



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 (202) 366-0123
INTERNET: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

231

Date Received

26-JAN-2001

Od_or

rt_dt

pd_rt

ip_ltr

Reference No.

879130

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 on driver's side)	Vehicle Make FORD	Vehicle Model THUNDERBIRD	Vehicle Year 1992	Current Odometer Reading
Purchase Date ☐ New ☒ Used	Dealer's Name _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____		Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____ No. Cylinders _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
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 Util ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other _____		Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other _____		

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 05150024	Part Name(s) ENGINE:GASKETS:VALVE COVER	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No. of Failures	Date(s) of Failure(s) Mileage at Failure(s) Vehicle Speed at Failure(s)	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
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

**AFTER HAVING VEHICLE SERVICED IT STALLED. VEHICLE WAS TOWED BACK TO DEALER .
TECHNICIAN STATED THAT HEAD GASKET WAS BLOWN. PLEASE PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION.
*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.

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 231

Date Received RECEIVED

26-JAN-2004

DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Reference No.
879130

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

670212

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 2/10/04

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN.) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side) <u>1FAPP6040NH132612</u>	Vehicle Make <u>FORD</u>	Vehicle Model <u>THUNDERBIRD</u>	Vehicle Year <u>1992</u>	Current Odometer Reading <u>79,280</u>
--	-----------------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------------	---

Purchase Date <u>3-93</u>	Dealer's Name <u>CAPITAL FORD</u>	Engine Size (CID/CC/L) <u> </u>	☐ Turbo
☐ New ☒ Used	City <u>RALEIGH</u> State <u>NC</u> Zip Code <u> </u>	No Cylinders <u> </u>	☐ 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 ☒ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other
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FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component <u>06150021</u>	Part Name(s) <u>ENGINE:GASKETS:VALVE COVER</u>	Location ☒ Left ☒ Front ☐ Right ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☒ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures <u>1</u>	Date(s) of Failure(s) <u>9-11-01</u> Mileage at Failure(s) <u>70,000</u> Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) <u>55 MPH</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> </u>	Number of Fatalities <u> </u>	Estimated Property Damage <u>\$2300</u>	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

AFTER HAVING VEHICLE SERVICED IT STALLED. VEHICLE WAS TOWED BACK TO DEALER. TECHNICIAN STATED THAT HEAD GASKET WAS BLOWN. PLEASE PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION. *AK

See enclosed document for details.

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 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.



Capital Ford, Inc.

SALES
790-4600

PARTS
790-4670

SERVICE
790-4700

BODY SHOP
790-4690

RENTAL
790-4632

ENGINE 1550⁰⁰
LABOR 350⁰⁰
TAX 93⁰⁰

\$ 1993⁰⁰
TOTAL

- ALL PRICES @
CAPITAL FORD
COST.





Capital Ford, Inc.



"WHERE SERVICE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE"

QualityCare
at your service

2807 MILLBROOK ROAD

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27616

PHONE (919) 790-4700

VISIT OUR WEBSITE @ www.capitalford.com

Motorcraft
QUALITY PARTS FOR QUALITY CARS

P & A CODE: 00978-7 (CHECK (X) APPROPRIATE BOX)

☐ CLAIMS REVIEW	☐ AUTHORIZATION TO ADJUST CLAIM	☐ PARTS SCRAP OUT
PARTS	LABOR	TOTAL

Authorized Signature And Date
ON REPAIR OF SERVING DEALER, I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREON IS ACCURATE UNLESS OTHERWISE SHOWN. SERVICES DESCRIBED WERE PERFORMED AT NO CHARGE TO OWNER. THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS FROM THE APPEARANCE OF THE VEHICLE OR OTHERWISE THAT ANY PART REPAIRED OR REPLACED UNDER THIS CLAIM HAS BEEN CONNECTED IN ANY WAY WITH ANY ACCIDENT, NEGLIGENCE OR MISUSE. RECORDS SUPPORTING THIS CLAIM ARE AVAILABLE FOR 10 YEARS FROM THE DATE OF PAYMENT. NOTIFICATION AT THE SERVING DEALER FOR INSPECTION BY REPRESENTATIVE OF FORD.

NAME: _____ DEALER GENERAL MANAGER OR AUTHORIZED PERSON: _____ DATE: _____

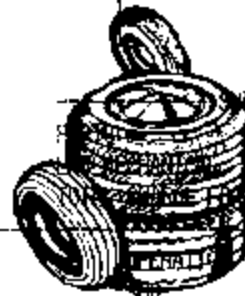
TERMS: STRICTLY CASH UNLESS ARRANGEMENTS MADE
 "I hereby authorize the repair work hereinafter set forth to be done along with the necessary material and agree that you are not responsible for loss or damage to vehicle or articles left in vehicle in case of fire theft or any other cause beyond your control or for any delays caused by unavailability of parts or delays in parts shipments by the supplier or transporter. I hereby grant you and/or your employee 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."

CUSTOMER'S SIGNATURE: _____
 *SEE BACK FOR INFORMATION REGARDING WARRANTY

FOR OFFICE USE TAG: 5516 ADV: 213 BELL, EDD INVOICE: PRELIM CUS C KB VIN 1FAP-P6A06NH132612 LICENSE NUMBER: NC JMW7606
 TAX RULES: YNNN INVOICED: 09/13/2000 18:44:11 #2 FORD THUNDERBOLT 2TR CPE
 ODOMETER IN: 73220 21801 FMC
 DATES BEGIN: 09/16/00 DONE: 09/18/00

CONCERN 51 TOWED IN...STARTED SMOKING, OK ENG LT ON...WON'T RESTART
 CORRECTION OK LEAK, REPLACE WATER PUMP, RD TEST-RUNS OK BUT SMOKES
 PART NUMBER PO# NOTE DESCRIPTION QTY
 FMC# PA 273 *PUMP ASY-WATER 113.74 113.74
 FMC E287 13544 PA COOL SYS FLUIT 1 GAL 8.00 8.00
 FACTORY TECH: 173 - HAINESPORT

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tire store.**



TYPE: C

CONCERN 52a TOW
 CORRECTION TOW
 PARTS PO# NOTE DESCRIPTION QTY
 002629 BOBBY'S TOWING 1 45.00 45.00
 FACTORY TECH: 199 - DEFAULT, TECH

TYPE: C

SUBTOTAL
 SUSPECT REPAIRS 45.00
 TOTAL CHARGE FOR CONCERN 45.00

PAGE 1

Thank You for Your Patronage!



Capital Ford, Inc.



