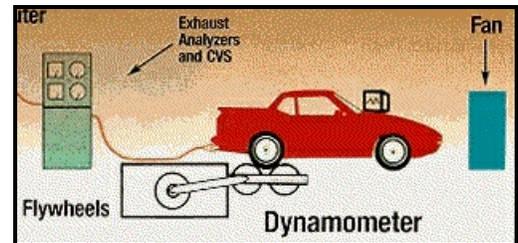




What is ASM2 and how does it work?

The Two-Speed Idle tailpipe emissions analyzer currently used in certified state inspection stations has two significant limitations for use in the Houston and Dallas/Ft. Worth areas. First, it does not test the vehicle for emissions under load and acceleration, as would be expected of the vehicle during normal operation on the road. Second, since it only tests for carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons, it does not test for oxides of nitrogen (NOx) which have been determined to be a major contributing factor in the formation of ground level ozone.

With the ASM2 test, the vehicle is driven on a dynamometer, acting as a treadmill stress test for the vehicle. It is a cost-effective method to measure pollutants under realistic driving conditions. The three main exhaust pollutants measured are hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen. If there is an excessive amount of any of these three pollutants, a vehicle will fail the emissions test.



A Few Reasons Why A Vehicle May Fail the ASM2 Test

Excessive Hydrocarbons (HC):

High hydrocarbon emissions result when fuel in the engine does not burn completely. HC in the presence of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and sunlight may form ground-level ozone, a major component of urban smog. Check the following:

- Internal Engine Problems
- Faulty Air Pump
- Ignition System
- Exhaust Gas Recirculation System (EGR)
- Catalytic Converter
- Gas Cap

Excessive Carbon Monoxide (CO):

A rich fuel mixture can cause high amounts of carbon monoxide, which can occur when there is too much or too little air reaching the combustion chamber. Check the following:

- Misadjusted Carburetor
- Faulty Fuel Injection System
- Worn Rings/Valve Guides
- Air Pump System

Excessive Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx):

High NOx can occur when there is excessive temperature in the combustion chamber or a damaged catalytic converter. Check the following:

- Air Injection System
- Exhaust Gas Recirculation System (EGR)
- Combustion Chamber Deposits
- Oxygen Sensor
- Catalytic Converter

For additional information and program updates check out our website at www.airchecktexas.com.

Texas Department of Public Safety Vehicle Inspection & Emissions

5805 N Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78752 Phone: (512) 424-2770, Fax: (512) 424-2774

www.airchecktexas.com



What is OBDII and how does it work?

On Board Diagnostics-Second Generation (OBDII), is a computerized system on 1996 & newer model year vehicles that monitors emissions-related components and systems for proper functionality. The OBDII utilizes an on board computer to test and monitor all the emissions-related components and systems of the vehicle.

This system is so sophisticated, it can detect malfunctioning components and systems before more serious failures occur and even before the driver of the vehicle becomes aware of a problem. The OBDII enables a vehicle owner to make cost-effective repairs before more costly damage is done to the vehicle.

OBDII testing uses a scan tool that plugs into the vehicle's computer and determines that the emission system and components are working properly. The test downloads stored information from the vehicle's computer to identify emission systems or components that are not working properly.

When an emissions control malfunction is detected, a dashboard light illuminates stating "Check Engine" or "Service Engine Soon." If the OBDII system detects a problem, a corresponding diagnostic trouble code (DTC) is stored in the computer's memory. Using an OBDII scan tool, a repair technician can quickly retrieve diagnostic codes from the vehicle computer and make necessary repairs before a more serious problem develops.

How are malfunctions detected?

The OBDII system test determines whether there is a malfunction and/or deterioration of the components that control the vehicle exhaust-emissions levels. A failure occurs when there is a malfunction with the OBDII equipment including the on board computer and related wiring, or when an emissions related component has failed causing the vehicle's exhaust emissions to be one and a half times the allowable emissions for the vehicle as determined by the manufacturer.

A Few Reasons for a Failed OBDII Test

- Catalytic Converter failure,
- Faulty gas cap,
- Fuel metering out of specification,
- Incorrect ignition timing,
- Inoperative injection system and/or thermostatic air cleaner,
- Mis-routed vacuum lines, and
- Faulty Positive Crankcase Ventilation (PCV) System or Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) System.

What are the advantages of using the OBDII test?

