



## - *Frequently Asked Questions* - Emissions and Safety Inspection Program Changes

### BACKGROUND

- In 2002, Citizens For Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) and the Clean Air Council initiated two lawsuits over the Commonwealth's slow progress in implementing auto emissions inspection procedures mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- In May, 2003, PENNDOT and DEP announced an agreement to settle these lawsuits over Pennsylvania's program for automobile emissions testing. The changes called for in this agreement bring the state's emissions testing program into compliance with federal air quality standards while having a minimal effect on most of the state's drivers.
- The programs in the agreement rely heavily on the "on-board diagnostic" (OBD) systems present in cars manufactured since 1996. This technology allows a technician to attach a cable to a car's on-board computer and download information that helps them diagnose common engine problems that lead to increased pollution.
- Emissions inspections for subject vehicles will be required once a year in conjunction with the annual safety inspection. Emissions inspections can be done at any participating private garage or dealer that is certified to perform emissions inspections.
- The fees for emissions and safety inspections will continue to be market driven. Competition permits customers to choose inspection sites based on price, service and convenience.

### TYPES OF EMISSIONS INSPECTIONS

#### On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) Check

##### **What is On-Board Diagnostics (OBD)?**

OBD is an on-board system comprised of a computer with diagnostic software and sensors. The OBD system monitors the performance of the ignition, fuel metering and

emissions systems, including the sensors and the computer itself, while the vehicle is being driven to insure they are working “as designed.” The on-board computer has the ability to identify a problem well before the driver may recognize symptoms. The computer will illuminate a light on the dash to notify the driver of a problem. Most dash lights will display a “Check Engine,” “Service Engine Soon,” or an engine symbol. When the OBD system detects a problem, a diagnostic trouble code is stored in the vehicle’s computer. When a vehicle is brought in for an official OBD I/M Check, those trouble codes will help a technician properly diagnose and, if necessary, repair the problem. The OBD I/M Check can be performed on most 1996 and newer model-year gasoline-powered passenger vehicles, vans and light-duty trucks weighing 8,500 pounds and less, since these vehicles were required by the EPA to be manufactured with OBD systems.

### **How is an OBD I/M Check performed?**

A certified technician will attach a cable to the vehicle’s on-board computer through a data link connector (DLC), usually found under the dashboard, and download information to a computer to access how well the vehicle’s emissions system is functioning. The vehicle’s on-board computer will generate diagnostic trouble codes (DTC’s) if there are malfunctions or other problems present in the vehicle’s emissions system.

### **What if the data link connector (DLC) is not able to be located is blocked by auxiliary equipment or has been removed?**

Within the first year of the program, if a DLC cannot be found or is inaccessible, the test will consist of a check to ensure the check engine light (located on the dashboard) is operating properly and is not continuously lit. After the first year of the program, the DLC will have to be accessible or replaced/repared as necessary to perform the inspection.

## **Tailpipe Tests**

### **What is a Tailpipe Test?**

A Tailpipe Test uses a tailpipe probe to collect a sample of the exhaust and an emissions analyzer to measure pollutants while the engine is idling. The Tailpipe Test can be performed on many gasoline-powered passenger vehicles, vans and light-duty trucks. Inspection requirements are based on each vehicle’s model year, with an allowance for normal wear.

### **How is a Tailpipe Test performed?**

First, a certified technician will verify that the vehicle’s engine is running at operating temperature. Then, the technician will insert a probe into the tailpipe to capture a sample of the engine’s exhaust. After approximately 30-45 seconds, the analyzer will determine whether or not the vehicle is emitting excess pollutants based on the vehicle’s model year.

### **What is a Tailpipe Test Utilizing a Dynamometer?**

A Tailpipe Test Utilizing a Dynamometer uses an emissions analyzer and a treadmill-like device, called a dynamometer, which puts a load on the engine to simulate driving conditions at 15 miles per hour. The Tailpipe Test Utilizing a Dynamometer can be performed on many gasoline-powered passenger vehicles, vans and light-duty trucks. Inspection requirements are based on each vehicle's model year, with an allowance for normal wear.

### **How is a Tailpipe Test Utilizing a Dynamometer performed?**

First, a certified technician will verify that the vehicle's engine is running at operating temperature. Then, the technician will place the vehicle's drive wheels on the dynamometer rollers. The technician will then insert a probe into the tailpipe to capture a sample of the engine's exhaust. After approximately 30-45 seconds, the analyzer will determine whether or not the vehicle is emitting excess pollutants based on the vehicle's model year.