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RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27616

PHONE (919) 790-4700

VISIT OUR WEBSITE @ www.capitalford.com

Motorcraft
QUALITY PARTS FOR QUALITY CARS™

P & A CODE: 00978-7		(CHECK 1/2, APPROPRIATE BOX)		MILEAGE OUT	
☐ CLAIMS REVIEW	☐ AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT CLAIM	☐ PARTS	☐ SCRAP OUT		
\$ PARTS	\$ LABOR	\$ TOTAL			
Authorized Signature and Date ON BEHALF OF SERVING DEALER, I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREON IS ACCURATE UNLESS OTHERWISE KNOWN. SERVICES DESCRIBED WERE PERFORMED AT NO CHARGE TO OWNER. THERE WAS NO INDICATION FROM THE APPEARANCE OF THE VEHICLE OR OTHERWISE THAT ANY PART REPAIRED OR REPLACED UNDER THIS CLAIM HAD BEEN CONNECTED IN ANY WAY WITH ANY ACCIDENT, NEGLIGENCE, OR MISUSE, INCLUDING SUPPORTING THIS CLAIM ARE AVAILABLE FOR 10 YEARS FROM THE DATE OF PAYMENT NOTIFICATION AT THE SERVING DEALER FOR INSPECTION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF NADA.				TERMS: STRICTLY CASH UNLESS ARRANGEMENTS MADE "I hereby authorize the repair work hereinafter set forth 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 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 and/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."	
CUSTOMER'S SIGNATURE _____				*SEE BACK FOR INFORMATION REGARDING WARRANTY	

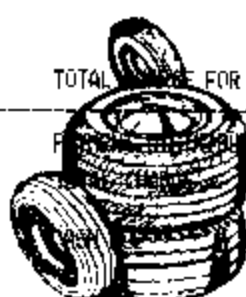
INVOICE TO:		VEHICLE INFORMATION	

FOR OFFICE USE		VEHICLE INFORMATION	
REF: 9342	ADV: 212 BELL, FOR INVOICE: MELIM CJS C KB	VIN 1FAPF6040NH132612	LICENSE NUMBER: NC-44W7806
TAX RULES: YNNN	INVOICE# 09/15/2000 17:38:11	92 FORD	THUNDERBOLT 2DR CPE
METER IN: 78217	DIST: FMC		
ATES BEGIN: 09/15/00	DONE: 09/15/00		

WORKMAN 01 PERFORM 27 POINT VEHICLE INSPECTN AND REPORT CK OVER THOROUGHLY #EB* DETECTION INCLUDES INSP AND EST IF NEEDED COMMENT CAR LOOKS OK. COULD USE 2 SHAW BAR END LINKS SOON HISTORY TECH: 173 - HAYES NORTH WEL: C	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>OPERATION</th> <th>TECH</th> <th>AMOUNT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>OT2710</td> <td>173</td> <td>+</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	OPERATION	TECH	AMOUNT	OT2710	173	+
OPERATION	TECH	AMOUNT					
OT2710	173	+					

SUMMARY OF CHARGES FOR INVOICE C61261 INVOICE-HISTORY ADN MECHANICAL TOTAL CHARGE 51.25	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>OPERATION</th> <th>TECH</th> <th>AMOUNT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>TOTAL CHARGE FOR CONCERN</td> <td></td> <td>51.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENT FOR INVOICE C61261</td> <td></td> <td>51.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>51.25</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	OPERATION	TECH	AMOUNT	TOTAL CHARGE FOR CONCERN		51.00	FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENT FOR INVOICE C61261		51.25			51.25
OPERATION	TECH	AMOUNT											
TOTAL CHARGE FOR CONCERN		51.00											
FINANCIAL ADJUSTMENT FOR INVOICE C61261		51.25											
		51.25											

YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS - PLEASE SEE FORD'S POLICY.
 IMPORTANT: YOU MAY RECEIVE A CUSTOMER SURVEY FROM THE MANUFACTURER
 IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. IF FOR ANY REASON YOU CANNOT SCORE US
 COMPLETELY SATISFIED, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR TEAM SERVICE MANAGER
 IMMEDIATELY!!! AT 919-720-4700.
 THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING CAPITAL FORD FOR YOUR AUTOMOTIVE NEEDS.
 VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.CAPITALFORD.COM



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newest
tire store.**

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Capital Ford, Inc.

Raleigh, NC 27616

Eddie Bell

Service Manager



capitalford.com

Capital Subcontractor
who towed
vehicle 9-16-00



- 15 yrs experience
- Lockout service
- 24 Hour service

Bobby's Towing & Recovery

• Phone: 919.261.0100 •

Bobby's Towing
P.O. Box 10344
Raleigh, NC 27629

Storage Lot
5500 2nd Street
Raleigh, NC 27604

General Manager

Capital Inc

Jerry Malar

1-800-291-2420

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Oct 16, 2000 3:13 PM
Subject: 92 Ford@CapitalFord-Repairs

I have not received written confirmation of the costs we discussed during the past week for the above-referenced vehicle. Please contact me regarding current charges for water pump. I also need exact and complete costs for replacing the engine. You need that I would received a prior deduction for work completed and that all labor and related expenses would be Capital Ford's and that I would be assessed for ONLY the engine not to exceed \$2,300. Does this include current use of existing oil pan, voltage regulator, etc.? I am be reached at email, postal adress, or phone number you have on file. I need this information before final decision. .

CC: [REDACTED]

no response

[REDACTED]
November 4, 2000

Fax [REDACTED]

Mr. Peter Duerksen
Service Manager
Capital Ford, Inc.
2807 Millbrook Road
Raleigh, NC 27616

Dear Mr. Ducksen:

Re: 1992 Thunderbird

I have the written commitment to replace the engine in my 1992 Thunderbird which was initially in for a 27 point inspection. Please contact me to verify that the total cost for the engine will be done for \$1,993 including engine, labor, tax (all at Capital Ford costs). Please advise if there will be any other direct or OTHER costs associated with this replacement. I need this information before authorizing the work..

The prior charges included the inspection (paid), the charges for the water pump which were exceedingly expensive and the \$45.00 towing charge. You indicated that these charges could be adjusted. Does the adjustment reference only the towing fee which I was previously told would be absorbed by Capital.

During the coming week I may be reached at work [REDACTED] during the evenings
[REDACTED] or by email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

BRENDA L. THORNE


December 16, 2000

Certified

Mr. Peter Duerksen, Service Manager
Capital Ford, Inc.
4900 Capital Boulevard
P. O. Box 58678
Raleigh, NC 27658

Dear Mr. Duerksen:

Re: Pending Repairs/Engine Replacement
1992 Ford Thunderbird
VIN 1FAPP6040NH13612

Since the problems with blown head gaskets for some Ford vehicles is well documented, I would like to speak with the Ford Representative before making a final decision. I have requested that customer service facilitate a meeting but am informed that it must be done at the dealership level which receive information on the rep's schedule.

I would also like to request, if not already ^{reflected} that you submit a request for payment.

Thank you for your assistance. I may be reached at 252-246-1257 through December 21. From December 22-December 27, I may be reached at the home number 252-237-1498.

Sincerely,


cc: Mr. Jerry Mosley, Gen. Manager
Capitol Ford, Raleigh, NC

NO 1/22/02 - 2 Called (re).


February 5, 2001

Mr. Thomas J. Feters, Director
Customer Assistance Center
Ford Motor Company
16800 Executive Plaza Drive
P. O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48121

Dear Mr. Feters:

Re: Case #065263360

This is a response to your letter of January 9 which was received January 16, 2001. Please note that Ford *did* meet my expectations--neither the dealership nor Ford Motor Company felt any sense of responsibility in this particular occasion nor has it on any prior occasion that I have experienced. I remain a little baffled regarding the reference to information provided by our company representative was appropriate. The only concrete information provided was on January 13 prior to receipt of your letter. At that point a Customer Assistance Center staffer was candid enough to indicate that no relief would be accorded because my vehicle did not meet an established profile. While this does not alleviate my problem or economic losses, I did find it refreshing; I assume that at this juncture information reflecting the stance in your letter had been entered in the customer assistance center database. In fact dealing with the public daily, I have admiration for the Customer Assistance Center staff. What a depressing situation to be in--listening to overwhelming complaints and having absolutely no policy making function--just being a robotic, human recording device.

I am greatly disappointed, but not surprised, that the January 9 letter bears a marked resemblance to others sent to Ford owners experiencing comparable problems. Indeed, I should consider it remarkable that I received a single letter when all other communications garnered no responses.

