

Wheels: Martin sent an e-mail that says, “My 2000 4-wheel-drive Ford Ranger will sometimes not go into gear when it has been sitting all day or overnight. It has a 4.0 L engine and a 5-speed automatic transmission. If I rev the engine and wait a while (less than a minute), it will then jump into gear with a bang. Once in gear, it is fine for the remainder of the day. When I run the shift lever through the gears, I feel no surge in either direction. So, I am reasonable sure that it is the transmission and not a sticking parking brake. I have seen a suggestion that it could be corroded contacts in the transmission range sensor. I don’t know how to demonstrate the problem to a mechanic. When the symptoms appear, I cannot drive the truck. When I can drive the truck, it may be days or even weeks before they show again.”

Halderman: Your problem seems to be that the torque converter has bled down and it takes a while for the fluid to fill it again before torque is transmitted to the transmission. Unfortunately, the unit has to be removed from the truck to replace a seal or seals that are allowing this to occur. I doubt the problem is related to the range switch, but to check, simply put the gear selector into low (1 or 2) and see if this helps. If it does take care of the problem, then the gear selector switch or circuit is the problem.

