



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE

VEHICLE OWNER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

NATIONWIDE 1-800-424-9393
DC METRO AREA 366-0123

REFERENCE NO.

551550

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

DATE RECEIVED

92 FEB 27 PM 1:10

OWNER INFORMATION (TYPE OR PRINT)

SIGNATURE OF OWNER

DATE 17 Feb 00

VEHICLE INFORMATION

VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NO.*

1FMDA41Y2NZA47191

VEHICLE MAKE & MODEL

FORD AEROSTAR X

MODEL YEAR

92

* LOCATED AT BOTTOM OF WINDSHIELD ON DRIVER'S SIDE

CURRENT ODOMETER
READING

122500

DATE
PURCHASEDL. NEW ☐ USED ☒

DEALER'S NAME, CITY, & STATE

N/A

ENGINE SIZE

(CID/CC/L)

NO. CYLINDERS

TURBO ☐DIESEL ☐GAS ☐FUEL INJECTED ☒

TRANSMISSION TYPE

☐ MANUAL☒ AUTOMATICCRUISE
CONTROL☒ Yes ☐ NoPOWER
STEERING☒ Yes ☐ NoPOWER
BRAKES☒ Yes ☐ NoAIR
CONDITIONED☒ Yes ☐ No

BODY STYLE

STAWAG ☐4 DR ☐2 DR ☐HATCH BK ☒VAN ☐PK. UP TRK ☐OTHER ☐

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION (REPORT TIRE INFORMATION ON BACK)

COMPONENT/PART NAME(S)

FUEL LINE

LOCATION

☒ Left ☐ Right☐ Front ☐ Rear

FAILED PART(S)

☒ ORIGINAL☐ REPLACEMENT

NO. OF FAILURES

1

DATE(S) OF FAILURE(S)

3 FEB 00

MILEAGE(S) AT FAILURE(S)

VEHICLE SPEED AT FAILURE(S)

60 mph

MANUFACTURER
CONTACTED☒ YES ☐ NONHTSA PREVIOUSLY
CONTACTED☐ YES ☒ NO

APPLICABLE ACCIDENT INFORMATION

ACCIDENT

☐ YES ☒ NO

FIRE

☒ YES ☐ NONUMBER PERSONS
INJURED

0

NUMBER OF FATALITIES

0

PROPERTY DAMAGE
(Est.)

\$ 7,652.07

POLICE REPORT
FILED

Notified

☐ YES ☐ NO

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), ACCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

Driving on Hwy 97 I hear a "Bam" and wonder if engine blew up. I slow down but van is running fine and so I wonder if it was a back fire. It is a couple miles into town so I continue. (I am disabled and cannot walk to far.) As I drive through town van begins to act funny - losing power, regaining power, etc. After a couple miles of driving through town I reach the repair shop. As I pull in people start pointing at me and running. Apparently the

CONTINUE ON BACK IF NEEDED

The Privacy Act of 1974
Public Law 93-579

This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA

in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

INFORMATION ON TIRE FAILURE(S) IF APPLICABLE:

TIRE IDENTIFICATION NO.

D	O	T
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MANUFACTURER/TIRE NAME

SIZE

* The identification number consists of 7 to 10 letters and numerals following the letters DOT. It is usually located near the rim flange on the side opposite the whitewall or on either side of a blackwall tire.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

"Bam" I heard was gas igniting under the van and I had been on fire all that time. The repair shop (Demsko's Auto in Omak, WA) said that the fuel line had cracked length-wise, gas had spouted out hitting the catalytic converter and ignited. The fuel line is plastic. The van was totaled. I was told I was lucky that the fuel tank had not exploded. Furthermore, when I asked the repair shop and the insurance co. they initially could not tell me who to report this to and both said that they have no routine method of reporting these events. I find that as scary as the incident itself. Thank you for your time on this matter.

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NATL HWY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Auto Safety Hotline, NEF-11 HL
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



This fire greatly concerns me because it involves from what I see a serious safety issue. Most vehicles now days have the fuel pump located in the fuel tank. It don't make much sense to me I am sure the manufacturers have their reasons. But it use to be fuel pumps were of a mechanical kind driven off the engine. Engines were run of carburetors which require low fuel pressure of only a few pounds. and since the fuel pump is in the engine compartment the line from the tank to the pump operates off suction which is even lower pressure. Now fuel injection of today, which I like, requires as much as 50 pounds pressure. And with the fuel pump in the tank that line from the tank to the pump is under high pressure. So what is the difference between the two when some kind of leak occurs. With the pump in the tank and the high pressure vaporized fuel is sprayed all over the bottom of the vehicle. It ignites easily on the exhaust pipes. Also the engine will run for quite some time because of the pressure. In the old system if there is a leak the engine will die quicker as the pump won't be able to get enough suction. What fuel does come out will only drip because of the low pressure. It is much much more unlikely a fire will occur. So as I see it we are not driving safer cars today.



We are driving ~~from~~ waiting to explode. Now looking at what happened in this case. The mechanic told me the fuel line split. From my experience that happens from the pressure inside the line probably because of some defect. This is very disturbing & only by the grace of God was my wife not seriously injured and if the fuel pump was located in the engine compartment were it belongs it would not have happened.

Anthony, God

To Whom It May Concern,

When I filled out the questionnaire & sent it to you, I did not realize that he wanted to say a few things also. As a mechanic for Smith & Nelson I believe his comments are of value.

Thank you again.