My 92 Thunderbird still languishes at the dealership although I reluctantly agreed recently to the replacement of the engine. (Please note my response to a recent Ford Customer Survey.) My economic loss will not be limited to the Thunderbird but has a broader ripple effect since the resale value of the Ranger Truck referenced is seriously reduced.) However, having rented a friend second vehicle from September-November, I should be grateful that I even had another recourse. (At least the rental period provided an opportunity for assessment of Dodge dealership for routine service--they insured that I got to work which was a rather unique feeling as the Ford dealerships have never cared whether the distance was 1 mile or 100 miles, locally or intra-city, and have declined requests for a substitute vehicle.)

Fetters
Page 2
February 5, 2001

As a Ford customer of long standing, I must consider the circumstances. With Ford having acknowledged formally in 2000 the problems with the 3.8L V6 engine head gaskets and most particularly finally, in face of great pressure and legal action, extending warranty coverage to nearly 300,000 1994-95 model Mustangs, Thunderbirds, and Mercury Cougars, in May 2000, I find it particularly odious that 92-93 owners are excluded. As a conservative driver, I have not reached 100,000 miles but find myself excluded by the seven-year, whichever comes first profile. (This extension was never mentioned to me at anytime.). Pray tell what is the difference between my loss and that of a 1994 model owner.

In conclusion, as this goes into Ford's giant file 13, *my experiences and circumstances* based on careful consideration and dedication to fiscal responsibility and common sense propel me, without great regret, to conclude that once divested of Ford ownership, I will not return.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Enc.



Rec'd 1-16-01

Ford Customer Service Division
Ford Motor Company
January 9, 2001

16800 Executive Plaza Drive
P. O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48121



Re: Case # 0656263360

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

The circumstances, which you outlined, have been given careful consideration.

Ford Motor Company considers the satisfaction of its owners to be one of its most important objectives. We commit very substantial resources and effort in a sincere attempt to resolve the concerns of our owners. Although we regret not being able to meet your expectations, our review indicates that the information provided by our company representative was appropriate. Therefore, we are unable to be of further assistance in this matter.

Thank you for contacting Ford Motor Company.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Fellers
Director
Customer Assistance Center

To: jnasser@ford.com
Cc: bthorne@email.wilsontech.cc.nc.us
Subject: Case#0656263360-VIN 1FAPP6040NH132612

On September 14, 2000, I took my 1992 Thunderbird to the dealership of original purchase (Capital Ford, Raleigh, NC—110 mi. RT from my home) for routine service/maintenance. Upon return, the vehicle was not ready due to dealership heavy-service volume. This required a return on Saturday, September 16, for pickup. No major problems were detected in the 27 pt inspection but approximately eight miles from site, the engine suddenly failed, without indicators or warning, in unusually heavy flow traffic (major weekend college football game).

The vehicle was towed with the initial problem being identified as a failed water pump. Service charges of approximately \$400 were assessed. However, in the following week, upon my inquiry and no contact from the dealership, the problem was identified by a service team leader as a potential problem with the engine. I was advised that I might try a sealant. Realizing that a major problem existed, I did not remove the vehicle, and later spoke with the service manager, Peter Duerken, in person and by phone as well as Capital's general manager, Jerry Mosley. Ultimately an offer to provide labor to replace the engine which had been blown due to head gasket erosion resulting from coolant leakage (cost to be assessed to me) was extended. Due to Ford's longstanding problems with the 3.8L V6 engine and failed head gaskets, I felt that other remedies should be extended and requested both financial assistance and to speak with a Ford Representative. (These issues have never been addressed.)

Still at an impasse and having followed the dealership route, in December I contacted the Ford Customer Assistance Center by phone, email, regular mail, and certified mail. The only concrete response received is a letter (January 9, 2001; received January 16) from Thomas J. Feters, Director, Customer Assistance Center:

The circumstances, which you outline, have been given careful consideration.

Ford . . . considers the satisfaction of its owners to be one of its most important objectives. . . . we regret not being able to meet your expectations, our review indicates that the information provided by our company representative was appropriate. Therefore, we are unable to be of further assistance in this matter.

I am a little baffled. I have never received information from a Ford representative. My only contacts, prior to Mr. Feters' letter, were with the staff of the Customer Assistance Center whose role is to record incoming calls and not offer policy decision. The most helpful of these calls, was one on January 13 (and prior to receipt of Mr. Feters' letter) when the staff indicated that no relief would be accorded because my request did not meet a prescribed Ford profile.

With great reluctance, and due to other circumstances, I have authorized engine replacement, having been without a usable vehicle on which both property tax and insurance have been paid for one-third of a year thus extending the costs well beyond those of repair. However, I must say that Ford did meet my expectations—I did not expect Ford to acknowledge well documented problems with the head gaskets (although it has accorded relief to Windstar, etc., owners) simply because it can set the profile and although the Thunderbird and Cougar vehicles have experienced similar failures, they were not marketed in as great a quantity (as well as the Thunderbird temporarily deleted from production) and not generating the volume of complaints that must ultimately be addressed. For brevity, I will not regurgitate the documentation, etc., of the well-known defect which has been referenced in prior correspondence. Suffice it to note, that the problem is a new Ford issue.

As a customer, I must consider the circumstances. Once divested of Ford vehicle ownership, I do not intend to return to the Ford marketplace. I will be joining the other owners who have experienced the head gasket problems as well as the Explorer owners, and I assume, the newly identified Contour and Mystique owners who face fire hazards due to overheated engines, who make alternate choices.

My decision is not capricious. A prior experience in 1999 encompassing a holiday period also represents part of an overall pattern. The above-referenced vehicle was taken from my worksite (which is within one block and visual sight) of the Wilson, NC, Ford dealership (Lee Motor Company) to have the battery recharged after the ignition was inadvertently left switched on in the parking lot. This led to a seven day delay and a charge of approximately \$700. Reportedly, although, the battery was checked and in my presence indicated as being good, the charging unit (never admitted by the dealership) was attached with incorrect polarity and resulted in damage to the voltage regulator, etc. Of course, the problem as later communicated was that the new installed regulator was defective and the dealership had to await the UPS delivery of a new unit. My very vivid recall of this event is intensified by the following—the refusal of a substitute vehicle by the dealership, the nonavailability of a commercial rental unit locally due to holiday demand, and the very real fact that I had two family members critically ill and in need of care and medication. One requiring two 12-hour daily injections of Lovenex, a limited availability product in short supply requiring preordering and pickup and another person on respiratory medication, oxygen, and chemotherapy treatment for cancer (this individual subsequently died).

This situation in addition to transportation needs for a full work week, did not afford a very pleasant experience. Least you perceive a professional whiner, I did not contact the Customer Service Center in this incident. I was contacted by the Customer Service Center (thus this should be on file) in what I hope was a response to a generally known and increasingly transmitted record of poor service by the Wilson, NC, dealership.

But the third strike came in the past month. After having borrowed a friend's Dodge vehicle for an extraordinary period of time while mine languished at the Ford dealership, I had to switch to a Ford Ranger 2000 unit, available because of the death of the prior-referenced relative. With a weather forecast of weekend snow (which matured) and the conclusion of the early December work week, I arrived home in early evening and entering my driveway, the Ranger at 450 odometer miles spewed forth all its coolant. The inbound snow meant no service was available until the following Monday from a dealership of delivery (90 miles RT away) so another weekend, with an 86 year old parent with critical medical needs and four days of an ensuring work week without transportation prevailed. (Gosh--sounds just like a soap opera doesn't it; but believe me when I say that humor is the only thing that was available.)

