

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational 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 335

Date Received

10-JAN-2001

Od_or
rt_dt
od_rt
up_tr

Reference No.

877920

Work Number

Home Number

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

666115

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 ____/____/____

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN.) (Located at bottom of windshield or driver's side)		Vehicle Mkt	Vehicle Mode	Vehicle Year	Current Odometer Reading
1FMPU18L3YLA01057		FORD TRUCK	EXPEDITION	2000	
Purchase Date	Dealer's Name		Engine Siz (CID/CC/L)	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injectio	
☐ New ☒ Used	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____		No Cylinders _____		
Transmission Type	Antilock Brakes	Restraint System	Cruise Control	Drive Train	Vehicle Type
☐ Manual ☐ Automatic	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ 3-Point Belt ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ Passengerside Airbag ☐ Motorbelt ☐ 2-Point Belt	☐ Yes ☒ No	☐ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	☒ Car ☒ Van ☐ Minivan ☐ Other
					☐ Sport Ult ☐ Truck ☐ Motorcycle ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up ☐ Truck

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 05100000 12422000	Part Name(s) ENGINE INTERIOR SYSTEMS:INSTRUMENT PANEL:GAUGE:INDICATOR:OIL	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures 0	Date(s) of Failure(s) 03-JAN-2001 Mileage at Failure(s) Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) 0	Failed Part(s) ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously ☐ 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 0	Number of Fatalities 0	Estimated Property Damag	Reported to Polic ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

CONSUMER HEARD A PINGING NOISE COMING FROM ENGINE, CALLED DEALER TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT, CLOSED APPOINTMENT, IT WAS THURSDAY, AND ON WENDESDAY NIGHT ENGINE SHUTDOWN WITHOUT ANY WARNING. TOOK TO DEALER, AND THEY SAID OIL HAD NOT BEEN CHANGED FOR A YEAR. CONSUMER STATED OIL LIGHT NEVER CAME ON. CONSUMER FELT WARNING LIGHTS MAY BE DEFECTIVE. *AK

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.

 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 335 Date Received <u>10 JAN 2001</u> Office <u>FEDS INVESTIGATION</u> Reference No. <u>877920</u>	
OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print) 666115		Work Number Home Number	
Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer. ☒ YES ☐ NO			
Signature of Owner		Date <u>1/21/01</u>	
VEHICLE INFORMATION			
Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side) 1FMPU16L3YLA01057	Vehicle Make FORD TRUCK	Vehicle Model EXPEDITION	Vehicle Year 2000
Purchase Date <u>11-2000</u>		Current Odometer Reading <u>NOT ACCURATE</u> <u>21,000</u>	
Dealer's Name <u>Northland Ford</u> City <u>Bellevue</u> State <u>PA</u> Zip Code _____	Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____ No Cylinders <u>VR</u>		
☒ New ☐ Used	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☒ Gas ☒ Fuel Injection		
Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☒ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☐ Yes ☒ No	Restraint System ☒ 3-Point Belt ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ Passengerside Airbag ☐ Motorbelt ☐ 2-Point Belt	Cruise Control ☒ Yes ☒ No
Drive Train ☐ Front ☐ Rear ☒ 4-Wheel		Vehicle Type ☐ Car ☒ Van ☐ Minivan ☐ Other	Body Style ☒ Sport Ut ☐ Truck ☐ Motorcycle ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other
FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION			
Component 06100005 12422009	Part Name(s) ENGINE INTERIOR SYSTEMS:INSTRUMENT PANEL:GAUGE:INDICATOR:OIL	Location ☐ Left ☐ Front ☐ Right ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☒ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures <u>1</u>	Date(s) of Failure(s) <u>03-JAN-2001</u> Mileage at Failure(s) _____ Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) <u>0</u>		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 <u>0</u>	Number of Fatalities <u>0</u>
Estimated Property Damage		Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No	
NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)			
CONSUMER HEARD A PINGING NOISE COMING FROM ENGINE, CALLED DEALER TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT, CLOSED APPOINTMENT, IT WAS THURSDAY, AND ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT ENGINE SHUTDOWN WITHOUT ANY WARNING. TOOK TO DEALER, AND THEY SAID OIL HAD NOT BEEN CHANGED FOR A YEAR. CONSUMER STATED OIL LIGHT NEVER CAME ON. CONSUMER FELT WARNING LIGHTS MAY BE DEFECTIVE. *AK			
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Discovery and events of the engine failure of the Expedition

