



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

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ)

NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 1575

Date Received

00 JAN 16 04 3: 00
09-DEC-2002

Od. or
rt. dt
cool. rt
up. ltr

Reference No.

8023894

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

INDIANAPOLIS

IN

Work Number

Home Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☒ YES ☐ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA will NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 1/3/03

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (Location is based on manufacturer's label on driver's side)	Vehicle Make	Vehicle Model	Vehicle Year	Current Odometer Reading
1B3ES47C1WD658361	DODGE	NEON	1998	42679
Purchase Date 12/98	Dealer's Name Balise Chrysler		Engine Size (CID/CC/L)	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injector
☐ New ☒ Used	City Westfield State MA Zip Code 01085		No Cylinders 3	
Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☒ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☒ Yes ☐ No	Restraint System ☐ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbelt ☒ Driverside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Belt ☒ Passengerside Airbag	Cruise Control ☒ Yes ☐ No	Drive Train ☒ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel
Vehicle Type ☒ Car ☐ Sport Utl ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other		Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☒ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other		

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 05150020	Part Name(s) ENGINE GASKETS	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☒ Original ☒ Replacement
No of Failures 2	Date(s) of Failure(s) 01-JAN-2002 Mileage at Failure(s) 39640 and 41743 Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) 30 mph	Failed Part(s) Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☒ No

APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☐ Yes ☐ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☐ No	Number of Persons Injured	Number of Fatalities	Estimated Property Damage	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☐ No
---	--	---------------------------	----------------------	---------------------------	--

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

WHILE DRIVING HEAD GASKET BLEW CAUSING ENGINE TO STALL. INCIDENT OCCURRED AT 39640 MILEAGE. DEALER REPLACED GASKET, THEN BLEW AGAIN AT 41743K MILEAGE. PH

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.

Indianapolis, IN
December 10, 2002

Daimler Chrysler Customer Assistance Center
Attn: Owner Relations
P.O. Box 21-8004
Auburn Hills, MI 48321-8004

Re: Care Number 10712993

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding a problem I have had with my 1998 Dodge Neon. It concerns a relatively common issue, namely, head gasket failure. Enclosed with this letter is some documentation from the Neon.org web site, which addresses some possible remedies to this problem, along with my bills and receipts from the dealers.

On January 17, 2002, I had my head gasket replaced in South Bend, Indiana at a Five Star car dealership by the name of Gurley Leep. This was the first time it had happened. Luckily I had purchased an extended warranty and only had to pay a \$100 deductible to pay for the repair. The mileage at the time of the head gasket replacement was 39,844.

On December 3, 2002, I was driving home and noticed the oil pressure light blinking on and off. My owner's manual stated that it was not recommended to drive the car in this condition, so I pulled into Kennedy Chrysler, a dealership on Pike Plaza Road in Indianapolis, Indiana. I had relocated from South Bend to Indianapolis one month ago.

On December 4, 2002, I was notified by Jim Miller of Kennedy that the head gasket and seal was leaking. It was a major leak and would need to be repaired. Mr. Miller contacted the regional district manager to see if the work could be done in Indianapolis, as it had only been approximately 2200 miles since I had the head gasket replaced. The mileage is only 41,807.

On December 5, 2002, I contacted Kennedy and told them to start working on the car. I was tired of waiting for the district manager to return the call. After leaving numerous messages for the district manager and contacting Chrysler to have them start a file, the manager finally called back and stated that I would have to bring it back to South Bend in order to have this fixed under the 1 year, 12,000-mile warranty. Apparently head gaskets and seals are under some type of "in-house" warranty whereby only the original repair dealer could fix the problem.

After a bill of approximately \$743, I was told by Kennedy that the head gasket had no type of "gasket sealer" sprayed onto it after it had been installed. The three layers of the gasket were "dry as a bone" and should have had some type of sealer sprayed onto it, in order to prevent leakage of oil. Since the layers had not been sealed, oil was able to leak out. Over time, this became a large leakage and this led to failure. Mr. Miller stated that if this sealer had been applied that the head gasket might not have failed.

I contacted Kevin Chlebowski at Gurley Leep and told him of the problem. He told me that he would be happy to look at my bills/receipts and see if there was anything he could do. As of this writing, I am sending all documentation to him in South Bend as well as to Chrysler to see if I can get any type of reimbursement.

Indianapolis is 3 hours away from South Bend. Gurley Leep did offer to fix the problem at "no cost" to me. However, I would have to take time off from work, probably not get the car back for a few days and arrange for a tow to South Bend, which would cost me at least \$200. Also, if something again goes wrong with the head gasket, I would again have to trek up to South Bend.

Daimler Chrysler Motors Corporation
December 10, 2002
Page 2

What is wrong with this picture? The district manager, who is supposed to be Chrysler, is telling me that they can't help me and it is basically my problem. Shouldn't a head gasket last more than 2300 miles? It is not my fault that the head gasket/seal failed. I never abused the vehicle in any way nor did I drive it extensively or haphazardly.

All the documents I have read states that Chrysler may help to pay a portion of the replacement cost. I only have approximately 41,900 miles on this car and the head gasket has failed twice. **PLEASE HELP ME WITH THIS PROBLEM BY HELPING TO REIMBURSE ME FOR SOMETHING THAT IS NOT MY FAULT.** (I had also bought a Dodge Aries in 1984 and the head gasket failed then too).

I would appreciate any help that Chrysler can give me. I have always been a good customer of Chrysler, made my car payments faithfully, and taken care of every vehicle I have owned. What is happening to me now is not fair to me, the customer. Please contact me if any other information is needed.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**