

Wheels: An e-mail from Jim asks, “I have a 1995 Ford Windstar. At 105,000 miles, the recommended service called for changing the transmission fluid and replacing the filter. Ever since my car care center performed this, there has been a transmission fluid leak. I have had the van back to the care center a number of times but the leaking continues. According to the car care center owner, the leak is the result of the transmission fluid coming out the dipstick tube, but they have not been able to fix the problem. The van is now at 118,000 miles. A friend suggested that the cause of this may be that the transmission filter is installed backwards. What do you suggest might be the cause of this leak?”

Halderman: I doubt the filter can be installed *backward*, and besides, the filter is inside the pan so any leakage from the filter would simply drip back into the pan. If the dipstick tube is leaking, a simple replacement O-ring seal should fix it unless the tube itself is rusted through. If the fluid is being forced out from the top of the dipstick tube, this is an indication that the vent may be clogged. I suggest that a dye be installed in the fluid and then drive the vehicle for a few miles before using a black light to see where the dye is leaking. This is about the only way to be sure where the leak is occurring. The leak could be from the front seal, requiring that the unit be removed from the vehicle.