### **Why is a dynamometer used for some Tailpipe Tests?**

In the Philadelphia region, where air pollution is more severe, it is necessary to reduce harmful oxides of nitrogen (NOX). To do this, the vehicle's engine must be tested while under load. The treadmill-like device is the only method of applying a load to the vehicles drive wheels to test for NOX.

## **Gas Cap Test**

### **What is a Gas Cap Test?**

A Gas Cap Test is a functional check that tests whether harmful evaporative emissions (fumes) are escaping from a vehicle's gas tank into the atmosphere.

### **How is a Gas Cap Test performed?**

A certified technician will remove the gas cap and insert it into a device that will then apply pressure to the gas cap. The testing unit will verify that the gas cap holds pressure for a period of approximately 45 seconds and a determination will be made as to whether or not fumes are escaping.

## **Visual Anti-Tampering Check**

### **What is a Visual Anti-Tampering Check?**

The Visual Anti-Tampering Check is a visual inspection for the presence of emission control components that were installed on a vehicle by the manufacturer.

### **How is a Visual Anti-Tampering Check performed?**

A certified technician will look for the presence of the following emission control devices:

- Catalytic converter,
- Exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) valve,
- Positive crankcase ventilation (PCV) valve,
- Fuel inlet restrictor,

- Air pump, and
- Evaporative control system components such as vapor canisters and lines.

The certified technician will also determine if these devices are properly connected and if they are the correct type for the vehicle being inspected. These components may be original vehicle equipment or an equivalent aftermarket replacement component meeting the same standards. Only those components (listed above) that were part of the original certified vehicle configuration are subject to this portion of the inspection. If a component was not originally on a vehicle at the time of manufacturer, it will pass inspection without it. A waiver will not be issued to a vehicle that does not pass the Visual Anti-Tampering Check.

**What constitutes tampering?**

The rule of thumb when it comes to emissions systems is that any modification that changes the vehicle from a certified configuration to a non-certified configuration is considered tampering. This applies to both vehicle owners and repair facilities and is therefore a Federal offense. Replacing a catalytic converter with a straight pipe is one traditional example of tampering. Likewise, overriding the OBD system through the use of high-tech defeat devices, non-certified computer chips, etc., would also be considered tampering.

**How will stations know what emissions components a vehicle was originally equipped with?**

Inspectors may use the Vehicle Emission Control Information (VECI) label in the engine compartment or an appropriate reference manual to determine which emissions components were originally placed on a vehicle at the time of manufacturer. If a component was not originally on a vehicle at the time of its manufacturer, it will pass inspection without it.

**EMISSIONS INSPECTION CHANGES**

**South Central Region**

*(Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Northampton and York counties)*

**When will the South Central Region be required to begin an emissions inspection program?**

Emissions inspections in the South Central Region will be phased in according to the following schedule:

- December 2003...Cumberland, Dauphin
- January 2004...Berks, Lehigh, Northampton
- February 2004...Lancaster, Lebanon, York

### **What type of emissions inspection will be required in the South Central Region?**

Beginning in December 2003:

- Most 1996 and newer model-year vehicles will be required to have an OBD I/M Check and a Gas Cap Test performed annually.
- Most 1975-1995 model-year vehicles will be required to have a Gas Cap Test and a Visual Anti-Tampering Check performed annually.

### **Does our station have to get a dedicated phone line in order to perform emissions inspections?**

Yes. A dedicated phone line is required to perform emissions inspections.

### **When can a waiver be issued in the South Central Region?**

In the South Central Region, waivers can only be issued to 1996 and newer vehicles. The waiver requirements are that a vehicle has failed two OBD Checks and made a minimum of \$150.00 worth of emissions related repairs that address the problem; if these criteria have been met a waiver may be issued.

### **What training is required to be a Certified Emissions Inspector in the South Central Region and where can I get it?**

Emission Inspector Certification training is a 16.5-hour course, which covers all aspects of Pennsylvania's Emissions Inspection Program. The most recent list of training facilities in the South Central Region can be found on the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us). Please contact a facility to get information regarding class availability and fees. NOTE: While certified emissions inspectors are qualified to perform emissions inspections on vehicles at certified emissions inspection stations, an emission repair technician certification is required to issue waivers for qualifying vehicles. PENNDOT encourages all technicians to become certified as both an inspector and a repair technician since this training will be valuable in properly diagnosing and repairing your customer's vehicles.

