



# INSPECTION UPDATE

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**Inspection Update is a publication produced by Massachusetts Vehicle Check; a joint program of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) and Parsons Commercial Technology Group, Inc.**

## Inspector Re-Certification Training (RECERT) Update

By the end of September 2010, Parsons will have mailed RECERT notifications to approximately 5,000 Non-Commercial inspectors and 750 Commercial inspectors. Parsons mails all RECERT notifications within a 90 day window before each inspector's respective training certification expiration date. As of September 1, 2010, our records show that 1,721 Non-Commercial inspectors and 60 Commercial inspectors had taken their online RECERT exams.



After inspectors have successfully passed the RECERT exam, training certifications are extended two years beyond the initial expiration date. In other words, no matter when inspectors pass their RECERT exams, their training certifications will be updated for two years beyond their current training certification dates. This will apply to all successive RECERT exams that inspectors pass.

### Commercial RECERT Update

The Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program requires commercial inspectors to attend a four hour classroom training before taking the online RECERT exam. Because much of the classroom training covers updated commercial inspection material, your RECERT exam will not be available for 48 hours after completing the classroom training. The 48-hour minimum study period is designed to provide you with adequate time to review the training material in preparation for taking the exam.

On October 22, 2008, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) declared the Massachusetts Commercial Vehicle Safety Inspection regulations equivalent to the federal regulations. The Commercial RECERT classroom training focuses on FMCSA and Massachusetts Commercial Vehicle Safety Inspection regulations. Other important commercial inspection topics covered by the classroom training include answers to the following common inspector questions:

- Does a Massachusetts commercial motor vehicle inspection require inspectors to look for the presence of first aid kits and fire extinguishers inside the vehicles?
- Do all commercial motor vehicles inspected in Massachusetts require chock blocks during inspection?

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Inspector Re-Certification Training (RECERT) Update *(Continued from page 1)*

- Are back-up alarms required for all commercially-inspected motor vehicles?
- Do all model year 1984 and newer diesel vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating greater than 10,000 pounds receive a diesel opacity test?
- When does a trailer require a commercial safety inspection?
- Does a commercially-inspected trailer require brakes, and if so, on which wheels?

### Non-Commercial RECERT Update

Non-Commercial inspectors are encouraged to prepare for and take their RECERT exams as soon as possible after receiving their RECERT notification. By doing so, you will have adequate time to review the training material in preparation for taking the online exam.

You should avoid allowing your training certification to expire, because an expired training certification will result in an automatic lock out that prevents you from conducting inspections until you have passed the RECERT exam.

### 7D and Motorcycle RECERT Update

Parsons will begin mailing 7D and Motorcycle inspectors their RECERT notifications in November 2010. All 7D and Motorcycle RECERT exam preparation materials will be available on the program Web site.

Additional RECERT information is available by calling the Technical Help at 877-834-4677 and/or visiting the program Web site: <http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us>.

## Safety Inspection Reminders

The Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program will mark its second anniversary on October 1, 2010. The Registry of Motor Vehicles would like to remind vehicle inspectors of a few items that are often overlooked while conducting proper safety inspections.

### Fuel Tanks

The fuel tank inspection requires you to check the fuel tank and all fuel system components including fuel caps and fuel filler necks. Fuel tanks, filler necks and fuel caps should be securely attached to the vehicle and free of all leaks.

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## Auto Home Inspections



Auto Homes are motor vehicles originally designed or permanently altered that are equipped for human habitation but not used to transport property other than what is used for human habitation or camping purposes. These vehicles can be identified at inspection stations by the display of Auto Home ("Camper") plates, AHN, AHR, and AHV.

Auto homes are not used for commercial purposes; therefore, inspectors need to remember that these vehicles undergo a non-commercial safety inspection and emissions test regardless of Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) and that the inspection fee is fixed at \$29. In other words, inspection stations are prohibited from charging an hourly shop rate when inspecting Auto Homes.