So after giving *my experiences and circumstances* careful consideration, in the absence of manufacturer/dealership candor, costly service, unavailable of interest or concern, lack of interest in assisting in providing alternate transportation when one is faced with a need to get home) while having encouraged a number of others to purchase Ford vehicles, I have decided that loyalty is a reciprocal relationship and in establishing my own profile feel that I can no longer be loyal to Ford.

Respectfully yours [REDACTED]

PS: Hopefully this email will be transmitted to appropriate parties.

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE CENTER - FORD

12/01 - Call; 12/03 - Call
12/12 - email
12/13 - Call Cust. Ctr - requested to speak to Ann O'Neil. checking - directed
12/19 - email
12/20 - Call & email
12/21 - Call & email
12/26 - Call
12/18 - Ltr of 12/13 - removed - Certified
to website
after conversation
Customer Assistance

1/13/01 - Call

1/16/01 - Receipt of Letter Ltr (1-09-01) - Dir. of Cust. Serv. CTR

1/23/01 - 2nd Summary / Pth

2/5/01 Pth to Letter


[OUR VEHICLES](#)
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Contact Us

Although we encourage you to speak to your dealer first regarding any vehicle specific issues, the Customer Service Centers are there to answer customer inquiries, document concerns, and assist in communications between customers, dealerships, and Ford Motor Company.

We've made it easier for you to contact us. Ford Motor Company offers access to all our brand Customer Service Centers. Simply select the appropriate brand for detailed contact information.

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[Lincoln](#)
[Mercury](#)

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[Jaguar](#)
[Land Rover](#)

[Mazda](#)
[Volvo](#)

Find Specific
 Contacts for the
 Following Areas:

FORD
NACRC Phone
United States

(800) 392-3673
 (800) 232-5952 (TDD for the Hearing Impaired)

United States Office Hours
 8 a.m. - 11 p.m. ET. (Monday-Friday)
 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET. (Saturday)
Canada
 (800) 555-3673

NACRC Mail
United States

Canada Office Hours
 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. ET. (Monday-Friday)
 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET. (Saturday)

Canada

Ford Motor Company
Customer Relationship Center
 P.O. Box 6248
 Dearborn, MI 48126
Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited
Customer Relationship Centre
 P.O. Box 2000
 Oakville, Ontario, L6J 5E4

NACRC Email

The North America Customer Relationship Center can also address your inquiries or concerns through email. Upon receiving your email, the North America Customer Relationship Center (NACRC) will send you an acknowledgement to let you know that your email has been received. We will then research your request and respond to your email within three business days.

To submit a specific question, comment, or request via Email, choose the scenario below that best describes the nature of your issue, and click submit to receive the appropriate form.

→
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 →
 →

December 19, 2000
Certified

Mrs. Nancy B. Vert, Manager
Ford Customer Service Division
Ford Motor Company
350 Enterprise Court
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-0305

Dear Ms. Vert:

Re: Head Gasket/Engine Replacement/VIN 1FAPP6040NH13612

I am formally seeking authorization of engine replacement for the above-referenced vehicle. The vehicle was placed for service on September 14 at Capital Ford, Raleigh, North Carolina, and picked up on September 16 (approximately 110 round trip). The vehicle underwent a 27 point inspection. Approximately eight miles after pickup, the vehicle engine lost complete power on a major highway corridor in extraordinarily heavy traffic due to a major football game; this could have been a very potentially dangerous situation. Following towing, the problem was initially identified as a failed water pump. Subsequently, a more critical problem--a blown engine was identified. To date I have not reached a satisfactory resolution to this problem and have requested assistance from Customer Assistance by phone, email, and regular/certified mail.

Yesterday, I recontacted Customer Assistance by phone and asked to speak with Ms. O'Neill regarding the problem. I was given the Ford website address. However, I have been unable to effectively access this site for some time. A copy of a December 13 letter to Ms. O'Neill was remailed by certified mail. I have also requested assistance from the Capitol Ford Service Manager, in speaking directly with the area Ford Representative and have asked that a request for payment assistance, if not already effected, be submitted to Ford. I have previously spoken with Mr. Duerkson and Mr. Mosley, Capitol's General Manager.

Ford's problem with the head gaskets on the 3.8 engine is already well documented and has been acknowledged for certain vehicles (Feb. 25, 2000, Customer Action Information, Ford Windstar). However, this problem is not restricted to Lincoln, Taurus, Sable, and Windstar units. The NHTSA has recorded head gasket complaints for other Ford 1991-1996 vehicles including the Ford Thunderbird. Ford vehicles exhibit a significant problem when compared to Chrysler and GM vehicles. Head gaskets should not fail during the life of a vehicle and are not routine maintain items in Ford's Owners Manuals. Ford's own recommended maintenance

Ford Customer Service Division
Page 2
December 19, 2000

schedule shows that Ford expects the head gaskets to last for at least 120,000 miles without replacement. Ford's service bulletins indicate that the 1992 Ford Thunderbird has experienced problems and that coolant may leak. All evidence indicates that my vehicle experienced a slow loss of coolant with no outward visible signs of leaking. The vehicle was in the possession of the dealership service department for three working days prior to the engine blowing. The head gasket was obviously flawed. Although the problem can result from a number of factors, leaking can occur because of improper sealing of the ends of the water pump stud. Without a reinforcement channel, coolant could obviously deteriorate the gasket. While one may say this is a water pump problem the implications are somewhat different.

After talking with a number of professionals, I have learned that Ford's problem with the 3.8, V-6 engine is well-known to insiders. Head gasket failure produces major repair costs. In addition to repairs costs, one must deal with vehicle rental and a number of other, not so small incidental factors. Many individuals unknowingly have gone to independent service providers in order to conserve costs. Although, I have an offer from the dealership to replace the engine for \$1993, I assume that this is for a used engine. I am rerequesting a meeting with the Ford Representative and a request for payment assistance.

Even though my vehicle is beyond the scope of Program 98M01, Ford should seek to right this commonly-known problem. Continual disregard for customer service can only lead to slippage of market share and other consequences.

Sincerely,



cc: Ms. Ann O'Neill, Director
Vehicle Services and Programs ✓
P. O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48126

Ford Customer Service Center ✓
300 Renaissance Drive
P.O. Box 43360
Detroit, MI 48242

December 13, 2000

Certified

Ms. Ann O'Neill, Director
Vehicle Services and Programs
Ford Motor Company
Customer Relationship Center
P. O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48126

Dear Ms. O'Neill:

Re: VIN 1FAPP6040NH132612
1992 Thunderbird

On Thursday, September 14, I left the above-referenced vehicle at the service department of Capital Ford, Raleigh, North Carolina. Upon return the vehicle, due to time constraints of the service department, was not ready for pickup. I left it until Saturday, September 16, for service and pickup (this required an additional round trip of approximately 110 miles) as well as securing an additional person to drive me to the dealership.

After leaving the dealership, the vehicle experienced a complete engine failure without any warning indicators approximately 8 miles from the dealership site, and required towing. The problem was identified as being a defective water pump. However, upon contact with the service team during the following week, the problem was identified as more serious--smoke was coming from the exhaust. I was advised that I might try a commercial sealant. Subsequently, I was in touch in person, phone, and mail with the Service Manager, Peter Duerksen. The problem was identified as cylinder damage which would require a new engine. Subsequent negotiations lead to an offer of engine replacement at Capital Ford Cost--\$1993. Prior services were \$51.25 (paid) and \$390.97 (unpaid).