## **Northern Region**

*(Blair, Cambria, Centre, Erie, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming and Mercer counties)*

### **When will the Northern Region be required to begin an emissions inspection program?**

Emissions inspections in the Northern Region will be phased in according to the following schedule:

- January 2004...Erie, Mercer
- February 2004...Blair Cambria, Centre
- March 2004...Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming

### **What type of emissions inspection will be required in the Northern Region?**

Beginning in January 2004:

- Most 1975 and newer model-year vehicles will be required to have a Gas Cap Test and a Visual Anti-Tampering Check performed annually.

**Can a waiver be issued in the Northern Region?**

Waivers do not apply to the gas cap or visual component portions of any inspection. Since these are the only items tested for in the Northern Region, there will be no waivers granted to vehicles registered in these counties.

**Does our station have to get a dedicated phone line in order to perform emissions inspections?**

Yes. A dedicated phone line is required to perform emissions inspections.

**My station is located in a very rural area and my phone company does not have any additional phone lines to install. Am I still required to get a dedicated phone line in order to perform emissions inspections?**

If your phone company does not have any additional phone lines you will be required to get a letter from the phone company (on company letterhead) indicating the unavailability of an additional phone line. In this case, PENNDOT will allow a splitter on a current phone line.

**What training is required to be a Certified Emissions Inspector in the Northern Region and where can I get it?**

For becoming an inspector restricted to the Northern counties, prospective students should call Parsons at (888)265-5909. They will be given instructions on how to apply, obtain course materials, and take the test. Inspectors in the Northern region must take a proctored recertification test at an approved institution. See a list of institutions for [training in the Northern region](#).

Upon completion of the required training, a web-based final exam will be administered at Vo-techs and Community Colleges in the eight Northern Region counties. The user name and password (provided when registering for this training program) and a valid driver's license will be needed at the time of testing. The most recent list of testing facilities in the Northern Region can be found on the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us). Please contact a facility to get information regarding testing availability and fees.

**Pittsburgh Region**

*(Allegheny, Beaver, Washington and Westmoreland counties)*

**When will the Pittsburgh Region be required to upgrade its emissions inspection program?**

Stations in the Pittsburgh Region can implement the OBD I/M Check any time between January 2004 and March 2004. If they do not begin offering the OBD I/M Check to motorists by March 31, 2004 they will not be allowed to offer any emissions inspections.

**What type of emissions inspection will be required in the Pittsburgh Region?**

By March 31, 2004:

- Most 1996 and newer model-year vehicles will be required to have an OBD I/M Check and a Gas Cap Test performed annually.
- Most 1975-1995 model-year vehicles will continue to receive the annual emissions inspections required under the current program which includes: Tailpipe Tests, Gas Cap Tests and Visual Anti-Tampering Checks.

**For several years I've been offering tailpipe emissions inspections in the Pittsburgh Region. In order to continue performing emissions inspections do I have to purchase the OBD equipment?**

Yes. In order to remain a Certified Emissions Inspection Station you must offer all emissions inspections required for your region.

**Why can't stations in the Pittsburgh Region just upgrade the machines we already own?**

PENNDOT has made the decision not to upgrade existing emissions machines because the current machines are outdated, other states have had difficulty with an upgrade and a new machine allows for the choice of a new manufacturer.

**What happens if my emissions station doesn't have the OBD equipment installed by the March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline?**

Emissions stations in the Pittsburgh Region that do not have OBD equipment installed by March 31<sup>st</sup> will be locked out from emissions testing until the equipment is installed. Additionally, stations who haven't ordered equipment by March 31<sup>st</sup> will not only be locked out at that time, but they will be scheduled for cancellation. They will then have to re-apply to be an emissions inspection station once the proper equipment has been obtained.

**Does our station have to get another phone line to perform OBD Emissions Inspections?**

No, existing emissions stations may use a splitter on a current dedicated phone line between two emissions analyzers.

**What training is required to be a Certified Emissions Inspector in the Pittsburgh Region and where can I get it?**

Emission Inspector Certification training is a 16.5-hour course, which covers all aspects of Pennsylvania's Emissions Inspection Program. The most recent list of training facilities in the Pittsburgh Region can be found on the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us). Please contact a facility to get information regarding class availability and fees. NOTE: While certified emissions inspectors are qualified to perform emissions inspections on vehicles at certified emissions inspection stations, an emission repair technician certification is required to issue waivers for qualifying vehicles. PENNDOT encourages all technicians to become certified as both an inspector and a repair technician since this training will be valuable in properly diagnosing and repairing your customer's vehicles.

**Philadelphia Region**

*(Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties)*

**When will the Philadelphia Region be required to upgrade its emissions inspection program?**

Stations in the Philadelphia Region can implement the OBD I/M Check any time between April 2004 and June 2004. If they do not begin offering the OBD I/M Check to motorists by June 30, 2004 they will not be allowed to offer any emissions inspections.