1. Discovered a "pinging" noise on December 30, 2000 and immediately called Northland Ford and scheduled an appointment with their service department for Thursday, January 4, 2001. The problems were described in detail twice as being a "pinging" noise in the engine.
2. Was going home after work on Wednesday, January 3, 2001 and was less than a mile from the office when the Expedition was making the "pinging" noise and then shut down. There were no other noises, i.e. a high pitched screeching sound such as a cat screaming as is typical when an engine fails due to a lack of oil.
3. Had Expedition towed to Northland Motors the next day, Thursday, January 4, 2001.
4. I called Northland Ford later that day (1-4-2001) to see if they had determined what was wrong with my truck and spoke to Mike in the service department. He said that it needed a new motor, but that the cause was yet undetermined. He asked if the oil had been changed, and I replied that I had instructed my mechanic to change the oil and filter when he inspected the truck in October, 2000, but that I would confirm from my mechanic if he did, indeed change the oil. Mike told me that it looked like the oil hadn't been changed, but that it didn't look low either, because the engine had plenty of oil in it, and the crank case was also full of oil. He also said that the oil was just dirty. I asked him if an engine could fail from dirty oil and he responded with uncertainty. Mike also told me that engines fail at 20,000 miles if the oil hadn't been changed. I told Mike that the milcage was not accurate, as I had never put 20,000 miles on any of my vehicles ever in a year. I explained that I live 5 miles from my office and had never been on a trip with the Expedition. I told Mike That I thought that the odometer was reading kilometers instead of miles, and he was going to run out to the truck to check. I instructed Mike not to drain any of the oil out until I was present and hung up.
5. I called Northland Ford on Friday, 1-5-2001 to check on the status of the truck. I spoke with Lenny and he said that the rep from Ford had been in to look at the engine and he determined that the engine failed due to no oil change, and that I would have to buy a new engine. Lenny also stated that the vehicle had 20,000 miles on it and that this was the milcage that they had seen other engines fail. I

told Lenny that I was disputing the mileage and had talked with their dealership several times about the odometer, because I *know* what kind of mileage I put on my cars every year and I have *never* been close to 20,000 miles in one year. Lenny also told me that the rep said that if I didn't have the work done by an authorized Ford dealer that he would pull the power train warranty. Lenny said that there was only one and a half quarts of oil in the engine and that it was all sludge. I asked Lenny why Mike told me the day before that the engine *and* crankcase were full of oil, and now today he was saying that the oil was low and that it was all sludge? Lenny just repeated what he had just said. After I hung up I realized that they had gone ahead without me and drained the oil in my absence, against my instructions.

6. I called Ford in Toronto on Monday, 1-8-2001 and spoke with Kerry (Carrie?) Ann from 9:48 A.M. to 10:05 A.M. and told her about my dissatisfaction that Ford wouldn't honor their warranty. Kerry Ann wrote down our conversation as we spoke. When I told Kerry Ann that Northland Ford said that the rep had already been there to inspect the vehicle she seemed shocked. I asked her why she was surprised and she responded that she doubted that the rep was there so fast, and it would be highly unlikely. I was puzzled as to why Northland would tell me that rep had inspected my vehicle, and that Kerry Ann was shocked about the same thing. She asked me to hold the line while she asked her supervisor what she should instruct me to do. When she returned, she said that the supervisor instructed me to have the truck towed to another Ford dealer and get a second opinion. Kerry Ann then told me that she could transfer me to roadside assistance to expedite the towing. I held while she did this and was then put on the line with Susan Jackson (extension 4404) at the Tennessee dispatch center. I spoke with her from 10:05 A.M. until 10:08 A.M. Susan told me that they would *not* tow the vehicle from one Ford dealership to another and that the person I spoke with in Toronto should have known this.