Below is a list of the inspection station licenses and inspector training requirements necessary to inspect Auto Homes:

- For Auto Homes with a GVWR under 10,000 lbs, the inspection station must be a Class A, Class B or Class D station. Additionally, the inspector must have completed non-commercial training.
- For Auto Homes with a GVWR between 10,000 lbs and 26,000 lbs, the inspection station must be a Class B, Class C, or Class D station. Additionally, the inspector must have completed commercial training. The inspector doesn't need to possess a commercial driver's license (CDL).
- For Auto Homes with a GVWR over 26,000 lbs, the inspection station must be a Class C, Class D or Class E station. Additionally, the inspector must possess a CDL, and have completed commercial training.



## Safety Inspection Reminders

*(Continued from page 2)*

### Safety Belts, Lap Belts, and Shoulder Restraints

You must inspect safety belts, lap belts and shoulder restraints originally installed in motor vehicles manufactured after July 1, 1966, to assure that all are maintained in good working order. This means that you are required to inspect all seat belts, front and rear, during the inspection process. It is the responsibility of the motorist that the safety belts are readily accessible for inspection.

Safety belts, lap belts and shoulder restraints should fail inspection for the following:

- Working improperly in any way.
- Safety belt webbing is frayed, split or torn.
- Belt buckles or retractors do not operate properly.
- Belt anchorages are loose, badly corroded, missing or not fastened to belt.
- Belt mounting surfaces are badly deformed, damaged or corroded.



### Inspection Sticker, Vehicle Inspection Report and Program Literature

Upon the completion of the inspection, you are required to remove the old Certificate of Inspection from the windshield, and affix the new Certificate of Inspection. You should never remove the old inspection sticker unless the workstation has printed a new sticker successfully and the inspector is ready to affix the sticker to the windshield.

You are also required to provide the motorist with all inspection documentation and program literature. This requirement means that motorists should always receive a copy of the Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR), whether the vehicle passes or fails.

This requirement also means that when vehicles fail, you must provide motorists with "My Vehicle Failed Inspection" VIR jackets. These VIR jackets provide clear instructions for the next steps motorists must take to repair their vehicles and pass the re-inspection. If you need to order more VIR jackets, which are provided at no cost to inspection stations, please contact the station support hotline at 877-834-4677.

The Registry of Motor Vehicles is committed to working with you to ensure that you are in full compliance with all inspection rules and regulations. If you have additional questions regarding inspection requirements, please contact the station support hotline or your local RMV field investigator.



## Please Keep Automotive Wastes Out of Storm Drains

Inspection stations and repair shops can take some easy and inexpensive steps to stop storm water pollution and comply with local and state environmental requirements. As part of its "Think Blue Massachusetts" project (<http://www.thinkbluema.org>), the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has developed a "best management practices" guide for automotive businesses, with helpful information on cleaning engines and parts, managing vehicle fluids, training employees to avoid polluting, and more. Check it out at: [http://thinkbluema.org/docs/auto\\_guide.pdf](http://thinkbluema.org/docs/auto_guide.pdf).





## Helpful Inspection Reminders

### Record Odometer Readings Accurately

Odometer data collected from inspection results are used for many purposes, including vehicle insurance discounts, CARFAX Vehicle History Report™ and more. Accurate odometer input is very important, so the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) reminds inspectors to be careful when entering odometer readings into the workstation.

Here are a few reminders to improve accuracy:

