

What a Drag it is Getting Older

Or, how you sometimes end up with more
than all-wheel drive to grip the road

Winter Park, April 2011

Setting the stage

- The noise created by a post-snow buildup of ice in the Audi's wheel well prompted a stop to clear the blockage
- The source of the noise, however, was a bit more concerning, as the illustration on the following page shows



Plastic driver-side underbody fairing (measuring front-to-back from just behind front wheel to just before rear wheel), shown in “extended” position

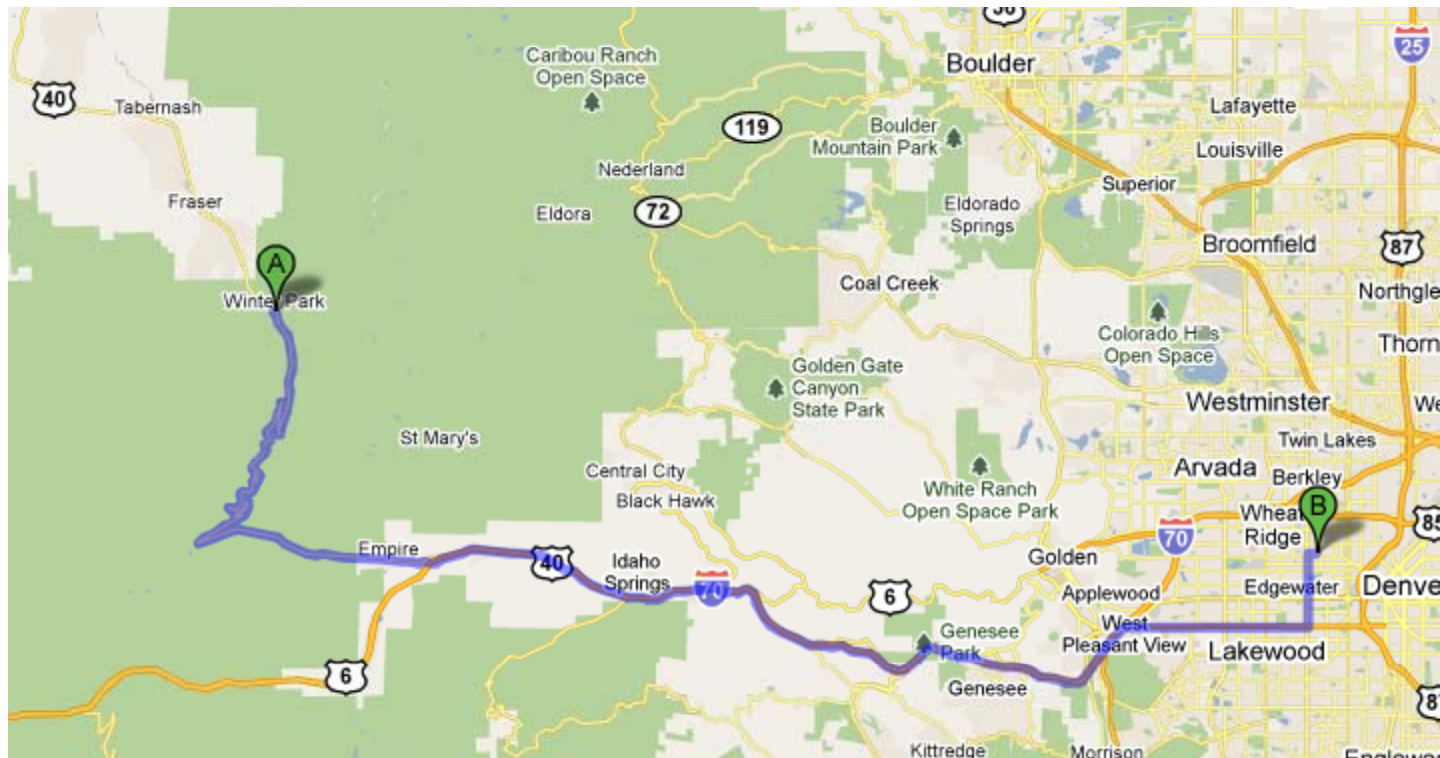
Large, heavy chunk of snow/ice covering the entire plastic fairing, pushing the latter down firmly on the road surface

The fix, part 1

Having discovered the problem only a short drive from the Bell residence, we returned and made use of an assortment of ski poles, brooms, fence rails, and scrap lumber to break up and dislodge the snow/ice chunk



The snow/ice chunk removed, we still faced the challenge of securing the plastic fairing so that it would not drag the road surface on the drive back to Denver



The fix, part 2

Using several sections of rope courtesy the Bell garage, we set about tying the plastic fairing back into place

