

Jun 24, 2008 12:27 pm US/Pacific

Document Reveals Ford Knew About Paint Problems

SAN FRANCISCO (CBS 5) — A [Technical Service Bulletin](#) that Ford sent to its dealers in December, 2004, and reissued in 2006 shows they've known about paint problems with their vehicles for years. And it's much bigger than just a few SUVs. It affects 12 models, from 2000 to 2005.

"This is one hot document! It's good evidence that Ford knew exactly what was wrong with the vehicles," said Rosemary Shahan of Consumers for Auto [Safety](#) and Reliability.

Shahan helped pass California's Lemon Law and believes this bulletin is proof that Ford knows its paint problems are caused by a factory defect.

"They hate to put out service bulletins. It's like a smoking gun. It's practically an admission that they know they have serious problems with these vehicles," said Shahan.

How serious a problem? CBS5 learned that since 2006, the Center for [Auto Safety](#) has been urging Ford to reimburse all owners of Fords who have peeling paint issues.

Ford owners like Janet Behr and Karen Walton. Both own 2003 Ford SUVs. Behr noticed the roof of her Ford Expedition was rusting.

"When I got up there I saw peeling paint," said Behr.

Karen Walton recently talked to someone at Ford about the same problem with her 2003 Explorer.

"She said they did not have any recalls in their system for any paint problems and that was the first she had heard about it," said Walton.

Both owners say Ford never told them about the bulletin and refused to fix their cars until ConsumerWatch got involved.

Shahan said automakers like to keep Technical Service Bulletins "hush hush." That's why they're often called "secret warranties." "It's when there's a defect in the product and the manufacturer is keeping it secret," said Shahan.

She said the manufacturer admits there's a problem, but doesn't tell the customer that they may be entitled to reimbursement for the repair.

"Part of the problem with secret warranties is that you can have two people with the identical problem, one of them gets it taken care of and the other just gets the run-around," said Shahan.

In Janet's case, Ford paid nearly 100% of the repainting cost. In Karen's case, they offered 50%. One possible difference? Janet's [family](#) has owned eight fords. Karen's only two.

In an email, Ford told CBS5, "We do factor owner loyalty into these decisions."

Janet Behr thinks that's a bad idea. "That's absolutely wrong. I don't care if you have a Pinto, you have to take care of your customers the same," she says.

Ford told us it's "highly unlikely" the paint problems originated at the factory and said they could be caused by weather or pollution.

But Ford's own bulletin said its own "testing revealed" that the problem occurs "prior to it being painted."

Ford says Technical Service Bulletins are merely a courtesy to give body shops directions on how fixing a problem.

Shahan thinks otherwise. "It's ridiculous to say that it's for body shops. This isn't the result of dents. We're talking about the skin they put on the vehicle is going to blister," says Shahan.

Both Janet and Karen agree. And they aren't buying Ford's reasons why the paint is peeling on their five year old cars.

"It's dishonest, and Henry Ford would not like that," said Behr.

CBS5 exchanged the following questions and answers with a Ford spokesman over email:

Ford issued a Technical Service Bulletin 04-25-1 in December of 2004 and it was updated in 2006. Why did Ford issue these bulletins?

To instruct repair facilities in avoiding iron contamination when making repairs to aluminum body panels. This is addressing accident repairs, not original paint application.

Did Ford receive complaints from customers regarding the paint peeling off their cars?

Every manufacturer receives complaints of this nature. Each is looked at on a case-by-case basis. The number of complaints is exceedingly low.

Why would two customers with very similar problems get two very different resolutions from Ford? This sounds like a secret warranty.

On the contrary, two identical resolutions would be indicative of a warranty action. After-warranty adjustments are administered based upon numerous conditions including mileage, time in service, owner loyalty, service/maintenance history and environmental factors such as exposure to the elements. No two cases are alike, and once a vehicle is beyond its warranty, the determination any Ford Motor Company participation in the repair is based upon these considerations.

Does Ford feel the peeling paint problem originated at the factory?

Highly unlikely. We paint thousands of vehicles in identical, controlled conditions.

Considering the fact that none of our interviewees was ever in an accident and their cars never had been in a body shop, how can you explain where the paint problems



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A Ford Technical Service Bulletin reveals the company knew about paint problems for years.

CBS

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originated?

Many factors affect paint durability, including maintenance and exposure to ultraviolet light (sun). A combination of factors can lead to paint degradation on any painted surface, particularly on metal if exposed to extreme temperature variations, pollution (especially industrial fallout), salt air, debris from trees, etc.

Loyalty, why should someone who buys only one Ford be treated differently than someone who's purchased to eight?

We do factor owner loyalty into these decisions, as do many industries (airline frequent fliers, restaurant coupons, etc.).

--For more information on technical service bulletins, and to find information on your vehicles, see the "related links" on the right side of the screen.