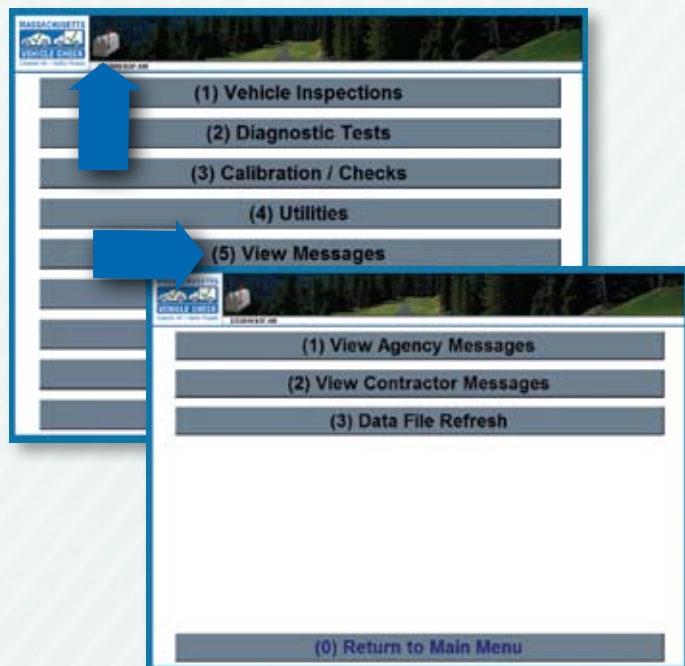
- Be sure the odometer on the vehicle is reading in miles, not kilometers.
- Be sure the odometer is not displaying the trip odometer.
- If the odometer is broken, type "BROKEN" in the odometer field on the workstation.

### How to Read/Review Workstation Messages

A flashing mailbox icon in the upper left hand corner of the workstation screen alerts inspectors that a new workstation message has arrived. There are two ways you can retrieve the message. From the Main Workstation Menu:

1. Select (5) View Messages and then select (1) View Agency Messages or (2) View Contractor Messages OR
2. Double click on the mailbox icon located in the upper left hand corner of the workstation screen, then select (1) View Agency Messages or (2) View Contractor Messages

Once the message has been viewed, the mailbox icon will stop flashing. Please print and post the message so that other inspectors assigned to the workstation are aware of the new message.



## Online Receipt for Registration Renewal

When motorists renew a registration online or order a duplicate registration online, they are issued an e-mail receipt, which is proof that the registration has been renewed/ordered. Until that motorist receives an actual registration in the mail, this e-mail receipt serves as their temporary registration, and can be validated by the workstation like any other registration at the beginning of an inspection.

## Inspection Equipment Updates

### Use the Workstation Maintenance Menu to Improve Service

Parsons is committed to continuous improvement of workstation repair services. Inspection stations can contribute to this effort by using an important Workstation Menu.

By logging the maintenance performed on the workstation through the Maintenance Menu, the station is confirming for Parsons that the correct part was received and installed on the workstation. Logging the replacement part in the Maintenance Menu also helps Parsons track returned parts to ensure that inspection stations receive credit for returning the malfunctioning parts.

A screenshot of the 'MASSACHUSETTS VEHICLE CHECK' Equipment Maintenance form. The form has several input fields: Date Requested, Date of Service, Request Reason (with a text area), Work Performed, Parts Replaced, Serial Number, Problem Resolved, and Subsequent Visit Required. At the bottom, it says 'Enter the date the service was requested. Press <ESC> to Cancel.' and 'Press <ENTER> to continue'.

Once a station receives and installs a replacement part, either the inspector or the station manager should follow these workstation menus to log the maintenance performed.

- From the main menu, choose (7) Station Menu and enter the Station Password.
- From the Station Menu, choose (5) Equipment Maintenance and fill out the screen fields as indicated.

Once the Equipment Maintenance screen is filled out, return to the main menu and conduct a Data File Refresh to send the maintenance file to the database.

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## Inspection Equipment Updates

*(Continued from page 4)*

### Don't Waste Sticker Adhesive

Stations receive one free adhesive roll for every two packs of stickers. When used properly, each roll of adhesive should last for 400 windshield stickers. To minimize adhesive waste and to avoid being charged for extra adhesive orders, follow this application procedure:

- When applying adhesive to the sticker, place the sticker face down and firmly press the adhesive onto the sticker.
- Next, peel the sticker from the adhesive backing, leaving the backing at the dispenser.
- Allow some excess used backing to extend out beyond the end of the dispenser. Applying adhesive to the sticker in this manner will allow the excess to be rerolled and keep the unused adhesive and the dispenser clean.