7. I called back to the Toronto office and this time I got Nicole on the line. I asked to speak with Kerry Ann, since she was familiar with the case. Nicole put me on hold for a few minutes, and when she got back on the line she told me that they didn't have the ability to transfer the calls internally. I thought that she should have known this before she put me on hold. I re-stated the entire story to Nicole that I had already told Kerry-Ann. Nicole read Kerry Ann's account of the story on the computer as I spoke with her. She asked me to hold while she asked her supervisor how she should advise me. Nicole got back on the line and wanted me to hold longer, but I had patients waiting and had to go. She confirmed my

daytime phone number and assured me that her supervisor or herself would call me back, but they never did.

8. On Tuesday, 1-9-2001 I went to Northland Ford to inspect the vehicle myself. Loren, the service manager showed me the oil that had been drained out of the engine and stated that it was just under 3 quarts. He stated that this is why the engine failed. I asked Loren how he knew that was my oil. The oil was sitting in a unmarked plastic jug with the top cut off. It was sitting on a workbench out in the shop, not in any kind of "holding" area or storage area. I inspected the oil and it definitely was not sludge, it was still in the liquid form. I asked Loren two times directly if the oil pan had been removed and he responded the exact way both times, that it had *not* been taken off. Loren then became slightly confrontational and told me that I had better take the rep's offer, because if I didn't it would cost me a lot of money and that there was *no way* I could win this dispute. I asked him how they could determine what the cause of failure was if they hadn't taken the oil pan off and he just repeated himself, saying that he knew his business and I knew mine, and if I tried to fight them that I would lose.

FACTS CONCERNING THE FAILURE:

-I asked Loren to check the powertrain control module (Gem module?) To determine the true mileage, and he refused and said that it couldn't be done.

-I know for a fact that there is not 20,000 miles on my truck. I live 5 miles from my office. If I go back and forth to work 2 times a day, that is only 20 miles a day. Plus, I only work 4 days a week. I have never taken the truck on a trip. I have only used it for local driving. That all considered, if we allow double my typical amount of driving (40 miles) and take it out over 7 days, instead of the four I work, the total mileage for one year would only be 13,440 miles, which is still a high number. According to the Ford people 20,000 miles is the magic number for engine failure due to lack of oil, and my Expedition wasn't even close to that.

-There is no way the Ford rep could have determined the cause of the engine failure and pinned it on lack of oil without taking the oil pan off and looking at the pick-up sump screen. I asked Loren to see the sump screen and he told me that the oil pan was not taken off.

-The bearing surfaces should be scarred and scored if the engine was starved for

oil, again, Loren did not allow me to inspect these surfaces.

-It is extremely suspicious that Northland Ford's story changed from 1-4-2001 to 1-5-2001, from there being enough oil to there being a lack of oil, and all sludge.

-When I inspected the oil there was minimal sludge, if any.

-I asked that the oil be drained while I was present, and it wasn't, so there is no way I can know if what they showed me really is the oil from my vehicle.

-My oil light *never* came on during the entire year that I have had the truck. The warning light and /or gauge should have shown a warning, but never did! What is the purpose of having the gauges if they do not work?

-This is a top of the line, Eddie Bauer 2000 Expedition. When compared to other vehicles in their class this would have never happened.

-There is a inherent flaw in the Expedition if it turns the oil to sludge at less than 15,000 miles.

-Loren's actions were a surprise to me. The only reason I can think of for him to not want Ford to honor their warranty is because he knows that his dealership will make their markup on the sale of the engine and the cost of labor to install the engine.