To date this problem remains unresolved. I also spoke with the General Manager, Jerry Mosley, and the costs have been reaffirmed. On December 1, I contacted the Customer Service Center by phone, and requested assistance in this matter. It was indicated that a Ford Representative would be assigned within two business days and that I would be contacted. On December 8, I recontacted the Customer Service Center, and was informed of the notation service was offered but declined. This is technically not correct. The matter remains unresolved. I requested that I be contacted by the representative and was told that this has to be arranged through the dealership. Subsequently, I have made three attempts through my area dealership to obtain the representative's schedule. This produced no results with three calls.

Ms. O'Neill
Page 2
December 13, 2000

Capital is approximately 50 miles from Wilson (my residence). Obviously, Capital made no attempt to facilitate a meeting with the Ford Representative, and it is impossible for me to make direct contact since the Customer Service Center cannot facilitate an appointment, and I cannot obtain a schedule from the local Ford dealership. This system, to me, seems very ineffective--if the dealership adopts its posture and controls access to the representative-- obviously the consumer is not going to be heard.

The basic source of the mechanical problem remains ambiguous. The information provided indicates that the problem may possibly have been a defective head gasket similar to incidents identified earlier this year with other Ford vehicles. I can only rely on the information given to me. However, the situation gives rise to some doubt--Capital passed the vehicle through a 27 point inspection and had it in its possession for three working days. If no coolant was noted as leaking on the ground and no warning indicators appeared during operation, then the loss of coolant may have occurred in another way. The way the followup engine check was performed would seem to be the bore scope test. If the gasket was defective, I feel that I have a reasonable expectation for a vehicle of 78,000 approximate miles that Ford cover the costs due to a inherent defect even though the vehicle is beyond warranty.

On the 12th I sent a email to the Customer Service Center, but request that you explore this matter further.

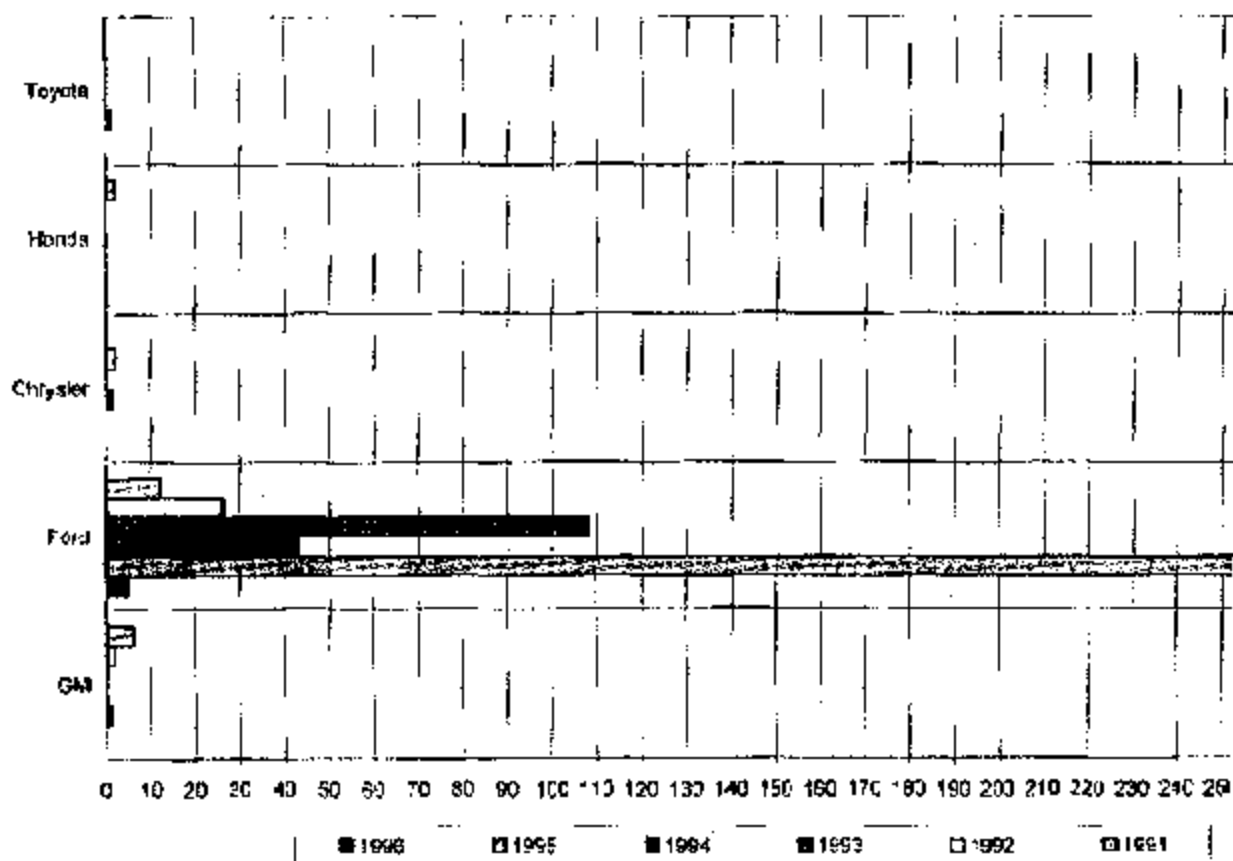
I may be reached at 252-246-1257 8 a.m.-5:30 EST and 252-237-1498, Evenings or by email at: bthorne@email.wilsontech.cc.nc.us.

Sincerely,



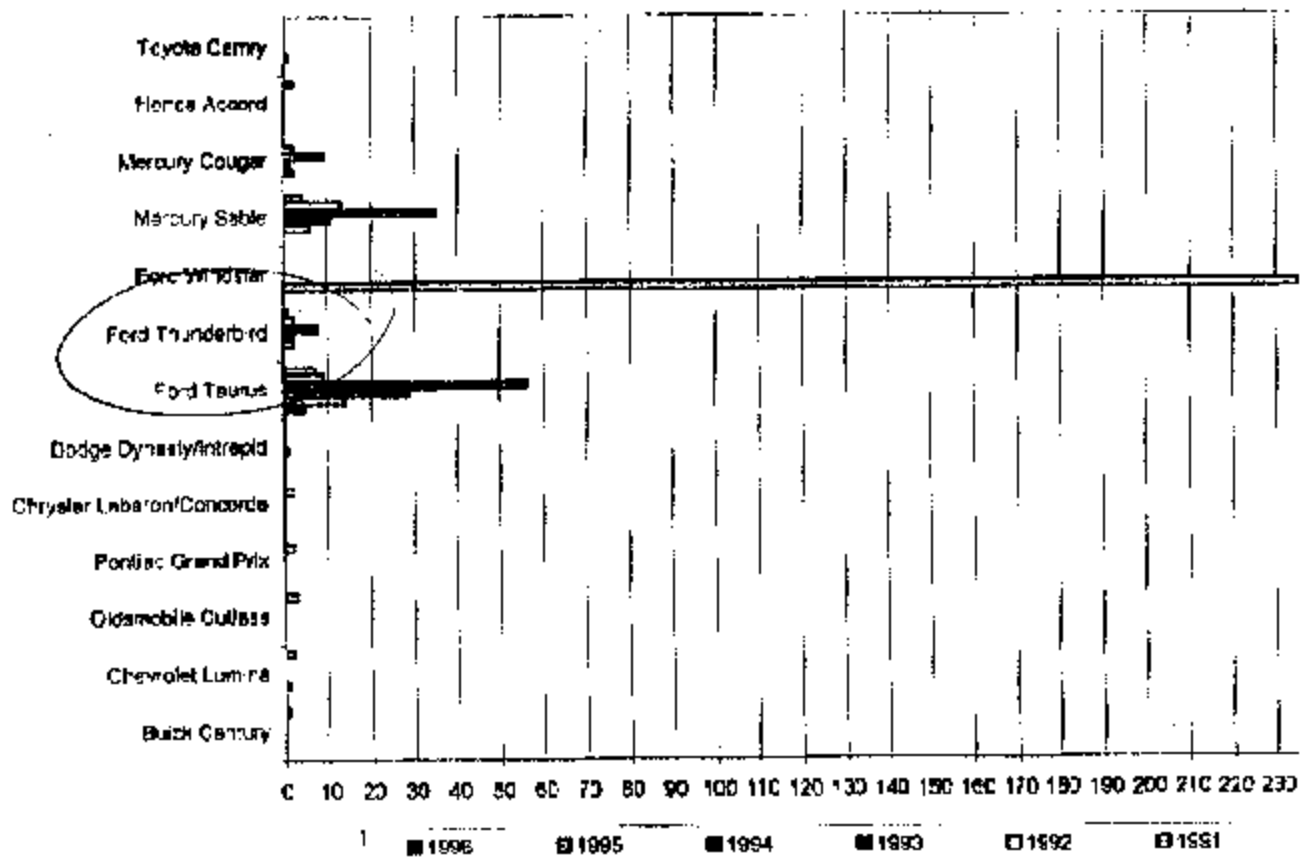
[Go Back to Document Page](#)