**What type of emissions inspection will be required in the Philadelphia Region?**

By June 30, 2004:

- Most 1996 and newer model-year vehicles will be required to have an OBD I/M Check and a Gas Cap Test performed annually.
- Most 1975-1995 model-year vehicles will continue to receive the annual emissions inspections required under the current program which include: Tailpipe Tests, Tailpipe Tests Utilizing a Dynamometer, Gas Cap Tests and Visual Anti-Tampering Checks.

**For several years I've been offering tailpipe/dynamometer emissions inspections in the Philadelphia Region. In order to continue performing emissions inspections do I have to purchase the OBD equipment?**

Yes. In order to remain a Certified Emissions Inspection Station you must offer all emissions inspections required for your region.

**Why can't stations in the Philadelphia Region just upgrade the machines we already own?**

PENNDOT has made the decision not to upgrade existing emissions machines because the current machines are outdated, other states have had difficulty with an upgrade and a new machine allows for the choice of a new manufacturer.

**What happens if my emissions station doesn't have the OBD equipment installed by the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline?**

Emissions stations in the Philadelphia Region that do not have OBD equipment installed by June 30<sup>th</sup> will be locked out from emissions testing until the equipment is installed. Additionally, stations who haven't ordered equipment by June 30<sup>th</sup> will not only be locked out at that time, but they will be scheduled for cancellation. They will then have to re-apply to be an emissions inspection station once the proper equipment has been obtained.

**Does our station have to get another phone line to perform OBD Emissions Inspections?**

No, existing emissions stations may use a splitter on a current dedicated phone line between two emissions analyzers.

**What training is required to be a Certified Emissions Inspector in the Philadelphia Region and where can I get it?**



Emission Inspector Certification training is a 16.5-hour course, which covers all aspects of Pennsylvania's Emissions Inspection Program. The most recent list of training facilities in the Philadelphia Region can be found on the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us). Please contact a facility to get information regarding class availability and fees. NOTE: While certified emissions inspectors are qualified to perform emissions inspections on vehicles at certified emissions inspection stations, an emission repair technician certification is required to issue waivers for qualifying vehicles. PENNDOT encourages all technicians to become certified as both an inspector and a repair technician since this training will be valuable in properly diagnosing and repairing your customer's vehicles.

## **SAFETY INSPECTION CHANGES**

### **Remaining 42 Non-Inspection/Maintenance (I/M) Emissions Counties**

*(Adams, Armstrong, Bedford, Bradford, Butler, Cameron, Carbon, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Crawford, Elk, Fayette, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lawrence, McKean, Mifflin, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Pike, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Somerset, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, Wayne and Wyoming counties)*

#### **What type of inspection will be required in the remaining 42 Non-I/M Emissions Counties?**

These counties will NOT be required to pass an emissions inspection. Rather, as part of the annual safety inspection, most passenger vehicles and light trucks weighing 11,000 pounds and less will be required to pass a Visual Anti-Tampering Check.

#### **When will the remaining 42 Non-I/M Emissions Counties be required to begin this enhanced safety inspection program?**

The changes to the safety inspection program in these counties will begin on December 1, 2003.

#### **Is special training/certification required to perform the Visual Anti-Tampering Check as part of the Enhanced Safety Inspection?**

No. PENNDOT does not require any special training/certification to perform the Visual Anti-Tampering Check. However, PENNDOT has published and distributed a Visual Anti-Tampering Guide that will assist certified safety inspection mechanics in identifying additional inspection items that will be included in the safety inspection of passenger cars and light duty trucks (having a registered gross weight of 11,000 pounds or less) as specified in the inspection procedure of the Vehicle Equipment and Inspection Regulations.

## **GENERAL EMISSIONS INSPECTION QUESTIONS**

**Do I have to have be an existing safety inspection station to offer emissions inspections?**

No. It is up to the station owner to determine if they want to offer safety inspections, emissions inspections, or both.

**My station is located in a county that does not require emissions inspections but I am adjacent to a county that does require emissions inspections. Am I allowed to become an Official Emissions Inspection Station?**

Yes. Your station can participate in the emissions inspection program as long as it meets all of the requirements to be appointed an Official Emissions Inspection Station.

**How do I apply to become an Official Emissions Inspection Station?**

To apply to become an official PENNDOT Emissions Inspection Station contact the PA Emissions Team Hotline at 1-800-265-5909.

