

Wheels: Christine writes, “My father has a 1994 Chevy Tahoe with a vortex engine. When accelerating from a stop light, it stays in first gear until about 30 mph. We think this is a problem with the transmission, but a few people have told us it is a solenoid. We cannot find a book on this specific car. Can you help?”

Halderman: The transmission in your vehicle is computer controlled. The shifts are made by the computer based on sensor information. If the “check engine” light is on, the computer has detected a fault and may be the cause of the shifting delay. After it shifts into second gear, does it work OK after that? Also does this only occur when you first start and drive the truck? More information would be helpful to try to determine the cause.

Further correspondence indicated that the truck has done this since new and now has over 100,000 miles. A search of the archives at the International Automotive Technicians Network (www.iatn.net) indicated one similar case, but was determined to be normal operation for this vehicle. The delayed upshift is programmed to help warm the automatic transmission fluid and the engine to reduce exhaust emissions.

