



parts return program

news

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION • NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

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July 1977

CASE OF THE MONTH

Alleged Engine Stalling, 1975-76 Dodge Dart & Plymouth Valiant, and 1976-77 Dodge Aspen & Plymouth Volare

This investigation by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration was initiated on May 20, 1977, as a result of 114 consumer reports of engine stalling among the involved Chrysler Corporation vehicles. Since that time the investigation has revealed a large number of additional reports of this stalling condition. A total of at least 58 accidents are alleged as a result of the condition, and at least 9 of these reportedly resulted in injuries.

Based on the information gathered, the stalling usually occurs during low speed acceleration, such as on freeway entrance ramps or at intersections. Some vehicles not experiencing acceleration problems exhibit stalling in left hand turns. Many owners also report occurrence of the condition in the first 15 minutes of vehicle operation. On vehicles equipped with power steering and power brakes the power assist is reduced when engine stalling occurs.

If any of our PRP members have encountered these conditions, we would like to hear from you. We are particularly interested in learning more about any accidents which may have been caused by engine stalling. Additionally, if you have performed service work on vehicles with any of these symptoms, please notify us of the cause and cure of the problem.

BRAKE HOSE BLOCKAGE

The photograph shows portions of a left front brake hose that was sent in by MAY'S AUTO SERVICE of Mansfield, Ohio. The hose was removed from a 1976 Pontiac Gran Prix with a vehicle mileage of 11,146. According to the shop,

the vehicle had been pulling to the right during service brake application. A hydraulic pressure check of the vehicle's brake system by the shop indicated the presence of a possible restriction in the left front brake hose. The hose was dissected by PRP staff and was found to have a collapsed inner rubber layer, as indicated by the photograph.

The PRP has received hoses from three other shops which reported the same type of problem:

FIFTH STREET AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE

Tyler, Texas
1976 Buick Electra Ltd.
11,090 miles

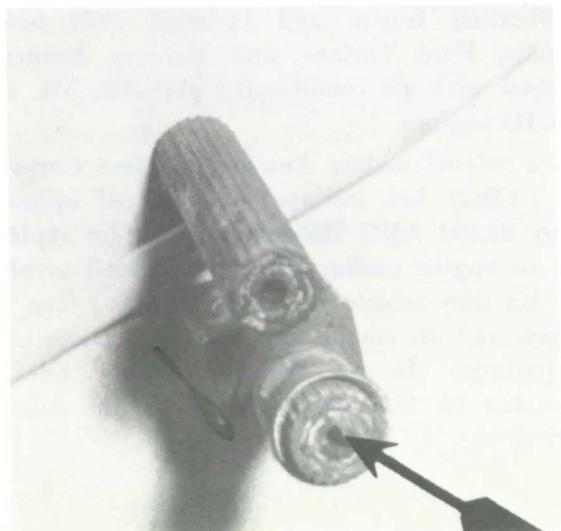
J. A. PAYNE ALIGNMENT SERVICE

West Point, Virginia
1975 Plymouth Valiant
24,000 miles

DOC'S AUTO CLINIC

Grand Forks, North Dakota
1969 Pontiac Ventura
65,047 miles

If your shop has encountered similar problems, please report them to the PRP. Thanks!



MORE FLEX-FANS RECALLED

Ford Motor Company has announced another safety recall and remedy campaign for possible breakage of the flexible blades on engine cooling fans. The campaign involves approximately 742,000 1976-77 Ford, Mercury, and Lincoln passenger cars equipped with five blade fans. The specific models include:

Model Years 1976 and 1977

<i>Vehicle</i>	<i>Engine</i>	<i>Application</i>
Ford/Mercury	351M	All A/C, Police Non A/C
Ford/Mercury	400	All A/C, Police Non A/C and Trailer Tow Non A/C
Ford/Mercury	460	All Non A/C Excluding Police

Model Year 1977 Only

<i>Vehicle</i>	<i>Engine</i>	<i>Application</i>
Ford	302	All A/C
Ford	351W	All A/C
Lincoln	400	All

Among the vehicles involved in the recall, there was one reported injury involving a dealership technician who was struck in the arm by a broken fan blade.

As indicated in the May issue of the PRP News, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) initiated a defect investigation on May 23, 1977, involving 1970-77 Ford Motor Company passenger cars and light trucks for this problem. The above flex-fan recall is the second one announced by Ford during the NHTSA investigation. The first one was initiated soon after the investigation began, and included 1972 model Lincolns, Ford Torinos, and Mercury Montegos equipped with air conditioning and 302, 351, and 400 CID engines.

In a related matter American Motors Corporation (AMC) has initiated a recall of approximately 26,500 AMC Matador vehicles for replacement of engine cooling fans. The recall involves 1976 Matador vehicles equipped with flex-fans, V8 engines, and air conditioning or a maximum cooling package. In a Consumer Advisory, released September 15, 1977, Joan Claybrook, the Admin-

istrator of the NHTSA, said that "the recall is the direct result of our inquiry to AMC in connection with an investigation into flex-fan failures in Ford Motor Company vehicles."

