

New ways to improve air quality all across Texas.

Those who live in Texas' biggest cities are probably well aware of the increase in traffic and the resulting air pollution problems.

In fact, the Houston/Galveston and Dallas/Fort Worth areas have been designated as "non-attainment" areas—meaning we're not meeting the Environmental Protection Agency's air-quality standards. But like Texans always do, we're rising to the challenge.

Texans working together for better air quality.

In 1990, the state of Texas began testing vehicles in the Dallas/Fort Worth area for hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide emissions. In 1996, the pilot program was upgraded to include testing for carbon dioxide emission, and expanded to Houston and El Paso.

Today, the inspection and maintenance program is a key part of the annual safety inspection for gasoline-powered vehicles from two to 24-years old. And it's a crucial way to reduce ozone pollution.

Thank you for doing your share for cleaner air.

All about the new high-tech emissions testing program.



www.airchecktexas.com



So we can breathe it. Not see it.

What does this mean to you?

If your vehicle is registered in Harris, Collin, Denton, Dallas or Tarrant Counties, it must pass a new emissions inspection test in conjunction with your annual vehicle safety inspection. Depending on the model year of your vehicle, it will receive one of two new tests:

The Acceleration Simulation Mode (ASM2) test—for model years 1995 or older

This test uses a chassis dynamometer, which measures emissions under simulated driving conditions. In a sense, it's like a treadmill stress test for your vehicle. And it's a cost-effective way to get very accurate, realistic results.



The ASM2 measures all of the common factors in ground-level ozone formation, including hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and oxides of nitrogen. A vehicle will fail the test if there is an excessive amount of any of these three pollutants.

The On-Board Diagnostic II (OBDII) test—for model years 1996 or newer

All newer vehicles feature a built-in computer that monitors the fuel, ignition and emission system components while adjusting and recording system operations. The OBDII test uses this computer to quickly and accurately check all the emissions-related parts of the vehicle.



The OBDII is so sophisticated, it can detect malfunctioning components and systems before serious failures occur—even before the driver knows there is a problem. When there is an emissions-control malfunction, the

"Check Engine" or "Service Engine Soon" light will illuminate on your dashboard. A diagnostic trouble code is also stored in the computer's memory. A repair technician can easily retrieve this code and make the necessary repairs before a more serious (and more expensive) problem develops.

Where do I get my vehicle tested?

Most vehicle inspection stations are offering both of the new emissions tests, but some are only equipped to test 1996 and newer vehicles. If your vehicle is model year 1995 or older, look for a yellow checkmark on the facility's Official State Inspection Station sign. For a list of the testing facilities nearest your zip code, please visit www.airchecktexas.com.



How much will the new tests cost?

The combined safety and emissions test fees may cost a maximum of \$39.50, but inspection stations may offer inspections at a lower fee. If your vehicle fails the test, repair costs will vary depending on the problem.

What causes smog and ozone pollution?

When fuel in the engine doesn't burn completely, hydrocarbons are emitted into the atmosphere. Ground-level ozone pollution—a major component of smog—is formed when hydrocarbon emissions interact with sunlight and oxides of nitrogen (NOx). NOx can form when nitrogen and oxygen atoms in the air react to the high pressure and temperature in an engine. (Catalytic converters are used to reduce NOx in the exhaust.)

What can I do to drive clean across Texas?

- Use the proper type of oil and gasoline for your vehicle, and change oil regularly.
- Get a complete car tune-up every year.
- Replace or clean your air filter and spark plugs, following manufacturer's recommendations.
- When a dashboard light reads "Service Engine Soon" or "Check Engine," have your vehicle checked. By investigating a potential problem early, you could avoid a major repair bill.
- Look for vacuum lines or electrical connections that are loose or cracked. Also check for corroded air intake and exhaust pipes.
- Avoid idling your vehicle for long periods of time. To warm up your vehicle, drive it. Excessive idling causes spark plug fouling, which can decrease your fuel efficiency.
- Avoid quick stops and rapid acceleration.
- Maintain your tire air pressure and braking system and keep your wheels properly aligned. Under-inflated tires, dragging brakes and unbalanced wheels can decrease fuel efficiency and increase harmful emissions.
- Make sure you have a gas cap that is the correct type for your vehicle and seals tightly. A faulty (or missing) gas cap allows harmful emissions into the atmosphere.