warranties either express or implied, including any implied warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, and the seller neither assumes nor authorizes any other person to assume for it any liability in connection with the sale of said products. Any limitation contained herein does not apply where prohibited by law.

10 PARTS OR LABOR WARRANTY WILL BE OFFERED WHEN USED PARTS ARE INSTALLED

NO RETURN ON ELECTRICAL OR SAFETY ITEMS OR SPECIAL ORDERS.

LABOR	440.02
PARTS	2915.90
DEDUCTIBLE	.00
SUBLET	.00
SHOP SUPPLIES	.00
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	.00
SALES TAX OR TAX I.D.	234.73
SPECIAL ORDER DEPOSIT	.00
DISCOUNTS	.00
TOTAL DUE	3590.65



NEW PART WARRANTY?

(Exhibit C

[REDACTED] d May 26, 2025).

[42-9-101](#)

[Short title 42-9-102](#)

[Definitions 42-9-103](#)

[Applicability 42-9-104](#)

[When consent and estimate required - original transaction - disassembly 42-9-105](#)

[When consent and estimate required - additional repairs - changed completion date 42-9-106](#)

[Amounts over estimate - storage charges - cancellation of authorized repairs 42-9-107](#)

[Used, reconditioned, or rebuilt parts 42-9-108](#)

[Invoice 42-9-108.5](#)

[Warranty completion date 42-9-108.7](#)

[Motor vehicle repair facility warranties 42-9-109](#)

[Return of replaced parts 42-9-109.5](#)

[Inflatable restraint systems - replacement 42-9-110](#)

[Exemption - antique motor vehicles 42-9-111](#)

[Prohibited acts - definitions 42-9-112](#)

[Criminal penalties 42-9-113](#)

[Civil penalties](#)

Current through Fall 2025

§ 42-9-101. Short title's source at colorado.gov

(Exhibit D)

ChatGPT Rate this definition:0.0/votes

1. Working as designed

Working as designed refers to a situation where a system, product, or process functions according to its intended or planned purpose. It implies that the system or product is performing as expected and meeting the specifications or requirements laid out during its design phase. When something is described as working as designed, it suggests that it is functioning correctly and without any unforeseen issues or failures.

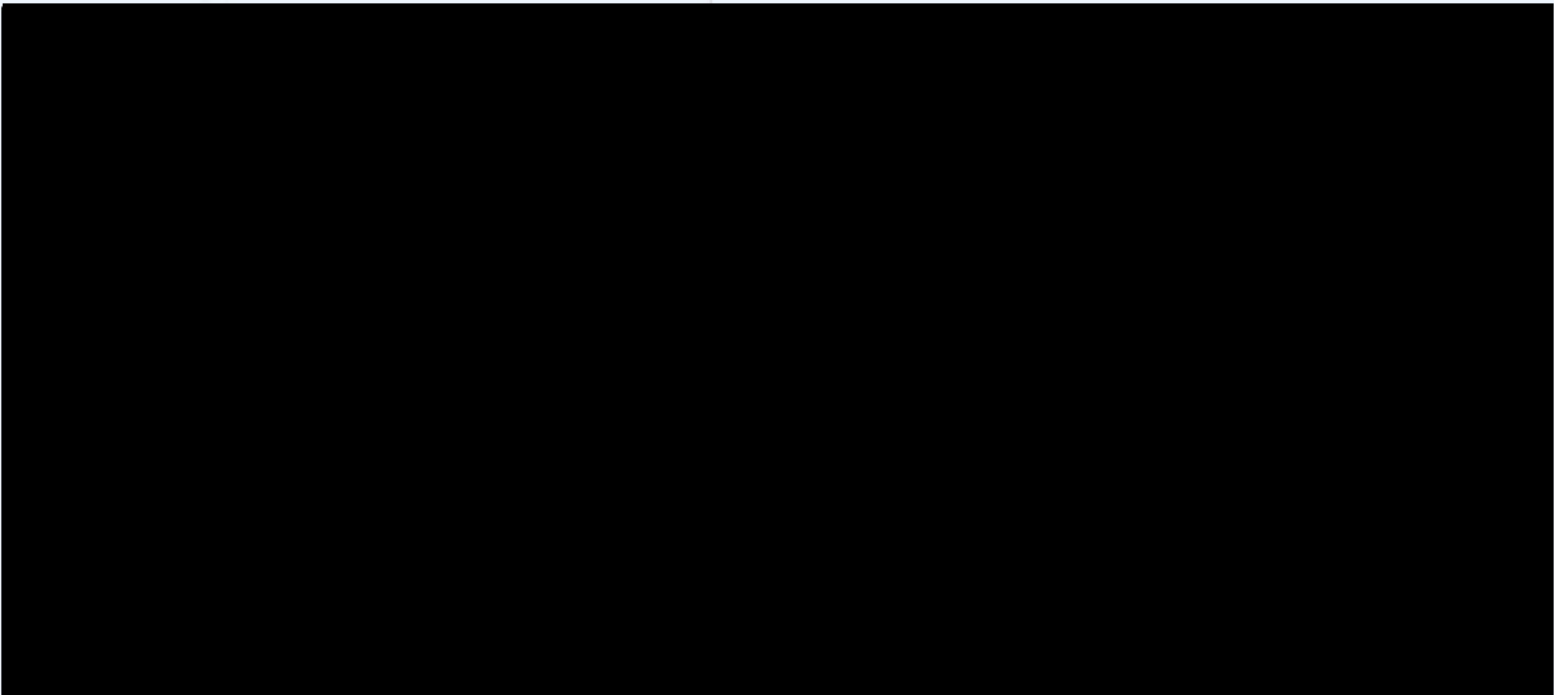
Thomasnet. "Vehicle Performs As Designed"

The phrase "**vehicle performs as designed**" refers to how a vehicle is designed to meet its intended functions and capabilities. This includes aspects such as **performance, handling, and safety**, which are crucial for ensuring that the vehicle operates effectively and meets consumer expectations. In automotive design, this means that the vehicle's aesthetics, ergonomics, and functional features are carefully crafted to enhance user experience and meet regulatory standards.

Thomasnet+2

DISCOVERY: (Exhibit E)

have discovered many documented sources regarding the exact problem(s) of the rear differential and/or coupler repairs, and in some cases, multiple repairs to the same vehicle for the same reoccurring problem.



NHTSA with 65 power train complaints - 11 specific to differential of imploding/exploding! This is, and has been, a design flaw affecting vehicles here in the U.S.!! (see **attached website**), <https://www.nhtsa.gov>



Contact Us

Share:    

NHTSA Contact Information

NHTSA Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.

West Building *ODI*

Washington, DC 20590

Call or Email NHTSA

- Call us at [888-327-4236](tel:888-327-4236)
- Contact us [by email](#)

Vehicle Safety Hotline

To report suspected safety defects with your vehicle, car seat, tires or other vehicle equipment, contact our Vehicle Safety Hotline. You can also obtain information about air bags, highway safety, and the proper use of car seats. We have English- and Spanish-speaking staff members available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET.

- [Email](#) our Vehicle Safety Hotline
- Call us toll-free at [888-327-4236](tel:888-327-4236)
- Hearing Impaired (TTY): [888-275-9171](tel:888-275-9171)

Call USDOT



- To reach the U.S. Department of Transportation general information switchboard, including personnel locator, call 202-366-4000.

NHTSA Media Inquiries

- Contact our media team by email or call 202-366-9550





20590

\$20.

S2324N50

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OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
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