Once adhesive is applied to the sticker, the inspector should use care in carrying the sticker from the dispenser to the vehicle. If the sticker is dropped or otherwise ruined, follow the workstation prompts to print a new one. Once the sticker is applied to the windshield, the inspector can then scan the sticker to complete the inspection.



Stan Morin, New England Tire Car Care Centers

## Inspection Update Profile

### with Stan Morin, New England Tire Car Care Centers

**Q.** What services do New England Tire Car Care Centers offer?

**A.** Our car care centers service both domestic and foreign vehicles, and provide all services ranging from diagnostic repairs to engine and transmission replacements.

**Q.** How many locations and employees does your business have?

**A.** New England Tire has a total of five locations, including: Attleboro, Seekonk, two in Mansfield, and one in Warwick, Rhode Island. We have a total of 51 employees throughout our company.

**Q.** What types of technicians do New England Tire Car Care Centers employ and what are their certifications?

**A.** Our team is made up of general service technicians, including five Master National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) L1 technicians and six Master technicians.

**Q.** How has New England Tire Car Care Center expanded its business over the years?

**A.** New England Tire has been able to successfully expand because we provide consistent value of services. Also,

as technology has moved forward, we have evolved. We are able to use the Internet, for example, to provide online products and services to our customers. We also use advanced technology equipment to maintain the integrity of our customers' vehicles.

**Q.** How did you get your start in the industry? What is your current role?

**A.** I graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in business management. My first job was at Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., changing tires and offering basic management. Then I moved over to the sales and management side of the business. I worked there for 20 years before joining New England Tire where, as General Business Manager, I oversee everything from paper towels to tires at each location.

**Q.** How do you stay on top of industry trends and advancements in technology?

**A.** All of our locations are Goodyear Complete Auto Centers. We stay in touch with technology and trends by attending the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAPEX) show each year. I personally belong to over 20 groups and other trade associations, such as the Alliance of Automotive Service Providers (AASP). I am also general director of the New England Tire & Trade Association.

**Q.** How has New England Tire Car Care Center benefitted by being part of the Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program?

**A.** By participating in the Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program, we are able to accommodate our existing customers so that they don't have to search elsewhere. We have become their go-to inspection station.





## Motorist Assistance Center (MAC) Success Story



### 2000 Audi A6 Quattro

This Audi initially failed for “no communication with the workstation.” The Audi was inspected at two separate inspection stations, and failed for the same reason each time. The vehicle’s initial diagnosis at a repair shop did not reveal any suggested repairs. The Motorist Assistance Center (MAC) L-1 technician attempted to communicate with the vehicle using the MAC workstation as well as an independent generic scan tool but was unsuccessful with both attempts, just as the repair shop had been.

The only observable concern was an illuminated anti-lock brake system (ABS) light. All modules on the vehicle, including the ABS module, share a common communication line. If any module goes down on the vehicle’s network, it could cause communication issues with other modules on the network.

The MAC L-1 advised the motorist to seek the services of a repair shop for the ABS module problem. The repair shop found that the vehicle network had no communication to any of its modules. The ABS module was disconnected and communication was restored to all of the modules besides the defective ABS module. After repairs were performed to the ABS module, the vehicle communicated with the workstation and passed its emission inspection.

There are two take-aways from this MAC case:

- First, the initial repair shop may have successfully communicated with the Audi using a factory scan tool or an ‘enhanced’ version of their generic scan tool, but didn’t use the same protocol as the inspection does, which meant that they couldn’t duplicate the failure. The MASS08 workstation communicates with vehicles using the global / generic U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-mandated protocol. If you are using the correct protocol to communicate with any vehicle (1996 and newer) for an on-board diagnostics (OBD) test, the OBD scan tool should not require the input of any piece of the vehicle inspection number (VIN).
- Second, if you are working with a vehicle that is not communicating with the workstation, the MASS08 Diagnostic Inspection option on the workstation menu can be used to confirm a communication repair. When you use the Diagnostic Inspection option, if the communication problem is not repaired, you can inform your customer that their vehicle needs additional repair work without using up a vehicle’s free re-inspection.