In developing data to respond to the NHTSA query, AMC determined that it too had problems with this type of fan. Although there was no record of fatalities or injuries, AMC informed the NHTSA of its intent to recall the vehicles.

Replies to the same inquiry from Chrysler Corporation and General Motors indicate no significant incidence of flex-fan failure, to date.

Our PRP members are reminded to stay alert for additional flex-fan failures involving any vehicle make or model.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Mr. George B. Lewis of AUTOMOTIVE PARTS CENTER, Greenville, Alabama has provided the PRP with information on a Ford flex-fan failure where a mechanic was injured. The information in turn, was provided to the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
 - In the coming months, the PRP will be expanding to include new car dealers, fleets (rental car, taxi, police, etc.), and parts suppliers. With the participation of these new members, we hope to receive more information on newer model cars and aftermarket parts. We expect to pass along information from these newer members in our newsletter and hope that our current members will benefit from the new information. Shops that know of interested dealers, fleets, or parts suppliers may want to call the PRP and relay their name and telephone number.
 - In a Consumer Advisory, released June 14, 1977, the NHTSA announced the availability of its annual report of motor vehicle defect recall campaigns for 1976. During the year, vehicle manufacturers issued 209 recalls involving more than 3.5 million motor vehicles. The report also lists the recall of more than 330,000 items of vehicle equipment and nearly 464,000 tires.
- Ms. Claybrook, Administrator of the NHTSA, noted that "the 1976 total brings to 52.4 million the number of vehicles recalled since 1966 when the national traffic safety effort was initiated."

(Continued on page 4)

OUTSTANDING SHOPS

Our outstanding shops are those that have sent in to the PRP at least one part during the current month. Since we have begun a new program year (July, 1977 thru June, 1978), all shops are considered new participants this month. During July 1977, 22 shops have started the PRP off to a successful year by sending in parts.

REGION 5

- BELOIT FRAME & AXLE COMPANY
Beloit, Wisconsin
- DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Ankeny, Iowa
- FELD GARAGE
Kenosha, Wisconsin
- FOREIGN AUTO SERVICE CENTER
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- RICHFIELD WHEEL ALIGNMENT
Minneapolis, Minnesota

REGION 0

- BUD HASKELL'S GARAGE
Falmouth, Maine
- HARRY'S AUTO SERVICE
Great Barrington, Massachusetts



REGION 1

- FARRELL'S SUNOCO
Fairview Village, Pennsylvania
- FERINO BROTHERS EXXON
Feasterville, Pennsylvania
- JONES SERVICE
Delmar, New York
- KOLESIK'S SERVICE STATION
Rochester, New York
- VINS MOTOR SERVICE CORPORATION
Brooklyn, New York

REGION 2

- AUTO BRAKE CORPORATION
Norfolk, Virginia
- B & G AUTO SERVICE
Arlington, Virginia
- MUSTEN AUTO SERVICE
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

REGION 8

- DUNCAN'S AUTO REPAIR
Phoenix, Arizona
- LAS VEGAS WHEEL ALIGNMENT & BRAKE
Las Vegas, Nevada

REGION 6

- McLAIN'S AUTO REPAIR
St. Louis, Missouri

REGION 7

- CLEARWATER CAR CARE CENTER
Metairie, Louisiana

REGION 3

- BELOTE'S BAYSHORE GARAGE
Dunedin, Florida
- BIG BRAKE SAFETY SERVICE
Gulfport, Mississippi
- RALPH CANNON AUTO SERVICE, INC.
Atlanta, Georgia

The report, entitled "Motor Vehicle Safety Defect Recall Campaigns" and covering the period from Jan. 1, 1976 to Dec. 31, 1976, may be purchased for \$2.30 from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. It contains informatoin on each recall campaign, the models involved, a short description of the defect, and the manufacturer's corrective action.

- More parts and/or information on possible safety-related defects in the performance, construction, components, or materials of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment are needed from our PRP members. Please take time to submit any failed automotive component, which you think could be safety related. If your shop needs mailbags or other material, call us collect at (703) 527-4500. Ask for extension 235, 236, 237 or 239.

NATIONAL PARTS RETURN PROGRAM

Description and Function

- The PRP involves the voluntary submittal of failed automotive components by independent repair shops. Components are submitted to a representative (Kappa Systems, Inc.) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

- The purpose of the PRP is to gather information on these components to help the NHTSA identify the existence of safety-related manufacturing defects in motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment. Under the authority of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, as amended, the NHTSA can require manufacturers to conduct safety defect notification campaigns when it has been determined that a defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists.

The information obtained from these parts is also valuable in preparing Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

- Your shop can help. The parts that you send in will give vital information that cannot be obtained in any other way.

TELEPHONE CALLS

If you have any problems regarding this program, are in need of additional mailbag, tags, etc., have any questions, or would like to pass on comments, please call collect. Place your call to Bruce Beddow, Ms. Jonni Peizer, or Guy Whiddon at (703) 527-4500. We are on Eastern Time and are normally available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

If you have a contribution or suggestion for the PRP NEWS, please send it to Kappa Systems, Inc., 1501 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22209, Attention: Bruce E. Beddow.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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