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By frank whaley posted Mon Sep 6 2010 11:01:24 AM

i have a 2003 f150 super crew. under the doors on the body of the truck and above the running boards it has completely rusted out. both sides of the truck and the complete length of both doors. the truck looks clean but i see rust falling on to my running boards every day. how do i go about getting Ford to pay to fix this problem? i do not have the money to lay out for the repair.

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By Dennis Smith posted Sun Sep 5 2010 9:23:49 AM

I had problems with my car and spoke with some lawyers who may be filing a class action. If you had a problem, I'd give them a call. www.kcrlegal.com

Link: <http://www.kcrlegal.com>

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By morris posted Tue Aug 3 2010 11:07:08 PM

CBS Broadcasting has helped consumers in the past and too need help on my Ford Grand Marquis. My paint has been chipping away since I purchased my car in 2005 brand new. I have been to the dealer and nothing is done about it. Where do I GO FROM HERE? It was Fords negligence and they knew about the contamination. My car has huge bubbling and paint falling off.Could Iget some type of feedback on what to do.

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By kim posted Fri Jul 16 2010 11:52:46 AM

We bought a 2008 Crown Victoria and have had many issues with the paint. Does anyone know if Ford will take care of it?

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By Zestar Corporation posted Wed Jun 30 2010 6:29:44 PM

Automotive paint durability research publication documents vehicles released to dealer and consumer below automaker's minimum paint thickness specifications. Refer to link for details.

Link: <http://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/making-it-right-why-your-car-payments-are-lasting-longer-than-your-factory-paint-job-basic-guide/>

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By shawnmichle posted Wed Jun 30 2010 2:20:58 AM

I appreciate the concern which is been rose. The things need to be sorted out because it is about the individual but it can be with everyone.The initiative taken for the concern is very serious and need an attention of every one. This is the concern which exists in the society and needs to be eliminated from the society as soon as possible.

===== Best Ford Dealer

By **Sharon** posted Tue Jun 22 2010 11:13:58 PM

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I have a 2001 Ford Taurus and the paint is bubbling and peeling. How in the world do we find the bulletin to get it fixed or don't we?

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By **mike Mcfadden** posted Wed Jun 16 2010 9:31:10 PM

we just got off the phone with the ford consumer line and they are saying they know nothing about this I wish the manufacture would stand by their products and have the recall before we all get together and forma a class action law suite does anyone know a good Lawyer? if so have them email me

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By **Eliane** posted Tue Jun 1 2010 2:22:43 PM

My 2004 Ford Explorer is peeling. I fully plan on taking it to small claims or finding a good consumer lawyer. Check out the Fecbook pages: My Ford Paint Peels and Ford/Mercury Peeling Paint Complaints.

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By **Dave** posted Mon May 10 2010 10:21:00 AM

I have a 2004 Explorer and the paint is peeling off in sheets on the roof, it started in 2006 and continues to get worse. Ford Customer Service refused to paint the roof, also denied knowing of any paint problems with SUV's. My local ford dealership would not do anything as well. BUT they did admit that Ford has Big paint problems and they have received numerous complaints from customers. They also looked my Explorer and determined it was a defect from the factory.

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By **Brenda** posted Wed Apr 28 2010 1:55:07 PM

I have a 2006 Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer under 5 years old that the tailgate is severely blistered all over, paint has even popped off of it. There is also some on the hood. The local Ford dealership admitted that Ford had a problem with the blistering paint and told me how bad my vehicle was. They took pictures and sent to Ford. Ford Rep denied it and I was told that even if holes appeared as a result now they would do nothing for me because they had already denied and only look at a claim for one thing one time. I pursued further by calling customer service and emailing them as well. The customer service rep also admitted there was a problem with paint blister but could do nothing for me because it had already been denied. I have owned Fords all of my Life and even worked for a Lincoln Mercury dealership for several years. I am continuing to pursue this as far as I can and ask for any help that can be offered in this matter.

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By **Zestar Corporation** posted Sat Apr 10 2010 9:28:20 AM

Our letter to Ford's Board of Directors was delivered on April 05, 2010. We have requested Ford to conduct an investigation of their Cost Per Unit Contracts. We have worked within the auto industry and with paint suppliers during the last 16 years. Quite simply a significant majority of Ford's vehicles are being released to the automaker, auto dealer and cosumer below the automaker's paint thickness specifications. Handling over process and paint quality responsibility to the 3 paint suppliers have resulted in millions of factory paint defects. Ford's issued TSBs pertaining to aluminum parts, corrosion, etc. is incorrectly being associated with the wide spread paint failure that is occurring. Our research concludes that the issue is not aluminum body parts. Paints not applied to specification will result in paint failure. Thin paint coatings are the major cause of paint peeling, blistering and chipping, not bird droppings, stone chips, etc. Easily verified by reviewing the vehicle's durability data.

