

## NEW JERSEY CONSUMER RIGHTS

A transmission repair facility in New Jersey is required to provide you with a written estimate before you authorize any repairs. The written estimate must state the exact amount to be charged for a diagnostic service, or the exact amount to complete a specific repair, or a price not to exceed a specified dollar amount and given at no charge. You may waive your right to such a written estimate, but only by signing a written waiver provided by the repair facility.

You may authorize further services verbally, but the facility is required to document precisely when and from whom the authorization was received and the telephone number called. You are also entitled to have the facility save any replaced parts for your inspection or return to you, although some transmission parts may not be able to be returned to you.

A transmission repair facility in New Jersey is also required to provide you with a written invoice stating the charges for parts and labor separately and whether parts are new, rebuilt, reconditioned or used. The charges for parts and labor on the final invoice may not exceed those stated on the estimate unless you agreed to those excess charges.

You are also entitled to a written warranty setting forth the term and limitations of any express warranty issued by the repair facility. Ask to see a copy of the warranty in advance so that you understand any limitations. For example, most facilities will not cover a transmission failure that results from an accident, alteration or abuse of a reconditioned transmission. Failures caused by electrical components won't be covered unless such electrical components were included in the original repair.



## MISCOMMUNICATION AND DISPUTES

Miscommunications can arise between a consumer and a repair facility, but these can usually be resolved fairly if addressed promptly. If a problem arises, ask the counter person at the facility for the name and number of the owner of that facility. If the owner of the facility is unresponsive to your concerns, there are a number of additional resources available to you. Many repair chains have corporate customer service offices available to consumers to report disputes. Check your invoice and warranty information for the location of a corporate customer service contact.

The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs also investigates complaints involving transmission repair facilities and can be reached at 1-800-242-5846 or 973-504-6200 or at [www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov](http://www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov). Various counties throughout New Jersey also operate Consumer Affairs offices that will investigate complaints about facilities within those counties.

Keep in mind that the vast majority of automotive transmission repair facilities in New Jersey recognize the need to satisfy customer concerns in order to make their business grow. While they may have greater expertise and automotive knowledge, they also understand the need to build consumers' trust and confidence in order to prosper from their expertise and knowledge.



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# GEARING UP FOR TRANSMISSION REPAIR

A CONSUMER PRIMER ON AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION REPAIR, CONSUMER RIGHTS AND REPAIR SHOP RESPONSIBILITIES PRESENTED BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS IN CONJUNCTION WITH AAMCO TRANSMISSIONS

## THE AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

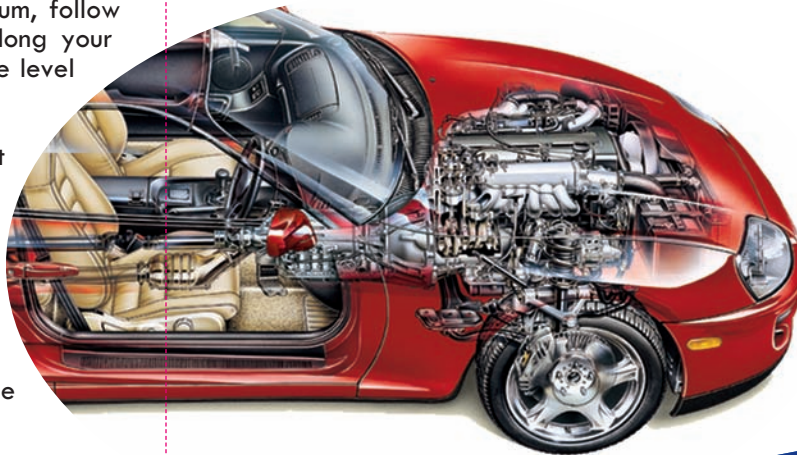
Most passenger vehicles on the road today are equipped with an automatic transmission that is designed to transmit engine power to the driving wheels in order to move your vehicle forward and back. With the exception of Continuously Variable Transmissions (CVT's), the common automatic transmission contains a number of reduction and overdrive gears along with a torque converter. If you have a problem getting your vehicle to engage in gear smoothly, you may be experiencing a problem with the automatic transmission or a related component. This primer will shed some light on issues related to the repair of your automatic transmission, one of the most complex components found in your vehicle.

## AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION CARE AND MAINTENANCE

All automatic transmissions use a combination of friction materials bonded to metal plates and bands, rubber or neoprene seals and bushings. Over time, these parts will wear through normal usage. If not properly lubricated, they will wear out prematurely. When malfunctions become apparent, they must be corrected to avoid the likelihood of more serious damage to even more complex components contained within the transmission.

Your vehicle's manufacturer has determined the maintenance intervals for its automatic transmission under various conditions, so, at a minimum, follow those guidelines. The best way to prolong your transmission's life is to regularly check the level and condition of your transmission's fluid.

Common transmission malfunctions that you may experience include fluid leaks, delays or difficulty in the shift quality of your vehicle or other driving problems. Most automatic transmissions in late model vehicles are controlled electronically. In such cases, the "check engine" indicator on your dash may also signal a problem related to the operation of the transmission rather than the engine.



## AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION SERVICES

If you suspect a transmission problem, a qualified technician can perform some basic checks and tests to confirm the same. These checks include the level and condition of the fluid, a road test, a lift and under hood check, and a scan of trouble shooting codes identified by your vehicle's computer control module. If there is any charge to perform such checks and tests, the repair shop should tell you the cost for such a check before performing any test.

There are a number of common services that may be recommended based on the external checks and tests including:

### FLUID CHANGE OR FLUSH

A routine maintenance service that should include replacement or cleaning of the fluid filter inside your transmission.

### EXTERNAL ADJUSTMENT OR REPAIR

A repair or replacement of an external component connected to your transmission that may correct a specific malfunction.

### RESEAL SERVICE

The replacement of all external seals and gaskets in your transmission that may correct a problem that is limited to fluid retention only, but will not correct a problem related to wear or damage inside your transmission.



## TRANSMISSION TEARDOWN AND REASSEMBLY

A Teardown is a diagnostic procedure to determine the extent of wear and damage inside your transmission and may be recommended if the malfunction can't be corrected with a fluid change, an external adjustment or repair, or a reseal service. The cost of the Reassembly should be included in the teardown.

## RECONDITIONED (OR REBUILT OR OVERHAULED) TRANSMISSION SERVICE

The replacement of various components inside your transmission based on standards set by the rebuilding facility and actual wear and damage found inside your transmission.

Exchange Transmission-The replacement of your defective transmission with another transmission, usually one that has been reconditioned, rebuilt or overhauled by the exchange transmission supplier.