

DATE: Nov. 18, 2009

CONTACT: Mark Shaffer, Director of Communications, (602) 771-2215 (o);
(480)433-9551 (cell)

ADEQ Requests Emissions Testing Exemption for Motorcycles in Phoenix Metropolitan Area

PHOENIX – (DATE) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced today that they have requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to approve the exemption of motorcycles in the Phoenix metropolitan area from the State’s vehicle emissions inspection (VEI) program.

“Since January, Governor (Jan) Brewer has asked her agencies to streamline Arizona government,” said ADEQ Director Benjamin H. Grumbles. “This is a great example of how our agency can make the lives of state residents simpler and still ensure Arizona has clean air to breathe.”

Phoenix is the only metropolitan area in the country in which motorcycle emissions are required to be tested. Because motorcycles make up only 3.5 percent of the vehicles tested and test failure rates have decreased significantly, testing and repair of motorcycles does not provide a significant benefit in improving air quality, according to a recent analysis by ADEQ and the Maricopa Association of Governments.

“This is a good step and it follows through on the Legislature’s action in 2008 to help motorcycle owners save time and money without putting air quality at risk. We will also continue to encourage everyone to drive wisely and that includes using fuel efficient vehicles and keeping engines properly tuned and tires properly inflated,” Grumbles said.

Cars, trucks, and motorcycles have their emissions tested as part of a program to help reduce the levels of carbon monoxide and ozone in the air and meet federal air quality health standards. Vehicles with excess emissions are required to be repaired.

The motorcycle study and exemption request are the result of 2008 State of Arizona legislation that allows the exemption with EPA approval. For the exemption to take effect, EPA will have to approve it by July 1, 2010. For now, Phoenix motorcycles will still need to be tested. ADEQ has been and will continue working closely with EPA officials to help expedite the approval process.

Last year, ADEQ’s VEI program diagnosed more than 150,000 vehicles as in violation of Arizona’s clean air standards. They were repaired and returned to Arizona roadways within those standards. Motorcycle owners and other interested parties can view the study and request at the ADEQ records center at 1110 W. Washington Street in Phoenix.

To receive press releases by email: <http://www.azdeq.gov/subscribe.html>
Follow ADEQ on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/ArizonaDEQ>