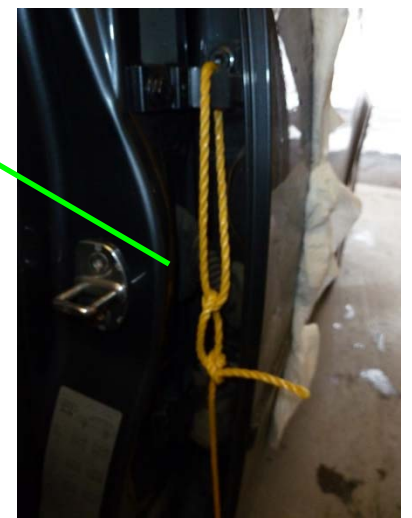
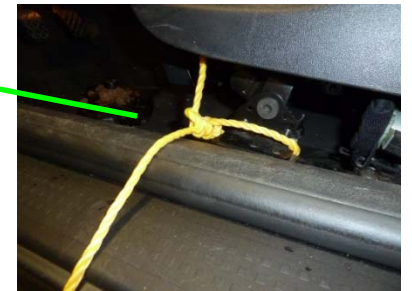
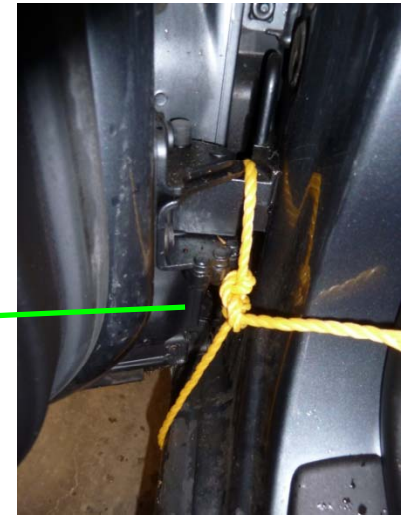
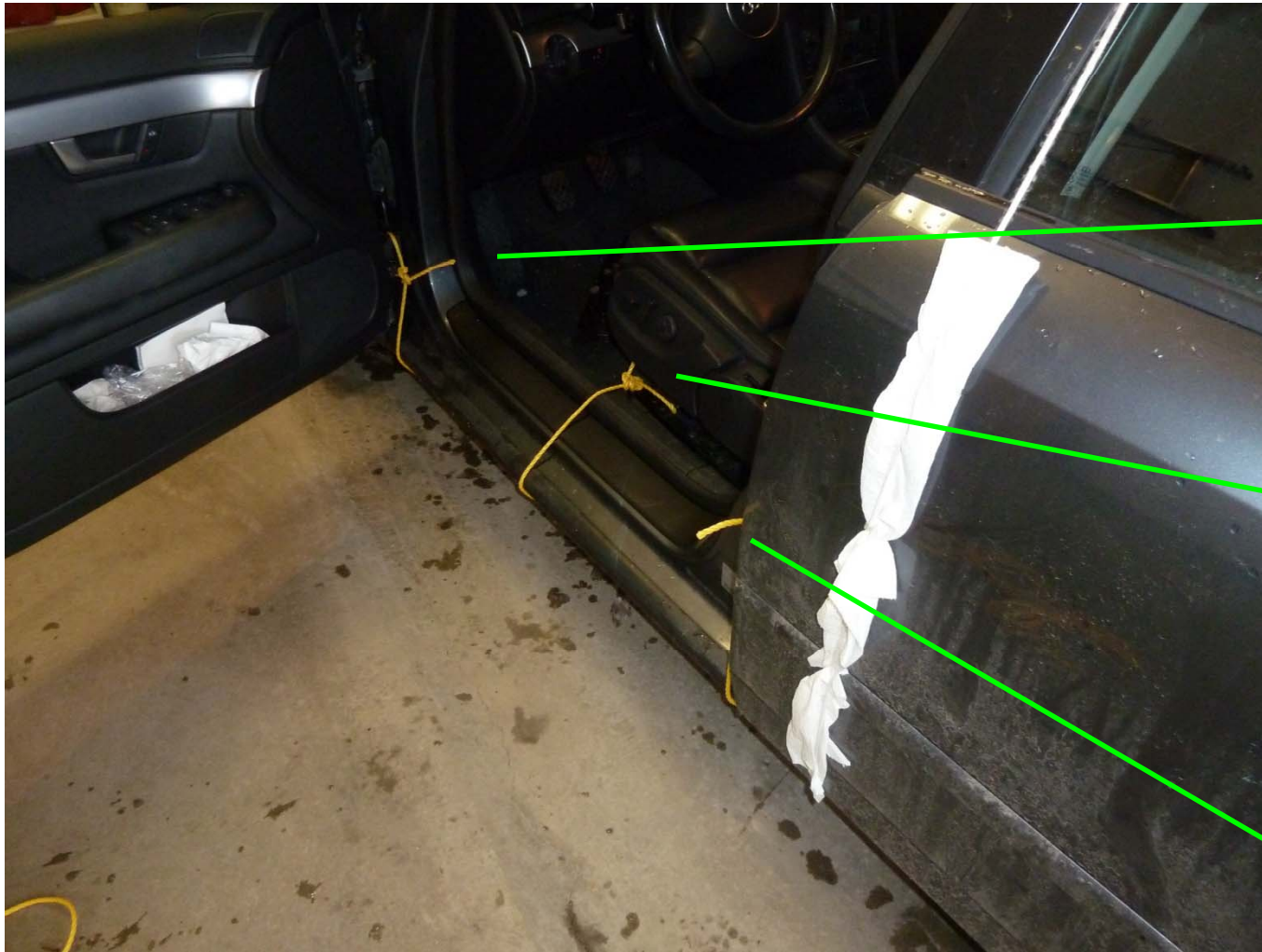