Link: <http://www.mmdnewswire.com/vehicle-paint-quality-6280.html>

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By **Jim Bigos** posted Fri Apr 9 2010 3:47:57 PM

Our 2010 Ford Focus SE Paint defects. When I got under vehicle to perfor the first oil change i was in awe all the paint under the door(running boards) was gone. It start fading up onto the rear doors. Brought it back to Ford dealer, they showed us a Technical service bulletin stating its from road debris. well a few days after we stopped in the dealer again, but before going in, I went to their new inventory lot which contained 2010 New ford focus's, I got under 6 new vehicles(Focus's) and documented with pictures the same paint damage on all 6 random new vehicles. I took pictures of the damage on all these new vehicles, one was already down to bare metal and rusting, I took pictures of each cars window sticker, Vin# and paint damage. I then contacted my states attorney generals office and senator for investigation. Now how can they say it's caused by road debris, these cars 6 out of 6 have the same damage but have not been driven on the roads, My vehicles paint was even missing under the weather stripping

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By **Zestar Corporation** posted Tue Mar 2 2010 9:48:52 AM

We have contacted Ford's Senior Management directly on this issue. Ford is aware that they have produced and released vehicles that have not met their paint engineering specifications. The new business models of outsourcing process and quality responsibilities to the paint suppliers have failed Ford, Chrysler and other automakers. Our research concludes millions of vehicles painted below specifications were released by Ford, Chrysler and other automakers. This is an auto industry which is impacting each automaker. Recent paint failures (paint peeling) have been reported on Ford's newer vehicles such as the Ford Transit, Ford Fiesta and Ford Focus. Hopefully, they will show leadership in the auto industry and correct this issue for themselves and all automakers.

Link: <http://www.mmdnewswire.com/auto-industry-6716.html>

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By **Steve Tait** posted Mon Feb 22 2010 9:19:48 AM

I have 2006 Explorer and the paint is flaking of the tail gate near the ford sign. Also both rear wheel arches are now bare of paint due to the plastic door mould scrapping the paint off. My dealer just scoffed and said it is out of warranty and it is not perforated. It is 3.5 years old and has 100,000kms only. I will push the TSB again with them. This is a big issue for ford especially as they believe they are now top due to Toyota's recent recall. They are far from top. How do I get a copy of the updated TSB?

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By **Michael Chies** posted Tue Dec 29 2009 5:06:25 PM

I just purchased a 2010 f150 crew cab 4wheel drive. I noticed that Ford put very little paint, (if any) on the bottom of the doors. I first observed this on the drivers door and look at the others and observed the same thing. I put a call into the dealer to see if this is the way ford is finishing their trucks. Since I keep my trucks for opver 150,000 miles and buy them new, it bugged me to see them cheapen up the painting process and opening up more opportunities for rust. Anybody observed this on their new Ford doors?

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By **amy** posted Wed Dec 16 2009 10:46:44 AM

I have a 2006 expedition with bubbling paint I bought the vehicle in May of 09 I had a 03 expedition with bubbling paint. Ford will not recognize there is a problem and its not the consumer fault. The likelihood of having back to back cars with the same problem is what 1 in a million. But again they will not fix the paint!

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By **Stephen Gaiski** posted *Fri Nov 13 2009 1:04:34 PM*

Dear CBS, During the past year we completed an investigated research of automakers' factory paint finish failures generated by recent business models (outsourcing). Consumers are not aware that automakers have adopted new business models in which they receive a service, "painted vehicle", instead of buying a product, "paint", from the paint suppliers. Over 11,000 vehicles paint factory data, encompassing millions of individual measurements were analyzed and correlated with 9 million production vehicles. The same data the factory uses for quality control of these vehicles were used in this investigation. Our investigative research leads us to the opinion that factories under the new business models, released millions of vehicles with factory paint defects to three parties: 1) Automakers 2) Auto Dealers 3) Consumers Our research concludes that today's paint failures are resulting not from technology, but from the supplier delivering to the automaker, vehicles not painted to the automaker'

Link: <http://www.zestar.com>

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By **J. Mercure** posted *Thu Nov 5 2009 7:36:34 PM*

I too have the issues with peeling paint on my Ford, however my SUV is a 2006 Expedition, so falls beyond the years Ford has attested to....however it is clear this is the same exact defect!! The dealership where I bought the car, in Northampton, MA, has denied any responsibility by the Ford Company, and refuses to discuss any resolve! My car was purchased in February 2006, so likely parts used and processes were of the 2005 variety, but after being referred to a Ford regional manager of some sort, we were also turned away with no compensation, as the car is now 7 months past Ford's warantee on exterior paint surfaces...though clearly I've seen documentation in so many complaints on line that show this is no fault of the consumer!! Please help us to take the right path to correct this situation...we bought this car in good faith, are still making payments, and are now left with no clout to force Ford to take responsibility for duping us, and knowingly selling a defective product for top dollar!!

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