**Do my employees need special certification in order for my business to be appointed an Official Emissions Inspection Station?**

Yes. Stations who wish to participate in the emissions inspection program need to have at least one certified emissions inspector employed at their station in order to be eligible for appointment as an Official Emissions Inspection Station.

**How do I become a certified emissions inspector?**

You must be at least 18 years of age, have a valid driver's license, attend a PENNDOT-approved certification course and successfully complete the prescribed tests. For more information contact the PA Emissions Team Hotline at 1-800-265-0921 or visit the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us) for a list of approved emissions schools in PA.

**I'm nervous about investing a large amount of money to purchase equipment for the emissions inspection program. Can the state guarantee a long-term commitment or a number of years that the emissions inspection program will last?**

The emissions inspection program is currently required by federal law and regulation. Pennsylvania, through its I/M and various other State Implementation Plans (SIPs), has committed to the government that it will operate the stated programs until they are replaced or demonstrated as no longer necessary. In short, it appears unlikely that the program will become unnecessary within the foreseeable future.

**How much does the emissions inspection equipment cost?**

There is no set price for the emissions equipment; each equipment provider decides the cost of the equipment. Competition permits stations to choose equipment based on price, service and convenience.

**How much can stations charge customers for an emissions inspection?**

It is up to a station to determine what they want to charge customers for an emissions inspection although the station must post a price list in an area visible to customers.

**Why is Verizon (a phone company) involved with this program?**

Through a competitive bidding process, PENNDOT selected Verizon as overall program manager in 1997 to collect and report on the emissions inspection data, perform overt and covert station audits, and provide call center support to stations and consumers

**Why must my station pay \$2.40 per call for every emissions inspection to Verizon?**

Verizon charges a Program Management Fee which is a fee charged to inspection stations for each initial emissions test performed. Services included in the Program Management Fee are:

- Program auditing and oversight
- Data analysis and reporting
- Centralized database management and maintenance
- Station certification
- Equipment certification
- Technical and customer Hot Line support
- Public information outreach materials

Stations will not be charged for retest of the same vehicle, at the same station, within 30 days of the initial test.

**As an inspection station offering emissions inspections, what type of public signage is required to be posted at my place of business?**

If you operate an existing safety inspection station, you should currently have an official inspection station sign outside the garage, clearly visible to the public. This sign shall have a keystone design which is 24 inches high and 21 inches wide. The station number plate (containing your Official Inspection Station number issued by PENNDOT) shall be 2 3/4 inches high and 13 3/8 inches wide. The background shall be navy blue with gold lettering. If hung from a bracket, the sign shall be double faced. If you also offer emissions test, an additional station number plate shall be at least 3 inches high and at least 13 inches wide. The background shall be green with white station numbers (this plate will also contain your Official Inspection Station number issued by PENNDOT) and placed below the present blue and gold plate. Fleet and Commonwealth inspection stations are exempted from this requirement.

**If I already offer safety inspections and decide to offer emissions inspections, will I be given a different Official Inspection Station number for emissions?**

No, the station number will be the same.

**If I only offer emissions inspections at my station, what type of public signage is required to be posted at my place of business?**

If you only operate an emissions inspection station, you'll be required to have an official inspection station sign outside the garage, clearly visible to the public. This sign shall have a keystone design which is 24 inches high and 21 inches wide. The station

number plate (containing your Official Inspection Station number issued by PENNDOT) shall be at least 3 inches high and at least 13 inches wide. The background shall be green with white station numbers and placed below the keystone sign. Fleet and Commonwealth inspection stations are exempted from this requirement.

**Where can I obtain these signs and number plates, does PENNDOT supply them?**

No, PENNDOT does not supply the signs. To obtain the proper signage contact your parts supplier or an industry association.

**When will a station need to perform an emissions inspection on a vehicle?**

The emissions inspection is required annually in conjunction with the annual safety inspection. A vehicle must get an emissions inspection or exemption before a safety inspection can be completed and a sticker issued.

**Does a station have to perform an emissions inspection before it can perform a safety inspection?**

No, the regulations only require that a vehicle pass an emissions inspection and receive an emissions sticker, or receive an emissions exemption/waiver sticker, prior to affixing a safety inspection sticker. There is no problem conducting the safety inspection prior to performing the emissions inspection if the inspector chooses to do so.

**How will a station know that an emissions inspection is required for a vehicle?**

The message "Emissions Inspection Required/Diesel Vehicles Exempt" will be printed on the motorist's vehicle registration card to remind stations that an emissions inspection is required for that vehicle.

**How is PENNDOT notifying the public about the changes to the emissions inspection program?**

PENNDOT will be notifying the public about the changes to the emissions program with an insert that is included with their registration renewal notice.

