

What Important "Accidents" Are Being Reported?

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This morning I came across a situation of a Chrysler vehicle stopped and blocking the curb lane of Highbury Avenue in London and the angle of its left front wheel was noticeably peculiar. Here are some photos:



Above you can see the vehicle at its rest position and below is a closer view that shows a separated ball joint and the control arm contacting the road.



The photo below shows the view in the curb lane just behind the vehicle where you should notice an obvious scrape on the pavement. Once the ball joint failed the control arm fell onto the pavement caused the scrape.



In the photo below I have taken a close-up view of the beginning of the scrape to make sure that you can clearly see that it exists.



Finally, below is a good quality photo showing the separated ball joint. Indisputable.



The woman driving this vehicle claimed she did not know what happened. She was driving normally and straight in her lane when this occurred. We can see that she was not travelling very fast when the lower control arm hit the pavement because the scrape is only about 1 1/2 car lengths in distance. But it is unlikely that the failure occurred exactly at the point where we see the beginning of the scrape. I have additional photos and there is more to this than I will discuss at this time.

But my point is that in my previous article I had just finished stating how the City of Kitchener was bragging about their 20% reduction in car accidents and how I felt that collisions were likely not being reported. In the present case this was a disaster that luckily did not occur. If the woman had been travelling at any significant speed she might have been directed into oncoming traffic and we could have had a fatality. The scrape I showed you is visible but not all that visible and could be missed by investigators. A collision resulting from this failure would cause direct damage to the left front wheel area of the vehicle and we would never realize that the ball joint failure was pre-existing and not as a result of the accident.

Furthermore, the public does not realize that Chrysler Corporation has had a significant problem with ball joint failures that have been occurring since the late 1990s and certainly into the early 2000s. So far they have been able to avoid recalls because they

have convinced many regulators at Transport Canada and the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that these failures are pre-announced, and they use the magical phrase that the driver "would have had prior warning" as in loud noises and things that they should have checked out. Besides, those vehicles are now old enough that Chrysler can say they do not fall under the umbrella of a recall because no one can be expected to protect the owner who drives a very old vehicle. Interesting.

So everyone hides behind something. The poor lady has to pay her repair costs, totally oblivious to the fact that she could have been killed. Yet our accident statistics show a safer world.

By the way, no police officer came to this site. A tow truck came by and hauled the vehicle away and there was no report filed with the Collision Reporting Centre. Neither Transport Canada, NHTSA nor Chrysler will be aware that this incident occurred. Safe driving everyone, you're in good hands.