Bulletin BES 07-12

Subject: Brake hose restriction

Vehicle Involved: All

Condition: Identifying brake hose restriction

Repair Procedure: Visually inspect all brake hoses for cracks, ballooning, chafing, and separation from end fittings, seepage, or any other obvious defects. Replace the brake hose if any of the above are found.

Many hoses include brackets that corrode. As the bracket rust they expand and may cause the hose to collapse internally. This is often difficult to detect.

After removing a brake drum, with the aid of an assistant expand the wheel cylinder and observe the return of the wheel cylinder pistons. If there is a delay in the return of the pistons, Expand the cylinder again and open the bleed screw on the wheel cylinder. If the wheel cylinder pistons return normally the brake hose is most likely the restriction.

On vehicles with disc brakes inspect the friction material for any uneven wear before removal. If the inboard and outboard pads are completely worn on one side, and the opposite side caliper pads have little wear, both hoses may require replacement. A restricted brake hose may block fluid from flowing to and from the caliper.

You can verify a hose restriction by pushing the piston in with the caliper bleeder screw closed and then repeating it with the bleeder screw open. If the piston pushes in easily with the screw open, and hard with it closed the hose should be replaced.

The very best way to verify the proper operation of the brake hose is to use two pressure gauges mounted in the caliper bleed screw hole. If the pressure build up or release is delayed you should suspect the hose on the side that is delayed.

Since frozen caliper piston and slides can cause uneven pad wear from side to side, be sure to verify the calipers are operating properly.

Many technicians remove the hose and attempt to blow compressed air through it. Brake hose failures may be different from one geographic area, to another. Areas with severe winters may have hoses fail at a higher rate due to increased corrosion activity.