**I have a motorist who no longer lives in a county that requires an emissions inspection but they still have a registration card with the emissions indicator on it?**

If a motorist no longer lives in a county that requires an emissions inspection they must complete Form MV-63, "Change of Address for Driver's License, Photo ID and Vehicle Registration." A change of address can also be completed online at [www.dmv.state.pa.us](http://www.dmv.state.pa.us). Once PENNDOT processes and mails the new registration card to the motorist the emissions message will no longer appear.

**I have a motorist whose vehicle registration card says "Emissions Inspection Required/Diesel Vehicles Exempt" but they do not live in a county that requires emissions inspections?**

PENNDOT can issue corrected registration credentials for vehicle owners who live outside of an emissions-affected area, but have the emission indicator on their registration in error. Vehicle owners should complete Form MV-421, "Emissions

Inspection and Maintenance Program Verification” or contact the Vehicle Inspection Division at (717) 787-7709. Upon verification of home address and location by PENNDOT, a new registration card will be issued without the emissions indicator message.

### **How much can a station charge for an emissions inspection?**

The fee for emissions inspections will continue to be market driven – similar to the safety inspection. Competition permits customers to choose inspection sites based on price, service and convenience.

### **Where will the Emissions Inspection sticker be placed?**

The emissions sticker will be placed on the front windshield of the vehicle next to the safety inspection sticker.

### **Are any vehicles excluded from Pennsylvania’s emissions program?**

Yes. Vehicles will be excluded from the program if:

- the vehicle is registered as a street rod, classic, collectible, antique or specially constructed vehicle and motorcycles.

Vehicles excluded from the program will not have the “Emissions Inspection Required/Diesel Vehicles Exempt” message in their registration card.

### **Will motorists still need an emissions inspection sticker if their vehicle is excluded from the emissions inspection program?**

No. If the vehicle is excluded from the program, no emissions message will appear on the registration card and as a result, no sticker is needed.

### **Are any vehicles exempt from Pennsylvania’s emissions program?**

Yes. Vehicles will be exempt from the program if:

- the vehicle has been owned for one year and driven less than 5,000 miles in the prior year. However, motorists must go to an emissions inspection station to verify the vehicle’s mileage and receive an exemption sticker.
- the vehicle is a new car, not previously titled and driven less than 5,000 miles before registration; motorists should receive an exemption sticker valid for up to 12 months upon receipt of the new car from their new car dealer.

Exemptions are determined by the vehicle registration or by a certified technician.

### **Will stations need to issue an emissions inspection sticker if a vehicle is exempt from the emissions inspection program?**

Yes. Even if the vehicle is exempt from the emissions inspection program the motorist must still take the vehicle to an emissions inspection station to receive an exemption sticker. Stations can charge a fee to issue an exemption sticker.

### **How will a station prove to a motorist that their vehicle passed or failed the emissions inspection?**

Stations will give the motorist a computer-generated report which lists inspection results. A computer-generated report for a vehicle that fails the inspection will also

include information on the cause of the failure. In addition to the computer-generated report, a passing vehicle will also have an emissions sticker affixed to its windshield.

### **What happens if a vehicle fails the emissions inspection?**

If a vehicle doesn't pass the emissions inspection, the vehicle owner must make emissions-related repairs. After these repairs are made, the vehicle can be re-inspected for free, within 30 calendar days, at the station that initially conducted the inspection. If the vehicle owner waits longer than 30 days, or takes the vehicle to a different emissions inspection station, the re-inspection is not free. In addition, if the vehicle still doesn't pass the inspection, in most cases the vehicle owner can get a one-year waiver if they have spent a minimum of \$150 on emissions-related repairs. In some cases, the vehicle owner may be required to spend more if the needed repair is the only repair that will address the problem.

### **If repairs are necessary, who is authorized to perform them?**

Any recognized vehicle repair location, or individual, may perform emissions-related repairs. However, only a certified repair technician at a certified emissions inspection location may issue a waiver.

### **What is the difference between a certified inspection technician and a certified repair technician?**

A certified inspection technician can inspect vehicles. Only certified repair technicians are permitted to issue waivers.

### **Where can my employees go for training and how much will it cost?**

The most recent list of training facilities can be found the Drive Clean PA web site at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us). Stations should contact a training school directly to find out the cost of the training as well as the training schedule.

### **Do I need a certified repair technician in my station?**

Stations will only be required to have a certified repair technician at their station if they intend to issue waivers. All stations must display a sign that indicates whether or not they are able to issue waivers.

