

# *Pittsburgh Region Fact Sheet*

## *Changes are planned for the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program*

### *The Pittsburgh Region includes:*

*Allegheny, Beaver, Washington and Westmoreland Counties  
(1.3 million subject vehicles)*

### *What is planned?*

- The Pittsburgh Region will transition, for 1996 and newer vehicles, from Tailpipe Testing to On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Checks from January 2004 through March 2004.
- The emissions program in the Pittsburgh Region will not change until January 2004. Until then, all current program elements will remain the same.
- When transition occurs, most 1996 and newer vehicles will receive an OBD I/M Check and a Gas Cap Test.
- Most 1975 through 1995 vehicles will continue to receive the current test (Tailpipe Test, Gas Cap Test and the Visual Anti-Tampering Check).

### *What is On-Board Diagnostics?*

OBD is a modern vehicle emissions inspection designed to detect problems with the computerized engine components found on most 1996 and newer model-year gasoline-powered vehicles. During an OBD I/M Check, a technician will attach a cable to the vehicle's onboard computer to see if the vehicle's emissions equipment is damaged or otherwise malfunctioning. The check can assist in preventing major engine problems and therefore major expenses caused by failing equipment while subsequently benefiting the environment in reducing the amount of harmful gasses emitted. As in the current program, emissions inspections will be completed at private service stations and dealers who opt to participate in the program. Stations who wish to participate will be required to purchase equipment to perform the OBD I/M Check and Gas Cap Test.

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

The Visual Anti-Tampering Check is an examination of the vehicle to see if the required emissions components have been tampered with or removed. A certified technician will look for 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 technician will also determine if these devices are properly connected and if they are the correct type for the vehicle being inspected.

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

A Gas Cap Test is a functional check to determine if a vehicle's gas cap seals properly. A gas cap that does not seal properly allows harmful evaporative emissions (fumes) to escape from a vehicle's gas tank into the atmosphere. The same equipment that is used to perform the OBD I/M Check also incorporates a gas cap tester.

## ***Key Program Elements***

- The program will continue to be a decentralized program, allowing motorists the ability to go to the certified emissions station of their choice to receive the OBD I/M Check and Gas Cap Test for their vehicle when the program transitions to OBD I/M Checks.
- As in the current program, the cost of the new OBD I/M Check and Gas Cap Test will be market driven and set by the participating stations.
- The OBD I/M Check and Gas Cap Test will be required annually in conjunction with the annual safety inspection as with the current Tailpipe Testing.
- Tailpipe Testing, Visual Anti-Tampering Checks and Gas Cap Tests will continue for most model year vehicles 1975 through 1995 even when the program transitions to OBD I/M Checks.
- Some exempt vehicles include vehicles registered as: antiques, classics, collectibles, street rods, specially constructed, vehicles over 9,000 lbs., non-gasoline powered vehicles and vehicles driven less than 5,000 miles during the previous year.
- For vehicles that fail the emissions inspection, a waiver may be issued for one year as in the current program. As in the current program, no waivers will be issued to vehicles that do not pass the Visual Anti-Tampering Check.

## ***Equipment***

- Cost of equipment is estimated to range from \$4900 to \$8000.
- 7 Manufacturers currently working towards the certification process.
- As Manufacturers equipment becomes approved, it will be posted on the Drive Clean PA website.
- Stations must purchase this equipment to continue as a certified emissions station.