

UNDER THE HOOD

WITH THE MOTOR MEDICS

Dear Motor Medics,

I have a 2002 Ford Ranger with push button 4x4 and over the past six years of ownership I have had the 4x4 shift motor replaced three times and now they tell me it is out again and this will be the second one out of warranty I have to pay for. Are these things just junk or what? I mean I don't even use the thing in the summer and in the winter I have used it only once or twice and sometimes not at all. Please help.

Mary Ann in Brandon
listening on KELO AM 1320

Mary Ann, thank you for listening to the show. I believe we can help you but first you will need to replace the motor again if it has gone bad. The problem with these motors is not that they are poorly designed but rather that they don't get used. Any time you let parts sit on a vehicle without use they start to fail. All of the features of a vehicle need regular "exercise" to stay healthy. That is, use them... Turn on the 4x4 at least once per month and drive for a block or so and turn it back off. At least once every six months engage 4x4 low and drive for 30 feet or so

and then shut it off. This will keep the parts lubricated and working as best as possible. Just like people if the systems are not used they will eventually not work when we need them.

Take care and keep listening to Under The Hood, Russ...

Dear Motor Medics,

I have listened to the show since 1991 both on the air and on the internet. My job takes me all over so I have listened on KELO in Sioux Falls, KBHB in Spearfish while in Rapid City, KCCR in Pierre KYNT while in Sioux City and when stationed in Iraq on the internet. You have solved many problems for me from door locks that unlocked and locked by themselves to sticking brakes and more. You have even helped me with advice on which cars to buy, or should I say avoid buying and all at no charge. Thank you for your show and the advice you have given over the years. I try to tell everyone I can about the show. I have a question I think I know the answer to because I listen so much but I need to ask anyway with winter coming. I have a 1997 Park Ave with 330,000 miles.

When the temp gets to exactly zero or less it won't start. It fires once then is dead until I plug it in for a few hours. I know it needs to be acting up to get a shop to find the problem but I don't want to wait until it is that cold. Can you offer me any advice?"

Scott D now back in Sioux Falls
listening on KELO AM

Scott, thank you for the kind words, we are always glad to help.

In most cases a shop can not diagnose certain items unless the vehicle is acting up when it comes in but in this case we have you covered. When a car won't start but cranks ok at exactly zero it is most likely the fault of carbon build up in the engine. You can repair this by having the fuel system professionally cleaned and using a product like Justice Brothers fuel system cleaner in the tank. You may even need to do the cleaning twice if it has gone this long without cleaning. The fuel system should be cleaned once a year by a professional and an additive used at each oil change to keep your mileage up to its best and to prevent the no starts.

Take care and keep listening to Under The Hood, Russ...

Advice given by the Motor Medics is for use as a guide to repair. Always check with your favorite repair shop for verification. The motor medics have been operating a repair shop and answering questions on the air for 19 years. Russ is an ASE Master Certified Technician with extensive dealer and aftermarket training. Shannon is an ASE Certified Parts Specialist with more than 30 years in the automotive world. You can ask a question of The Motor Medics by going to help@underthehoodshow.com we will answer your question on line and you may see it appear in this publication. The Under The Hood Show can be heard each week on local stations with coverage reaching 7 states and on www.underthehoodshow.com. Go to Underthehoodshow.com to find one near you.



with Shannon Nordstrom and
Russ "The Super Tech" Evans

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Live on the web at www.underthehoodshow.com