### **What is a waiver?**

A certified emissions inspection station with a certified repair technician on staff may issue a waiver for a vehicle that does not pass an emissions inspection after the vehicle owner has made a minimum of \$150 worth of emissions-related repairs. A waiver is valid for one year. Waivers will not be issued to vehicles that do not pass the Visual Anti-Tampering Check.

### **What costs count towards the waiver?**

Costs which count toward the waiver amount include:

- Diagnosis fees
- Parts installed and labor performed at a recognized repair location
- Costs of parts installed by vehicle owner/operator.

Waivers will not be issued to vehicles that do not pass the Visual Anti-Tampering Check.

**If the vehicle fails the Visual Anti-Tampering portion of the emissions inspection and can no longer purchase a replacement part, what happens next?**

Vehicles with emission control devices which are obsolete and cannot be obtained through the original equipment manufacturer, aftermarket manufacturers or suppliers of used parts may be exempt from having to have the missing item of equipment replaced provided the customer provides proof of the unavailability of the component(s) as specified by PENNDOT.

**What can stations use as a reference to determine the vehicle's original emissions components?**

Inspectors may use the Vehicle Emission Control Information (VECI) label in the engine compartment or an appropriate reference manual to determine which emissions components were originally placed on a vehicle at the time of manufacturer. If a component was not originally on a vehicle at the time of its manufacturer, it will pass inspection without it.

**Are emissions repairs covered by a vehicle's warranty?**

If a vehicle owner has questions about the emissions warranty on their vehicle or needs help in filing a warranty claim, tell them to contact their local car dealer or the manufacturer's zone or regional representative listed in their owner's manual or warranty booklet.

**Will certified emissions inspection stations be audited to ensure they are conducting the required inspections on vehicles properly?**

Yes. As it does in the current emissions program, PENNDOT will continue to conduct audits at each certified emissions inspection station.

**If I lose my inspection privileges as either as safety or emissions inspection station, will it impact the other?**

In most cases, it will not. However, depending on the circumstances, there could be an impact on both station licenses.

**How is PENNDOT notifying the public about the changes to the emissions inspection program?**

PENNDOT will be notifying the public about the changes to the emissions inspection program with an insert that is included with their registration renewal notice.

**How can I obtain a copy of the Pennsylvania emissions inspection manual?**

Copies of Pennsylvania's Emission Inspection Program Regulations can be purchased directly from PENNDOT. Requests for regulations should include a check or money order for \$5.30 per copy payable to Commonwealth of PA (tax is included) and forward to the Vehicle Inspection Division, P. O. Box 68697, Harrisburg, PA 17106-8697.

## SAFETY INSPECTION QUESTIONS

### **Are any vehicles in the remaining 42 Non-I/M Emissions Counties exempt from the Enhanced Safety Inspection?**

Yes. Vehicles weighing over 11,000 pounds and vehicles currently exempt from a safety inspection. Vehicles registered as a classic or collectible will be exempt from only the anti-tampering portion of the safety inspection. Exemptions are determined by the vehicle registration or by a certified safety inspection mechanic.

### **If the vehicle fails the Visual Anti-Tampering portion of the safety inspection and can no longer purchase a replacement part, what happens next?**

Vehicles with emission control devices which are obsolete and cannot be obtained through the original equipment manufacturer, aftermarket manufacturers or suppliers of used parts may be exempt from having to have the missing item of equipment replaced provided the customer provides proof of the unavailability of the component(s) as specified by PENNDOT.

### **Can a station issue a waiver if a vehicle fails the Visual Anti-Tampering Check?**

No. Waivers will not be issued to vehicles that do not pass the Visual Anti-Tampering Check. Any modification that changes the vehicle from a certified configuration to a non-certified configuration is considered tampering and the vehicle would not pass the safety inspection.

### **How much can stations charge customers for the enhanced safety inspection?**

It is up to a station to determine what they want to charge customers for the enhanced safety inspection although the station must post a price list in an area visible to customers.

### **Will certified safety inspection stations be audited to ensure they are properly conducting the required inspections on vehicles?**

Yes. As it does in the current safety inspection program, PENNDOT will continue to conduct audits at each certified safety inspection station.

### **How is PENNDOT notifying the public about the changes to the safety inspection program?**

PENNDOT will be notifying the public about the changes to the safety inspection program with an insert that is included with their registration renewal notice.

### **How can I obtain a Pennsylvania safety inspection manual?**

Copies of the Vehicle Equipment and Inspection Regulations can be purchased directly from PENNDOT. Requests for regulations should include a check or money order (made payable to Commonwealth of PA) for \$5.30 per copy (tax is included) and be forwarded to the Vehicle Inspection Division, P. O. Box 68697, Harrisburg, PA 17106-8697.