OBDII testing is quicker than previous emissions tests. This test determines whether there is a malfunction and/or deterioration of the devices that control the exhaust-emissions level. It can lower repair costs by detecting and storing a code specific to the problem. The OBDII test should readily identify vehicle problems, thereby reducing repair time and costs. This will, in turn, contribute to lower vehicle exhaust emissions.

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**Acceleration Simulation Mode (ASM2)**

An emissions test using a tail pipe probe that measures certain harmful pollutants in motor vehicle exhaust while the vehicle is being driven on a chassis dynamometer to simulate driving conditions. The pollutants measured by ASM2 are Hydrocarbons, Carbon Monoxide and Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx).

Affected County

A county with a vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance program.

Designated Vehicles

Vehicles subject to emissions testing in non-attainment areas. They are defined as 2 - 24 vehicle model years; capable of being powered by gasoline; and primarily operated in an affected county.

Individual Vehicle Waiver

A waiver from compliance with emissions standards for vehicles which cannot reasonably be brought into compliance with applicable vehicle emissions standards, through no fault of the owner.

Low Income Time Extension

A time extension for compliance with emissions standards for vehicle owners who are below the poverty level who cannot afford to repair their vehicles to meet vehicle emissions standards.

Low Mileage Waiver

A waiver from compliance with emissions standards for vehicles which have not been driven more than 5,000 miles in the year preceding the inspection and is not anticipated to be driven more than 5,000 miles in the upcoming year, and for which at least \$100 of emission related repairs have been performed.

Non-Attainment Area

A non-attainment area is an area designated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as violating federal clean air standards.

On-Board Diagnostics (OBDII)

A computerized system on 1996 model year and newer vehicles which monitors emissions related systems to determine their proper function. The OBDII emission test consists of a connection to this computer to read the results of the vehicle's self monitoring of emissions controlling components and systems.

Parts Availability Time Extension

A time extension for compliance with emissions standards for owners who are awaiting delivery of a hard to find emissions related component.

Two Speed Idle (TSI)

An emissions test using a tail pipe probe that measures certain harmful pollutants in motor vehicle exhaust while the vehicle is idling at a low and high rate. The pollutants measured by TSI are Hydrocarbons and Carbon Monoxide.



What can an inspection station expect to gain from participating in the AirCheckTexas program?

Inspection Fee Breakdown Comparison (Fee is up to \$39.50)

TSI/Safety (Current)		ASM/Safety (Effective 5/1/02)		OBD/Safety (Effective 5/1/02)	
Total Fee	\$ 25.50	Total Fee	\$ 39.50	Total Fee	\$ 39.50
State Fee	\$ 7.25	State Fee	\$ 8.00	State Fee	\$ 8.00
VID Fee	\$.88	VID Fee	\$.78	VID Fee	\$.78
				LIRAP	\$ 6.00
Station Revenue \$ 17.37		Station Revenue \$ 30.72		Station Revenue \$ 24.72	

The table reflects the station revenue for the existing program and the new fees, effective May 1, 2002.

Where will my inspectors go for training?

The Texas Department of Public Safety is offering training covering the AirCheckTexas program including the new test procedures at no cost to station owners. More information about training dates and locations can be obtained from the Department of Public Safety at (281)272-1150 in the Houston area or (214)861-2400 in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area.

When I sign up to participate as an inspection station, how can I be sure that the program will not shutdown?

The AirCheckTexas program is designed and intended to significantly reduce harmful motor vehicle emissions in the Houston/Galveston and Dallas/Ft. Worth non-attainment areas as a part of the state's overall compliance plan for meeting federal air quality standards by May 1, 2007. While there can be no absolute guarantee that a program will not be eliminated by a legislative or judicial action, this program in its current form utilizes the most reasonable and economical methods for testing motor vehicle emissions and ensuring that effective emissions related repairs are performed to reduce levels of harmful pollutants from those vehicles.

Why should I participate?

The AirCheckTexas program offers inspection facilities a unique opportunity to contribute to improving the air quality of the large urban areas of Texas. The equipment investments are sizable but there will continue to be a stream of customers who must have their vehicles inspected and emissions tested each year. The number of vehicles inspected and emissions tested each year has grown by 3% each year over the past five years. The AirCheckTexas program station revenue will increase from \$17.37 per TSI test to \$30.72 per ASM2 test and \$24.72 per OBDII test.

Due to the cost of the emissions testing equipment some businesses who performed vehicle inspection and emissions testing as a customer service and not as a primary business in the past will no longer provide inspection and emissions testing services. This will create a greater market for the remaining inspection and emissions testing facilities.

