



International Carwash Association
Serving the Professional Car Care Industry

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Answers to Side Mirrors Concerns

I have received several inquiries regarding whether or not to retract foldaway side view mirrors while going through a car wash. According to Donnelley Corporation, a major supplier of side view mirrors, sufficient testing of the foldaway feature of the mirror is accomplished that they have complete confidence that continual use of the foldaway feature should not harm the mirror assembly. Their developmental testing exceeds 5000 cycles.

Donnelley also benchmarked their mirrors with all the competitive mirror manufacturers and have found that most mirror manufacturers also meet or exceed the criteria.

The bottom line is, depending on your car wash system, it shouldn't matter whether or not the mirror is retracted. The mirror housing should withstand the repetitive movement. Donnelley recommends that the mirrors be retracted in a car wash.

The redesigned 1999 Mercury Cougar has introduced what they call a "break-away" power outside side view mirror. The mirror housing will break away when significant contact occurs. If the mirror does break-away, while going through a car wash, it can be returned to design position by lining the mirror head up with the mirror base on the vehicle and applying a force perpendicular to the surface. This procedure is referenced in the Cougar's owner's manual, page 77.

Ford claims that since this feature is not prevalent in North America, customers may believe the mirror is broken. To alleviate this concern, the Cougar power side view mirrors are being revised to the traditional "fixed" mirror design and will be available in late 1999.

If you have questions about the Vehicle Alerts Program or wish to submit a form, call International Carwash Association Headquarters at 888.422.8422 or please [SUBMIT A REPORT](#) online at www.carwash.org.

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