Wheels: An e-mail from DEP says, “I have a 2002 Ford F-150 four-door crew cab pickup truck that my son and daughter-in-law use to pull their camper. They went to Gatlinburg, TN and had a very unpleasant trip. When they came to a hill like the mountains on I-75 south at Jellico, TN, and several times before and after, the truck didn't have the power it should have. It kept running rough, especially under a load not taking the gas for power. They put up with it until on the way back through West Virginia when I told them to take it to a Ford dealer and have it checked because I had called one here and they said it sounded like a coil pack going out as each cylinder had one. Since it was a Friday, they did manage to get it in. The problem was the coil pack for cylinder number 7. The mechanic there said they have had plenty of that, when one goes out isn't long until another coil pack goes out.

I'm very disturbed with this, the truck only had 27,000 miles on it, but according to the mechanic there he said that's quite a common problem. The whole bill cost over $200 as I guess part was for reading the computer printout. I think the part was something like $90.00. That being the case, an 8 cylinder could soon cost over $1,600 for that and I would say not dependable being in question on any camping trip.

My question, Ford says it’s not a recall problem, it’s a customer problem. Why is it necessary for a coil pack on each cylinder? Trucks didn't used to have them.”

Halderman: Almost all vehicle manufacturers are using what is called "coil on plug" ignition because this way the computer can vary the ignition timing on a cylinder by cylinder basis instead of having to adjust it, even if one cylinder needed to be changed. This results in lower exhaust emissions and better fuel economy.
These coils are a "pattern failure" item on this vehicle as well as the coil boots. The repair cost seems reasonable.