NHTSA Head Gasket Complaints by Manufacturer 1991-1996



[Go Back to Document Page](#)

NHTSA Head Gasket Complaints by Vehicle 1991-1998



(5)

A. A. Kaduk
Manager
Vehicle Service and Programs
Ford Customer Service Division



Ford Motor Company
P.O. Box 1231
Dearborn, MI 48121-1231

95 Windsor

98M01 Kit CC

June, 1998

1.1

Ford Motor Company is providing extended warranty coverage under Service Program, Number 98M01, to owners of 1994 and 1995 Taurus and Sable and 1995 Windsor vehicles equipped with a 3.6L FWT Engine.

**Reason For
This Program**

Premature failure of the head gaskets may occur and may result in engine overheating or in extreme cases could cause engine failure if the overheat condition is ignored. The extended warranty coverage is Ford Motor Company's commitment to customer satisfaction and we are taking this action as part of our ongoing efforts to maintain your confidence in our products.

**No-Charge
Coverage:**

Ford is providing additional coverage for this condition only. If your vehicle's engine should experience this condition, your dealer will verify the condition and replace the engine head gaskets, if necessary.

The no charge coverage for this condition is available on affected Taurus, Sable and Windsors for 5-years or 60,000 miles from the vehicle's original warranty start date and is automatically transferred to subsequent owners.

On vehicles for which the extended warranty coverage has expired, vehicles are eligible for this program through December 31, 1998, regardless of mileage.

**What You
Should Do:**

PLEASE KEEP THIS LETTER. If your vehicle's engine head gasket should exhibit the condition described above within the extended warranty coverage period, contact your dealer. The dealer will replace the engine head gaskets, if necessary, after verification of this specific condition. If you should lose this letter the dealer will still honor the provisions of this coverage.

Refunds: If you paid to have this service performed prior to the date of this letter, Ford is offering a full refund. For the refund, please give your paid original receipt to your dealer. To avoid delays, do not send the receipts to Ford Motor Company.

Changed Address Or Sold The Vehicle? Please fill out the enclosed prepaid postcard and mail it to us if you have changed your address or sold the vehicle.

We hope this program will confirm your continued satisfaction in your Ford-built vehicle.

Sincerely,



A. R. Kaduk
Manager
Vehicle Service and Programs

O.N.P.
98M01

Sent: Sat

Dec-01-99 12:15 PM

From: "CASP201403"

Page: 2

CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

1325 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, SUITE 300 WASHINGTON, DC 20004-5108
202-328-7202 www.casafety.org

November 24, 1999

William Clay Ford, Chairman
Ford Motor Company
The American Road
Dearborn, MI 48121

Dear Mr. Ford:

The Center for Auto Safety (CAS) has received over 115 complaints about failed head gaskets on 1988-95 Ford cars and vans with 3.8-liter V6 engines.¹ The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has reports of at least 200 more head gasket failures on these vehicles. Consumers report their vehicles' engines have overheated, leaked coolant, or completely failed due to defective head gaskets. Costs of repairs are as high as \$4200 for a new engine and an average of \$1642 to replace the head gaskets. The average reported mileage at failure was 65,750.

Head gaskets should not fail during the life of a vehicle. They are designed to last the life of a vehicle and are not routine maintenance items in Ford's Owners Manuals.² In fact, the only related maintenance required or suggested by Ford through 120,000 miles is to (1) change oil and filter every 5,000 miles, (2) inspect cooling system and check coolant strength every 15,000 miles, and (3) change coolant at 30,000 miles and every 30,000 miles thereafter. Ford's own recommended maintenance schedule shows that Ford expects the head gaskets to last for at least 120,000 miles without replacement.

Ford admitted the head gasket is defective by redesigning it and providing dealers with "revised head gaskets and bolts (that) provide improved sealing capability and higher clamping force between the cylinder head and block."³ Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) 98-4-9 indicates what conditions exist when this problem occurs and what procedures are to be taken to repair the defective head gaskets. According to this TSB, "coolant may leak, . . . and/or the vehicle may overheat." The TSB allows 7.1 to 8.3 hours of labor to verify coolant loss and replace the head gaskets and bolts.

¹ Attachment A is a list of consumers who have contacted CAS about head gasket failures in their 3.8-liter engine Ford vehicle.

² Attachment B is a copy of the maintenance schedule of an exemplary owners manual for a 1995 Winstar.

³ Ford Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) 98-4-9, March 3, 1998, a copy of which is provided as Attachment C.

Sent by:

Date: 01-08 (21:32pm)

From: 28236741409

Page: 3

In June 1998, Ford established an inadequate and discriminatory Service Program (98M01) to address the flood of complaints about head gasket failure in their vehicles.* 98M01 applies to 1994 Taurus/Sable/Continental and 1995 Taurus/Sable/Windstar with 3.8-liter engines. The program provides free repairs for head gasket failure within 3 years or 60,000 miles for the Taurus, Sable, and Windstar and 6 years or 75,000 miles for the Continental. If a vehicle had a failure at higher mileage or time limits before the program was announced, Ford agreed to pay for repairs only if consumers submitted claims by December 31, 1998. Program 98M01 is more candid in describing the failure than TSB 98-4-9. According to Program 98M01, "premature failure of the head gaskets may occur and may result in engine overheating or in extreme cases could cause engine failure if the overheat condition is ignored. . . . The dealer will replace the engine head gaskets, if necessary after verification of this specific condition."

