



Automotive & Collision
13403 Murphy Road - Stafford, Texas

Comprehensive Automotive Services
281-499-4797 Fax: 281-261-4824
www.freedomauto.com
Email: newsletter@freedomauto.com

NEWSLETTER FOR: September 2013

[Visit Our Website](#)

[See Coupons](#)

[Free Subscription](#)



The Dealer is better?

Unfortunately even new cars can be involved in accidents. Often when one of our customers has had a new or fairly new vehicle damaged in a wreck we hear, "I took it to the dealer because I figured they are the experts on it." You would think that is right. It sounds right. After all they built the thing and should be the best qualified to fix it back to factory standards. Real life has taught us differently.



We recently had a radio show listener who brought his 2013 model luxury car to us to recheck the work done at the dealership body shop. He had no particular reason to suspect anything wrong,

but because the car had less than 2000 miles on it when wrecked, and because there was over \$24,000 in damage he wanted to have an impartial third party review the workmanship.

The dealership is on the owner's insurance company's preferred provider list and is one of the body shops that this major insurance carrier recommends to its policy holders. The shop operates under a manufacturer's franchise agreement and is required to have all the necessary tools, equipment, welding machines and measuring apparatus to do the repair to factory specifications. Their staff is required to be trained in the proper procedures. So what could go wrong?

Any shop, whether dealer or independent, is only as good as the supervisory and technical staff's dedication to excellence. This place fell far short of excellent.

Our inspection revealed that the right body frame rail, a major structural component, was welded in place and the welds were not ground down or treated with corrosion protection. This will allow rapid rusting of the frame structure and serious damage. The inner fender structure was assembled and welded (again not properly treated for rust prevention) in place out of position and as a result the headlamp mounting ear holes had to be ground into slots so that the headlamps would attach. One mounting ear was missing entirely. These headlamps cost over

\$900 each. Inner body panels were assembled unpainted or painted over the parts shipping labels. Front bumper bracket bolts were left loose and about half of the trim panel attaching clips or screws were missing. While the front end alignment was within specifications, the rear was not. Procedure requires that the front alignment be set in "reference" to a properly align rear suspension.

The car owner did not get what he expected; a car properly repaired and restored to pre-accident condition.

Higher Technology

We are all used to the constant introduction of high technology on our cars. It has become almost commonplace for some new innovative feature to appear with each new model. The infotainment gizmos usually garner all of the attention, but safety features are what the car makers spend most of their R&D dollars on.

We have all probably seen the new Infinity commercial that touts the ability of the new Q50 to predict an accident 2 cars ahead of you. I must admit that had me scratching my head a bit. I looked into the technology involved. While I was aware of the passive cruise control, lane change monitoring, pedestrian warning systems and even the "old fashion" collision avoidance features I hadn't given much thought to the combination of all these into a predictive technology that would help all of us drive safer.

The new system monitors the conditions around the car. I mean ALL around the car with as many as 24 different sensors, cameras and transmitters. Many of these are from other systems and are combined to function as a cohesive network of information sensing interpreted at the speed of light and translated into actions faster than Mario Andretti (or Danika Patrick) could react.

The new Infinity system "sees" forward and constantly measures the distance between you and the car ahead. It translates that into collision probabilities and recommends to the driver certain actions. If the driver doesn't respond fast enough the car's computers take over and respond for them. This same system can "look" under the car ahead to the next object on the roadway and monitor that distance too. If you notice in the commercial the car directly ahead of the Infinity is really a truck with high ground clearance. Will it work with a normal car ahead of you? Maybe? A Corvette? Probably not.

The response of the car depends on make. A Mercedes will tighten seat belts, close windows, lock doors (which it unlocks after the accident) tilt the head rest and apply the brakes. Other makes do some or all of this.

In the near future, and already on the road in prototype, is a Nissan system that will steer the car away from the obstacle if conditions are clear to do so.

While I think all of this is wonderful and a great improvement to safety I have to wonder how many car owners are going to be willing to shell out the big bucks it will take to repair these system once the cars are out of warranty. A side mirror with cameras in it can cost a thousand dollars today. A relatively minor bumper collision could take out as many as 8 different sensors and transmitters.

For the new car buyer this is marvelous technology, but for the rest of us finding a good used car may take on new dimensions as we look for low tech solutions to transportation.



properly repaired and restored to pre-accident condition. transportation.

This is not a condemnation of all dealership repair centers. There are some very good body shops operated by dealerships. The point is that just because it is a dealership owned body shop does not mean that you are going to get a quality repair. The same applies to those shops on the insurance company's preferred provider list. I do not mean to say that every independent shop will do a first rate job. Unfortunately there are many bad apples in the business of fixing cars. The important thing to keep in mind is that the car owner must pick the body shop that he or she feels best about. Sources such as Angie's List, Google Reviews or referrals from friends can go a long way toward preventing problems.

Finally do not hesitate to ask for a second opinion or a review of the work done by an impartial third party or by the insurance carrier. In this particular case the review has led to a complete rework of the job at an additional cost of almost \$10,000.



**Shocks and Struts**

Buy 3 get 1 FREE*

Save \$30.00 on alignment with purchase above

**Automotive & Collision**
13403 Murphy Road - Stafford, Texas

*After Rebate. See store for details. Coupon good thru 9/30/2013

Freedom Automotive Service
Be good to yourself...be good to your car and do it with quality BG Products!

Less than 36,000 miles on your vehicle?
Ask us about the LIFETIME BG Products Protection Plan
It's FREE with qualifying service!

 **SAVE 10%**
ON ANY BG PRODUCTS SERVICE
expires 09/30/13

13403 Murphy Road • Stafford, Texas • 281-499-4797

Copyright 2010-2013 Freedom Automotive Services

[Powered by Anything Internet](#)