Our first attempt was to use some white cord tied to the roof rack and dropping down the side of the car, underneath, back up the other side, and tied to the rack on the other side. We then padded the cord with paper towels secured with electrical tapes

- The white cord secured the plastic fairing in only one spot, and we needed more. Unfortunately, we used all of the white cord for the single pass.
- After a bit of digging, we found some yellow cord. Needing to be able to open the front doors (the white cord having blocked the rear ones), we went about figuring a different method for tying off the cord. As it turns out, this approach would have been better for the white cord as well, but we didn't go back and re-tie it.





Yellow cords affixed to front door hinge, seat anchor, and rear door hinge, respectively; these cords ran across the underside of the car and attached to the corresponding points on the other side



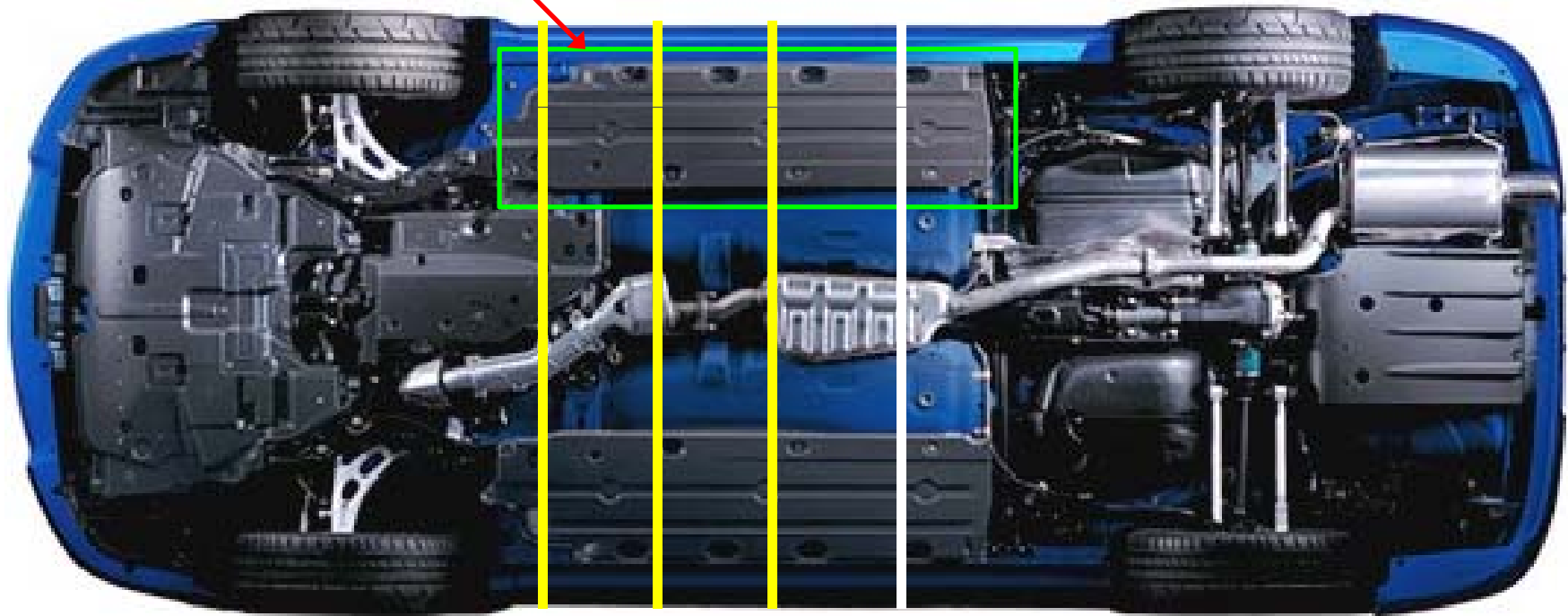
Plastic
fairing

Middle
yellow
cord

Front
yellow
cord

Finished fix, bottom view

Plastic fairing highlighted with green border



Yellow lines represents improved fix with yellow cord

White line represents initial fix with white cord



Success!