-I find it odd that the first day Mike told me that the oil wasn't low, the second day Lenny told me that there was only one and a half quarts of oil in the engine, and when Loren showed me the oil (that was supposedly from my truck) there was almost 3 quarts in the jug. What is really the truth?

-A representative from Ford, Charmaine, called me at 3:18 P.M. on 1-10-01 to discuss my case. She didn't want to discuss the case at all, she merely reiterated what Northland Ford's representative, Loren had told me, with two glaring differences. The first was that my warranty had been terminated by their district rep. As of 1-4-2001. This is a direct contradiction of what I was told By Loren on 1-5-2001. He said that the rep had told him that he would keep my warranty intact if I would replace the engine at a Ford dealership. Loren further told me that the rep would pull the warranty if I had an after-market engine installed. Now this Charmaine is saying that the warranty was pulled on 1-4-2001. What is the truth.

This has become very typical when dealing with these Ford people, the stories change and I am lied to. Charmaine also told me that my truck was *6 quarts low!* Now this is the *fourth* story on the level of oil that was measured. The first day I was told that the oil level was fine by Mike. The second day Lenny told me that there was only one and a half quarts after they drained the oil out. The third story, by Loren, was that there was slightly under 3 quarts when they drained the oil (which he supposedly showed me), and *now*, Charmaine is telling me that my truck was low *6 quarts*, which would mean that there was .7 quarts when they drained the oil. WHICH IS IT! The truck hold approximately 6.7 quarts of oil. I believe that they are lying about what the level is or all of the accounts of the oil levels would be consistent, and there hasn't been one consistency yet! Further, Charmaine was very unwilling to hear my account of what had happened, and was antagonistic. I made the statement to her that the way they have it set up they make it very difficult, if not impossible to have a dispute with them. Case in point: The rep made the determination that the engine failed because of lack of oil without ever speaking with me. If he had, he would have found out that the oil light *never* came on, which shows a defect in their truck. The feat is, he never did his job. You can't come to the conclusion that an engine failed due to lack of oil by merely draining the oil out. He never took the engine apart and looked at the oil pan, sump, or bearing surfaces. Is this man paid by Ford according to how much money he saves them. I also told Charmaine that I see why people are disgusted with Ford, and how they wouldn't stand behind the tires they put on their vehicles, and how the Explorers are rolling over and killing people. Charmaine got mad and started yelling at me saying that the tires were not a warranty item.

-My experience with the representatives of Ford, from the dealership up, has been an extreme unwillingness to listen to what you have to say concerning your vehicle. They make their determination without input from you.

-The history of this vehicle will show that it has malfunctioned from the day we got it. The starter failed immediately, and they replaced it within the first month we purchased the vehicle. The starter never did work correctly, grind at periodic intervals. I was never sure that the vehicle was going to start. If Northland's records are checked, it will be found that the starter was on my list to be checked on 1-4-01 along with the "pinging" noise the engine was making. Also, the odometer never worked properly. It was malfunctioning in that it didn't keep the mileage correctly, and that it would not change from kilometers to miles. The screen would just blank out. I also brought this to their attention.

I It is possible that this truck has a computer or electrical problem that Ford is refusing to admit, and they are trying to stick the blame on me, instead of their faulty vehicle which has failed.

-I have contacted the Pittsburgh Better Business Bureau to file a complaint and ask them how they can help me. They referred me to the National Highway Traffic Safety Department (Department of Transportation auto safety department) at 1-800-424-9393. I spoke with Tina there. And she is forwarding me forms to file a complaint. Tina's concern was the fact that my oil light never came on and the oil level was supposedly low. She said that they will investigate and test other oil gauges to determine if there is a flaw in many of them, or if mine just had a factory defect.

-Tina from the DOT auto safety dept. then referred me to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at 216-263-3410 or 877-382-4357 to get me help with warranty disputes.

-I also contacted an attorney, Dennis O'Brien for legal help at the advice of Ken Wright who owns Wright Automotive. Ken made a comment that Ford is very difficult to deal with.