## AIR QUALITY

### **Why are different types of emissions inspections required throughout Pennsylvania? Why is this not a statewide program?**

Metropolitan areas with a population of 200,000 or more with poor air quality are subject to auto emissions programs. Since several regions in Pennsylvania currently fail, by varying degrees, to meet federal health-based air quality standards, emissions inspections are required. The Commonwealth remains committed to taking a customized approach to address the particular air-quality issues for each region and for the Pennsylvanians who live there. This “common sense” approach is the way Pennsylvania has ensured and will continue to ensure our citizens have clean air.

### **Why are there different emissions standards for different model-year vehicles?**

From one model-year to another advances in technology can change, therefore, an older vehicle would not be required to meet the same manufacturing standards as a newer vehicle. For example, a 1982 vehicle is NOT required to meet a 1998 model-year emissions allowance. Inspection requirements are based on each vehicle’s model-year and engine size, with an allowance for normal wear.

### **Why is Pennsylvania incorporating OBD I/M Checks into its emissions inspection program?**

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued rules requiring states to incorporate OBD I/M Checks into their emissions inspection programs. These checks will modernize Pennsylvania’s current vehicle emissions programs and will ensure that today’s computer-controlled vehicles continue to generate lower levels of air pollution. An OBD I/M Check can be performed on most 1996 and newer gasoline-powered passenger vehicles, vans and light-duty trucks weighing 8,500 pounds and less, since these vehicles were required to be manufactured by the EPA with the OBD systems.

### **Why is an emissions inspection necessary for newer model-year vehicles?**

Vehicles and fuels are cleaner and more efficient than they were 25 years ago, but vehicles are still responsible for about a third of our air pollution problem. Even new vehicles can pollute more than they should if they aren’t well maintained. Emissions inspections help make sure that vehicles meet the manufacturer’s standards.

### **What does a motorist gain when repairing emissions-related problems?**

Repairs to emissions-related components offer several advantages to the motorist:

- Reduce operating costs through improved fuel economy
- Repair minor problems before they become major, costly repairs
- Protect the capital investment in the vehicle by prolonging its life
- Help ensure proper maintenance and thereby comply with warranty requirements
- Improve air quality: cleaner air for all Pennsylvanians

### **Why aren't diesel-fueled vehicles required to participate in Pennsylvania's emissions program?**

Diesel-fueled vehicles are not required to participate in Pennsylvania's emissions inspection program because the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has not yet approved, and required, an emissions inspection for diesel-fueled vehicles. Current Pennsylvania law states that the Department cannot implement more stringent requirements than mandated by the EPA.

### **Has the current emissions inspection program helped to improve Pennsylvania's air quality?**

Yes. For example, the program's success is clearly evident in the Pittsburgh area; the program helped the area attain the one-hour health-based ozone standard in 2001. Attainment means that the area has reached the ambient air quality levels required by federal law. After an area reaches attainment status, a plan must be in place to maintain air quality for the next 10 years. The program has also contributed to improvements in air-quality in the Philadelphia area by helping to reduce the number of times the area exceeded the one-hour ozone standard. Almost every urban area in the Commonwealth will be affected by new more stringent ozone standards, and the program is expected to help ensure these areas attain and maintain clean air.

### **Does the state know how long the emissions inspection program will last?**

The emissions program is currently required by federal law and regulation. Pennsylvania, through it's I/M and various other programs is committed to cleaning up its air and will operate until it is demonstrated that they are no longer necessary. In short, it appears unlikely that the program will become unnecessary within the foreseeable future.

### **Are other states doing their fair share to clean the air?**

All Northeastern states that don't meet federal air quality standards are subject to similar pollution control requirements as Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth continues to work with the EPA, Congress and other states to ensure that all states do their fair share and that Pennsylvania is not unfairly singled out. Pennsylvania has been instrumental in ensuring states to the west and south of us also control pollution that contributes to Pennsylvania's air quality problem.

### **Where can I get more information on emissions testing and air quality issues?**

Motorists can get more information regarding vehicle emissions inspection programs, as well as other air quality issues, from the EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality at [www.epa.gov/otaq/](http://www.epa.gov/otaq/).

### **Where can I get more information on Pennsylvania's Vehicle Emissions I/M Program?**

Stations can visit the "Drive Clean PA" website at [www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us](http://www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us) or call 1-800-265-0921 for information on Pennsylvania's Vehicle Emissions I/M Program.