Program 98M01 only covers a fraction of the vehicles with defective head gaskets - i.e., the 1994-95 Taurus/Sable, 1995 Windstar, and 1994 Continental with 3.8-liter engines. Yet according to TSB 98-4-9, the affected vehicles are the 1988-95 Taurus, 1988-94 Continental, 1988-95 Sable, and 1995 Windstar. CAS has received 35 complaints from consumers with a 1988-93 Continental, Sable, or Taurus not covered in Program 98M01 but listed in TSB 98-4-9. Bunari Kraemer, of Newton Centre, MA, owns a 1993 Mercury Sable. His vehicle's head gasket failed at only 44,000 miles but was forced to pay the \$1200 repair bill because his vehicle was not covered by Program 98M01. According to Mr. Kraemer in a letter to Ford:

This is a troublesome engine that an extended warranty was offered for 1994 and 1995 cars and inasmuch as this is the same engine, I feel strongly this too should be covered.

Ford has not only failed to offer assistance to vehicles outside the scope of Program 98M01, but also has in some instances denied consumers coverage on those vehicles that are covered. For example, Mr. Frank Fiorella of Yonkers, NY, owns a 1994 Ford Taurus and had to pay for the entire head gasket repair in June of 1999. He never received a Program 98M01 letter and subsequently was told by the dealer that if he had taken the car in 6 months earlier he would have received repair free of charge. Others were refused coverage because they were over the warranty mileage limits by a few thousand miles but were within the age requirement.

For those owners beyond the limits of Program 98M01, Ford has established a classic "secret warranty" policy. If a consumer complains loud enough, Ford reimburses the owner for cylinder gasket repairs on 3.8-liter engine vehicles even though the vehicle is beyond the time and mileage limits of 98M01. For example, Chuck Catanese of Independence, KY, owns a 1995 Windstar and experienced a head gasket failure at 68,513 miles in March of 1999. He originally had to pay for the repair, but after complaining loudly to Ford and the dealership, the dealership sent him a check in the amount of \$986.59. Ford Program Headquarters wrote to Mr. Catanese:

* Attachment D is a copy of Ford Service Program 98M01

Sent by:

Date: 01-14 17:33:00

From: 20130701402

Page: 6

to inform him of the financial assistance:

As we discussed in our recent telephone conversation, Ford is offering to reimburse you for a previous repair on your 1995 Windstar GL, up to \$1000.00, excluding maintenance, wear items, and non-manufacturing defects such as collision damage.

Mr. Mickey Kroll of Lilburn GA, never received notice of 98M01 and had his head gasket fail at 78,300 miles. The repair was \$1700, but after much complaining, Ford finally paid Mr. Kroll \$1000. Mrs. Mary Auville of Bowie MD, reluctantly accepted an offer of \$500 from Ford after her 1995 Windstar blew its head gasket with 73,766 miles even though this was less than half of her \$1132 repair bill.

Even within the express terms of the extended warranty program 98M01, different models are treated differently. Owners of the 1995 Windstar and 1994-95 Taurus/Sable have their warranty coverage extended to 5 years or 60,000 miles from the original warranty start date. However, 1994 Lincoln Continental owners have their warranty extended 6 years or 75,000 miles even though all the vehicles have the same defective head gaskets. What's fair to a Continental owner is fair to a Windstar or Taurus/Sable owner. They have the same repair costs for the same defect and shouldn't be short changed because they bought a less expensive vehicle. The reduction from 75,000 to 60,000 is particularly onerous for Windstar and Taurus/Sable owners because our analysis shows 40% of the reported failures occur between 60,000 and 75,000 miles.

Head gasket failure produces major repair costs for the consumer. Mr. Jadesh Sharma, of Mill Creek WA, is an owner of a 1993 Ford Taurus with 71,740 miles. After years of proper maintenance, which Ford of Kirkland has verified, Mr. Sharma's vehicle began to have temperature gauge fluctuations in the normal range from low to high. Mr. Sharma immediately took his Taurus to the dealer only to learn the head gasket had failed and would need a completely new engine at the cost of \$3500. Ms. JoAnn Pope of Fredericksburg VA, needed her engine replaced on her 1995 Windstar due to the subsequent damage caused by the defective head gasket. The engine, which only had 80,000 miles, was replaced for \$4200. /

In addition to repair costs, consumers have been forced to pay for rental car, towing, and other consequential and incidental expenses their vehicle's head gasket failed. For example, 1995 Windstar owner Patty Shade of Harrisburg PA, was never notified by mail about Program 98M01. Mrs. Shade's vehicle overheated in September 1998, and had the head gaskets replaced for free. In July 1999, her vehicle died at 51,000 miles on I-95 with her family on a vacation trip. In addition to engine repair costs, Mrs. Shade was hit with \$600 in towing plus a \$450 rental car bill to continue on vacation. Ford initially denied coverage for any repair costs until her extended warranty company, Interstate, went to bat for her. According to Mrs. Shade:

¹ Attachment E is a copy of Mrs. JoAnn Pope's complaint.

Sent: 8/27

Date: 8/11/99 10:24am

From: 26238784@att

To: 2

Ford has been completely unhelpful until today when the extended warranty company that I have (Interstate) found some secret warranty that Ford had issued admitting that there is a known defect in this engine. Now it gets interesting because after fighting with Ford to help us, now after this was brought up to them they are paying for the repairs.*

Although Ford agreed to pay for the engine repairs after this, Ford still would not pay for the \$1050 in towing and rental car expenses. Mrs. Strade then took them to small claims court and was given a default judgment in her favor.⁷ Ford then appealed the decision which forced the case to the next level of the Pennsylvania court system. On the day of the appeal, Ford settled with Mrs. Strade but forced her to sign a secrecy agreement which is contrary to public policy in some states to remain silent about the terms of the settlement.⁸

Nell Clark, of Granger IN, and his family were stranded 450 miles from home on their vacation when his 1994 Ford Taurus rolled on the side of I-75 near Corbin KY. Mr. Clark's Taurus had only 59,229 miles when the head gaskets failed. Even though his vehicle was covered by Program 98M01 and had less than the mileage limit, Mr. Clark was denied complete coverage due to the fact his vehicle was 4 years and 5 months old. Ford paid for part (\$350) of the replacement however; Mr. Clark had to pay the remaining \$333 of the head gasket replacement plus \$614 in rental car costs, \$51.00 in gas for the trip to the dealership in Kentucky to get his vehicle, and \$1076 for components related to the engine cooling system that failed within six weeks of the head gasket failure. Ford offered Clark reimbursement for the remainder of the gasket replacement and the rental car cost, but rejected his request to be reimbursed for all of the costs related to this catastrophic head gasket failure.⁹ Mr. Clark has turned down Ford's initial offer and is pursuing this matter in small claims court.

Ford Motor Company's handling of the widespread and costly head gasket failure on its 1988-95 vehicles with 3.8-liter engines raises two major concerns -- (1) Ford has not dealt with its customers in an honest and fair manner, and (2) Ford continues to lead all automakers in covering up defects and exposing consumers to safety risks and expensive repairs in order to limit its financial exposure for remedying defects. Ford's actions in these areas show a callous disregard for its customers which can only lead to lost market share and legal actions against the company by both government and consumers.

* Attachment 9 is Mrs. Patty Strade's complaint.

⁷ Phone interview of Patty Strade by Jason Kennedy, CAS Vehicle Safety Staff, August 25, 1999.

⁸ Phone interview of Patty Strade by Jason Kennedy, CAS Vehicle Safety Staff, November 22, 1999. Such secrecy agreements are prohibited as public policy in some states such as California.

⁹ Attachment 10 is Mr. Nell Clark's complaint.

