



Engine Noise When Cold

The Subaru Technical Support Line has received several reports from the field of an engine noise that could be mistaken for an internal engine noise on 1999-2000 Impreza, Legacy and Forester models equipped with 2.2 and 2.5 liter engines. The noise sounds like it is coming from the front of the engine and could be mistaken for failed bearings. This noise is heard after a cold start and will gradually go away as the engine warms up. It may therefore be difficult to reproduce the noise unless the vehicle is left overnight.

It has been found that the timing belt tensioner on these vehicles may be weak, allowing the timing belt to move and hit the inside of the timing belt cover. The tensioner bearing itself could also be at fault. It is essential that you listen to the actual noise before reaching a diagnosis.

If you suspect the belt tensioner, remove the front cover and look for evidence of rubbing or chaffing. As the vast majority of these vehicles will still be covered by the manufacturer's powertrain warranty, any vehicle exhibiting these symptoms should be returned to an authorized Subaru dealer for service.