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**Who is affected by the AirCheckTexas enhanced emissions program?**

Gasoline powered vehicles (except motorcycles), 2-24 model years old in affected counties are subject to emissions testing.

Changes in the mode of testing depend on the model year of the vehicle. If the vehicle is model year 1995 and older, it will be subject to the Acceleration Simulation Mode (ASM2) test and 1996 and newer models are subject to the On-Board Diagnostics (OBDII) test.

What are the fees for the ASM2 and OBDII tests?

The test fee will be a maximum \$39.50 for both ASM2 and OBDII tests.

What should I do if my vehicle fails the emissions test?

Have the items of failure indicated on the Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) repaired and return to the same inspection station within 15 days for a free retest. For specific repair details see the brochure "What to do if your vehicle fails the emission test."

When I take my car in to be inspected, how long will the test take?

- The actual vehicle safety inspection and AirCheckTexas emissions testing time for an ASM2 test should take approximately 20 minutes.
- The actual vehicle safety inspection and AirCheckTexas emissions testing time for an OBDII test should take approximately 15 minutes.

Where will I be able to have my car inspected?

All inspection stations will offer OBDII testing. However, model year 1995 or older vehicles may only be tested at facilities offering ASM2 testing. Vehicle owners should look for the yellow check mark displayed on the inspection sign for ASM2 Stations.

**Why is the program changing?**

For the Houston and Dallas/Ft.Worth areas to be able to demonstrate compliance with the Federal Clean Air standards by 2007, it is necessary to implement strategies to control additional pollutants that contribute to the ozone problem. The ASM2/OBDII vehicle emissions testing program is one of these new strategies.

For additional information and program updates check out our website at www.airchecktexas.com.



HISTORIC REFERENCE

- Texas implemented the Two Speed Idle vehicle emissions testing program on July 1, 1996, in Dallas and Tarrant Counties and January 1, 1997, in Harris County to meet Federal Clean Air Act requirements.
- TNRCC rules upgraded the testing procedures used in the Houston and Dallas/Fort Worth non-attainment areas from Two Speed Idle to Acceleration Simulation Mode for 1995 and older model year vehicles and On-Board Diagnostic for 1996 and newer model year vehicles to help meet the ozone reduction requirements those areas outlined in the State Implementation Plan.
- Additionally, HB2134, passed by the 77th Legislature in 2001, adds a test-on-resale emission test provision, provides for administrative penalties for failure to comply with on-road testing program notices, and creates a low-income repair assistance and vehicle retirement program.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

- Vehicle owners in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Denton and Collin Counties beginning May 1, 2002.

TEST COST AND INSPECTION CERTIFICATES

On May 1, 2002, vehicle inspection fees will be a maximum of \$39.50.

- This fee includes the safety inspection fee of \$12.50 and the new emissions test fee of up to \$27.00.
- The program will still utilize a unique certificate to distinguish vehicles receiving an emissions test.

EARLY SIGN-UP INCENTIVE

An early sign-up incentive was offered beginning October 24, 2001 through January 15, 2002, to the first 1,000 inspection facilities purchasing ASM2 equipment, making application to the TNRCC and having the ASM2 equipment operational on May 1, 2002. The incentive resulted in the enrollment of 851 full service inspection facilities.

LOW INCOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE, RETROFIT AND ACCELERATED VEHICLE RETIREMENT

HB2134 created the Low Income Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement program (LIRAP) in affected counties to assist low income vehicle owners with emission related repair costs or retiring of vehicles not worthy of repair. The TNRCC is scheduled to adopt rules for LIRAP on March 27, 2002.

WAIVERS AND TIME EXTENSIONS

An emissions testing waiver or time extension defers the need for full compliance with vehicle emissions standards for a specific time period after a vehicle fails an emissions test. Currently, there are four (4) emissions testing waivers and time extensions:

Low Mileage Waiver Individual Vehicle Waiver Low-Income Time Extension Parts Availability Time Extension

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Recognized Emissions Repair Program

DPS recognizes automotive repair facilities and technicians which meet nationally recognized repair certification standards. Emissions repairs may only be eligible for LIRAP assistance, if they are performed by a Recognized Repair Facility.

High Emitter Identification and On-Road Testing

- Designed to test 20% of the total vehicle population on public highways operating in non-attainment areas.
- Vehicles identified out of compliance with emissions standards are notified for further testing.

Central Database

- All emissions inspection data is stored in a central database for program oversight and enforcement. The central database is required by the EPA for reporting program compliance activities.