Sent: 5/1

Date: 01-09 12:24pm

From: XZ35741493

Page: 6-1

In the case of the 3.8-liter engine head gasket, Ford has treated consumers unfairly by not notifying all affected owners of the defect, by giving Lincoln owners longer coverage than Ford and Mercury owners even though all have the same defective head gasket and by creating secret warranties to cover the costs of repairs beyond the terms of Ford's limited Owner Notification Program for those owners who complain loud enough. The Center for Auto Safety calls on Ford Motor Company to stand behind this head gasket specified by the Owners Manual as a no-maintenance, lifetime part and provide free repairs for the full 120,000 mile useful life. Ford should reimburse owners for past repairs and incidental/consequential expenses associated with prior head gasket failures. Notification for this program should be sent to owners of all 1988-95 Ford, Lincoln and Mercury 3.8-liter engine vehicles covered by Ford TSI 98-4-9.

The 3.8-liter engine head gasket is just the latest example of Ford Motor Company trying to cover up a defect and avoid responsibility for complying with the law. By avoiding recalls, Ford forces consumers to pay for repairing defects while riding at risk of failures on the highway which can lead to costly repairs, if not accidents, deaths and injuries. In the early 1970's, the Environmental Protection Agency fined Ford twice for cheating on its emission tests. In one case, the Department of Justice filed a criminal complaint against Ford that resulted in a record \$7 million fine of which \$3.5 million was an unprecedented criminal fine against an auto company for false reporting of emission information to the government.¹⁰

In the late 1970's, the Federal Trade Commission sued Ford for conducting secret warranties on engine and transmission problems.¹¹ In the 1980's, Ford withheld documents from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration during investigations on stalling in Ford vehicles to avoid recalls.¹² In 1999, NHTSA reached a settlement which required Ford to pay a \$425,000 penalty for its coverup and failure to timely recall million of vehicles with defective ignition switches that set parked vehicles on fire.¹³ In 1998, the Environmental Protection Agency again fined Ford, this time \$7.8 million in total payments including a \$3.5 million fine, for cheating on emission standards by illegally installing emission control defeat devices on its vehicles.¹⁴ No other auto company holds such a widespread reputation for lawlessness over five years. And this doesn't even consider the infamous exploding Ford Pinto which resulted in a criminal indictment against company. Even though Ford was narrowly acquitted in the Pinto criminal case, a model cooperation would not come close to the edge of breaking the law.

As the new Chairman of the Ford Company and the heir to one of the nation's most prominent families, we call on you to exercise moral and management leadership by bringing Ford Motor

¹⁰ Attachment H is a copy of the Department of Justice's February 13, 1973 press release on the settlement.

¹¹ In *the Matter of Ford Motor Co.*, 96 FTC 362 (1980).

¹² Letter from Frank Seales, NHTSA Chief Counsel, to Jay D. Engel, Office of the Chief Counsel, Ford Motor Co., January 26, 1998.

¹³ Attachment I is a copy of the settlement.

¹⁴ Attachment J is a copy of the Department of Justice's June 8, 1998 press release on the settlement.

Sent: 8/1/00

Re: 8-1-00 10:15am

From: 2021079146

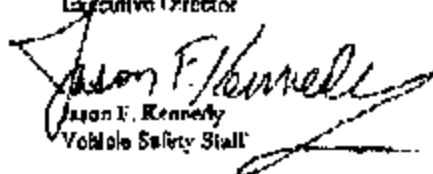
Page: 1 / 1

Company back from the edge of lawlessness and make it a model for corporate responsibility. A good start would be to admit that Ford has badly handled the 3.8-liter engine head gasket failure and implement the plan of action proposed by the Center for Auto Safety.

Sincerely,



Clarence M. Ditlow
Executive Director



Jason F. Kennedy
Vehicle Safety Staff

Reproduced with permission from the Center for Auto Safety, Washington, DC

A. N. O'Neil
Director
Vehicle Service and Programs
Ford Customer Service Division

Ford

Ford Motor Company
P.O. Box 1804
Dearborn, Michigan 48121-0180

January, 2000

Ford Motor Company is providing a no-charge Service Program, Number 99B29, to owners of certain 1996 and 1997 model year Mustang, Thunderbird, Cougar, and 1997 F-Series vehicles equipped with 5.8L or 4.2L engines.

What Is The Reason For This Program?

The affected vehicles may experience engine coolant leaks at the engine front cover gasket; this could cause severe engine damage if not corrected. To avoid engine damage, you should make an appointment to have this service performed on your vehicle at your Ford or Lincoln Mercury Dealer as soon as possible.

No Charge Service

At no charge to you, your dealer will replace the engine front cover gasket with a redesigned gasket and change the engine oil and filter. This service will reduce the likelihood of coolant leaks at the engine front cover, and will help avoid the potential inconvenience of breakdown and costly engine repairs.

Your vehicle is eligible for this program until March 31, 2001, regardless of mileage.

How Long Will It Take?

The time needed for this repair is less than one day. However, due to service scheduling issues, your dealer may need your vehicle for a longer period of time. To avoid engine damage, inconvenience, and costly repairs please schedule a service date as soon as possible.

Call Your Dealer

Call your dealer without delay. Ask for a service date and whether parts are in stock for Owner Notification Program 99B29.

If your dealer does not have the parts in stock, they can be ordered before scheduling your service date. Parts would be expected to arrive within a week after the order is placed.

When you bring your vehicle in, show the dealer this letter. If you misplace this letter, your dealer will still do the work, free of charge.

Refund:

If you paid for engine repairs caused by a front cover gasket leak on this vehicle before the date of this letter, Ford is offering a refund: the refund, please give your paid original receipt to your Ford or Lin Mercury dealer. To avoid delays, do not send receipts to Ford Motor Company.

**Changed Address
Or Sold The
Vehicle?**

If you have changed your address or sold the vehicle, please fill out enclosed prepaid postcard and mail it to us.

We are taking this action as part of our ongoing efforts to maintain owner confidence in products. We hope this program will confirm your continued satisfaction in your Ford or Mercury vehicle.

Sincerely,



Ann O'Neill
Director
Vehicle Service and Programs

Q.N.P.
99829

[OUR VEHICLES](#)[OUR SERVICES](#)[OUR COMPANY](#)[HOME](#)[Contact Us](#)**Email****Vehicle Problems****Name**

Title:

Ms.

*First name:

M.I.:

*Last name:

Address

*Street 1:

Street 2:

*City:

*State or province:

*Zip or postal code:

*Country:

Phone number

Country code:

*City or area code:

*Phone number:

Extension:

*Email address:

*VIN:

1FAPP6040NH13261

*Odometer reading:

78217

*Servicing dealership:

Capital Ford, Raleigh, N

*Comments/Inquiry:

Prior emails, letters, and customer assistance requests have been "shelved."

My 92 Ford Thunderbird which was left for service on September 14, 2000.

Clear Form

Submit



[Go Back to Document Page](#)

I received 3 of these letters all total



Ford Customer Service Division
Ford Motor Company
April 29, 1999

16800 Executive Plaza Drive
P. O. Box 6248
Dearborn, MI 48121

We have reviewed all of the necessary information in order to respond to your inquiry.

Although the joint efforts of your dealer and our representative have not met your expectations, we feel that every consideration has been given to the matter and the decision reached was correct. Therefore, we are unable to further review this concern.

If you have concerns other than those we have already reviewed, please contact the service manager at your dealership.

Thank you for contacting Ford Motor Company.

Sincerely,

Clive Woodrow
Operations Manager
Customer Assistance Center

GENUINE LTR. FORD
APPEARS TO SEND SIMILAR
LETTER TO ALL.