



VEHICLE EMISSIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

October 2014

Does my new car need to be tested?

New cars are not required to be tested until they have been registered for five years. Find more details at www.myAZcar.com.

Where do I go to have my car tested?

Emissions testing is available at any of the Phoenix metropolitan area and Tucson area inspection stations. For locations and current traffic at a station located near you, click on www.myAZcar.com.

What do I do if my vehicle fails?

If your vehicle fails the test you must have it repaired and reinspected. The reinspection is free if you return within 60 days of your original or subsequent paid test with the repair information completed on the back of the vehicle inspection report.

Can I help my vehicle pass?

Yes. Vehicles benefit from regular tune-ups, oil and filter changes, and generally good maintenance. When going for an emissions test, have the vehicle thoroughly warmed up. If it has been serviced (especially service requiring the battery to be disconnected) drive the vehicle for a few days to enable the computer and On-board diagnostic (OBD) monitors (if your car has them) to reset.

What does the gas cap have to do with emissions testing?

Most vehicles have a "closed fuel system." With the gas cap in place there is moderate pressure in the fuel tank and lines. This pressure is part of the emissions control system. If the cap cannot maintain pressure in the system, the air/fuel mixture can be compromised, resulting in elevated emissions.

Do alternative fueled vehicles need to be tested?

All alternative fuel vehicles (except electric, solar and hydrogen powered) registered in or used to commute into metro Phoenix or Tucson are required to be tested for emissions before the vehicle can be registered.

How do I know if my vehicle is an alternative fueled vehicle?

Alternative fueled vehicles are vehicles that use forms of energy other than conventional gasoline and diesel fuel. A detailed definition is found in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 1-215.4. Pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 28-2416, in order to qualify for an alternative fuel special plate, the vehicle must be exclusively powered by one of the alternative fuels identified in Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 1-215.4, and be incapable of operating on any other type of fuel.

Hybrid vehicles do not qualify for an alternative fuel special plate but instead may qualify for an energy efficient plate. To see if your vehicle qualifies for an energy efficient plate visit: <http://servicearizona.com/content/SAZHighlightEE2014>

How do I find a good repair facility?

The State of Arizona cannot recommend individual repair facilities. However, the Vehicle Emissions program tracks repair information on vehicles that have failed the test. You can review the effectiveness of repair facilities in your area at www.myAZcar.com by clicking the tab "Locate a Repair Facility" on the right.

My vehicle is due for inspection, but it is out of state. What do I do?

If your vehicle is out of the State of Arizona 90 days before your registration expires, you must do one of the following.

1. If your vehicle is in an area that has an inspection program, you must have the vehicle tested and submit the passing inspection report.
2. If your vehicle is in an area that does not have an inspection program, you may submit an "Out of State Exemption" application.

For more information see: <http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/air/vei/exempt.html#out>

Where can I report a smoking vehicle?

Maricopa County operates a program to notify owners when their vehicles have been emitting excessive smoke.

To report a smoking vehicle in Maricopa County, call (602) 372-2703, or visit: www.maricopa.gov/aq/contact_us/report_violation.aspx.

I am new to Arizona. What do I do to register my car here?

If you reside in the emission control areas of Pima or Maricopa counties, you should have your vehicle emissions-tested first. Check www.myAZcar.com to see if your car is required to be tested. Then take your passing test result and your vehicle to any MVD office to register in Arizona. You can look for an MVD office at: www.azdot.gov/mvd/index.asp.

How much does an emissions test cost?

Fees vary by location and vehicle size and type. A complete schedule of the test fees can be found at www.myAZcar.com.

What is OBD and how does it work?

On-board diagnostic systems (OBD) were developed in the 1980s to help technicians diagnose and service the computerized engine systems of modern vehicles. A new generation of these systems is found on 1996 and newer light duty vehicles (8500 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) and less). These systems monitor the same components, use the same computer

“language” and have the same criteria for evaluating the systems and for indicating the problems to the driver and the repair technician.

The OBD system provides drivers with an early warning of malfunctions through a dashboard “Check Engine” light (also known as a Malfunction Indicator Light or MIL). This early-warning light helps protect the environment and identifies problems before they become major repair bills.

Why does OBD testing replace tailpipe testing on newer vehicles?

The OBD II system is required on 1996 and newer light duty vehicles (8500 pounds GVWR and less). While the tailpipe test looks at the vehicle exhaust to determine if the vehicle is running efficiently, OBD testing looks at the parameters of the engine to ensure optimum efficiency. OBD often identifies failing components before a tailpipe emissions test would fail. This often allows for repair at a much lower cost than a malfunctioning component damaging the engine or catalytic converter.

How does the driver know there is a problem?

When the OBD system determines that a problem exists, a corresponding “Diagnostic Trouble Code” is stored in the computer memory. The computer also illuminates the dashboard “Check Engine” light, informing the driver that service is needed. If the light is flashing, the problem is serious and needs immediate attention.

Where can I get more information?

Go to: www.myAZcar.com for more information, to find an inspection station, repair facility, test fees, exemptions and much more.

ADEQ has an On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) informational brochure and an On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) For Vehicles fact sheet that are also available. They can be found on the ADEQ Web site www.azdeq.gov, and click on the heading “Brochures & Fact Sheets.”

For vehicle specific information, or for information not covered in the above resources you may contact Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program staff in Phoenix at 10210 N. 23rd Avenue, (602) 944-0383 or 4949 E. Madison Street, (602) 275-1144 or in Tucson at 3931 N. Business Center Drive, (520) 887-5191.