



BRAKES

ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS

Bulletin BES 04-16

Subject: Brake Pulsation front or rear?

Vehicle Involved: All vehicles with four-wheel disc brakes, equipped with parking brake activation independent of the conventional brake system.

Condition: Diagnosing brake rotor induced pulsation.

Repair Procedure: Do not apply the parking brake to identify a brake pulsation. Many of us were taught years ago, back in the days of “emergency brakes”, to hold the release lever and gently apply the emergency brake. If the rear drums were out of round, the pulsation would be felt through either the emergency brake pedal or hand brake. Vibration may sometimes be felt in the floor of the vehicle, seats, and dash. Some techs or service writers continue to use this method with devastating results to the parking brake assemblies on the newer platforms.

The parking brake assemblies utilized on newer platforms often have the parking brake shoes working independently from the conventional rotor-braking surface. That is, many new platforms have a drum section built into the hat section of the rotor (drum-in-hat). Verify what type of system you have, prior to attempting this test!

Once that you have verified that the parking brake cannot be used to check brake pulsation, begin the process with NAPA part number BF-168 brake hose isolation clamps. To isolate the front brakes from the rear brakes, gently clamp the rear brake flex hoses with the isolation clamps. With extreme caution test-drive the vehicle in an appropriate location. A slow speed test is adequate to identify the problem. If no pulsation is evident, remove the isolation clamps from the rear of the vehicle and secure them to the front brake hoses. Test-drive the vehicle again using extreme caution. The rear brakes by themselves do not adequately stop the vehicle. A slow speed test within the parking lot or quiet side road is sufficient for this test.

Use extreme caution when performing this test. Do not drive vehicle in traffic with either front or rear brakes isolated! Please refer to bulletins 03-01 and 03-02 for additional information on brake pulsation.