

The following updates are provided as a courtesy to the towing community.

Saab Oil Pan Damage Caution

The oil pans on newer Saab models can be damaged while the vehicle is being transported on a flatbed type tow truck. This is especially true with 1999-02 Saab 9.3 models and the 2003 Saab 9.3 2-door and convertible models. The damage is apparently being caused by the cluster hook assembly on the end of the winch bridle getting jammed between the oil pan and the surface of the flatbed while the vehicle is being transported. The reason that this is happening is due to the type of attachment that is required to load the newer Saab models onto a flatbed type tow truck and the proximity of the attachment point to the engine oil pan. The pictures below show the proximity of these pieces and the possible result if care is not taken.



The Problem



The Result

Not all cluster assemblies are of the same design. The one pictured here uses 2 rings to support 3 different hooks. Some cluster assemblies will only use 1 ring to support 3 different hooks, which would present an even bigger challenge in transporting the newer Saab vehicles without damage.

Below are four different methods that the tow truck operator can use to eliminate the risk of causing oil pan damage on these vehicles:

- Tow the vehicle on a wheel lift and ensure that the "L" arms or wheel grids are in tight enough to the tires to ensure adequate clearance between the engine oil pan and the cross tube on the wheel lift. This may require jacking the vehicle up to get the "L" arms in tighter.
- When transporting newer Saab models on a flatbed type tow truck, secure the vehicle to the flatbed surface using nylon straps around the wheels and slacken the winch line and bridle assembly during transportation. Do not forget to retighten the bridle before loosening the nylon strap at the unloading destination.
- Place a 2 by 4 or similar block of wood between the cluster assembly and the oil pan when loading. Use a block of wood that is long enough to catch the frame section on the passenger side of the vehicle and extend to the underside of the transaxle. This will help disperse any loads on the oil pan from the cluster assembly during transportation.
- When using the loading eyelets on the underside of the newer Saab vehicle to secure it to a flatbed, use only a single "mini-J" hook on each side connected to a nylon or chain bridle assembly, **DO NOT USE A "MINI-J" THAT IS PART OF A HOOK CLUSTER.**

If your only option is to use a "mini-J" hook that is part of a cluster assembly, use the outboard keyhole slots on the flatbed surface to secure the other end of the strap or chain as this will give an outward pull and avoid having the securing device run underneath the oil pan.

Using a conventional loading bridle, securing the vehicle to the tow truck surface with nylon straps around each wheel and slacken the loading bridle during transport is the preferred method.

Saab battery service update

The 2003 Saab 9.3 sedan models can require some special handling when the battery is discharged. When power is restored to the vehicle through either a boost or battery replacement, it may not start right away. This is due to the time needed for all of the on-board computers to re-synchronize. This may take up to 5 minutes with either a properly charged battery installed in the vehicle or a booster battery connected to the discharged one, and the ignition key in the "on" position. If the time is not taken to allow the computers to re-synchronize, the vehicle may not crank, as though it has a bad starter motor or starter feed circuit.

The best advice we can give to roadside assistance providers when dealing with this situation is to connect their boosting systems properly and wait a few minutes with their system hooked up before attempting to start the disabled Saab.