## Registered Emissions Repair Technician Update

Parsons has worked through the summer to prepare an updated Mass Module (Massachusetts-specific vehicle emissions inspection program information) and a new 28-hour training course on performing successful on-board diagnostics (OBD) vehicle repairs for Registered Emissions Repair Technicians.

Once the Mass Module is available from the Program’s web site, it can be reviewed free of charge by anyone who has applied to Parsons to renew their existing registration or become registered for the first time. To register or renew your registration, you must successfully pass the final online test with an exam score of 100 percent. The Mass Module exam will only be available online if Parsons has received your application. You may obtain a Registered Repair Technician application form via the

program Web site: [http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection\\_forms.html](http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection_forms.html). You may also call the Registered Repair Coordinator at 781-794-2961 and request that an application be sent to you by mail.

Prospective Registered Technicians will need to enroll in and complete the 28-hour OBD training course. This course will require two weeks to complete and will be offered with eight-hour daytime and three-hour evening class options. In addition to completing the OBD training course, new Registered Technicians must successfully pass the final exam with a score of 80 percent. This OBD training course will cost \$600.

In preparation for the release of the Mass Module, the Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program has reorganized the program Web site’s Inspection and Repair Industry section, <http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection.html>. If you haven’t visited this page recently, take a look!





On Sept. 8, 2010, repair technicians attended an open house at the Braintree Motorist Assistance Center and received free training on On-Board Diagnostics Readiness Monitor Setting Techniques.

## Introduction to Emissions Test Results Lookup

This fall, the Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program will add a useful, new motorist feature to the program Web site, [www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us](http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us). This feature is called the Emissions Test Results Lookup.

Motorists can use this Emissions Tests Results Lookup to see how their vehicle compares to other vehicles, to see if their vehicle's diagnostic trouble code (DTC) is common, or to research whether a used vehicle that they may be considering purchasing has any common on-board diagnostics (OBD) test failures.

The lookup function will allow motorists to research either a particular kind of vehicle subject to the OBD emissions testing or a particular DTC using a series of user-friendly drop-down menus.

Using the Vehicle Lookup tab, after the user selects a kind of vehicle, the Web site will display:

- The number of initial OBD tests performed on the kind of vehicle selected,
- The overall OBD test failure rate,
- The OBD diagnostic link connector (DLC) failure rate,
- The OBD communication failure rate,
- The OBD Malfunction Indicator Lamp (MIL)-on failure rate, and
- The OBD monitor not ready rate for each readiness monitor.

Using the DTC Category Lookup tab, after the user selects a DTC Category and a specific DTC, the Web site will display:

- The top 25 kinds of vehicles with that DTC, and
- The respective initial OBD failure rate with that DTC.

## Change of Address/Save a Tree



Please keep us up to date with current information to help us ensure that you continue to receive this Inspection Update. If you have moved or would prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail, please check the appropriate box and send this information to: Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program, 55 Messina Drive, Unit C, Braintree, MA 02184. You may also fax changes to 866-873-8932 or e-mail them to [info@massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us](mailto:info@massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us).

- ☐ Change of Address
- ☐ Save a Tree, use E-mail
- ☐ New Repair Shop
- ☐ Phone Number Change

Station Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax \_\_\_\_\_



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**Safety Inspection and Inspector Re-certification Training Details Inside!**
**Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program At A Glance**

Inspection Statistics		Count	Failure Rate	Enforcement Statistics		Count
Non-Commercial Safety Inspections		1,261,940	6.6%	Violations Issued to Inspectors		149
Commercial Safety Inspections		42,928	6.2%	Violations Issued to Stations		172
7D Safety Inspections		628	5.4%	Inspector Privileges Revoked		0
OBD Emissions Inspections		1,028,568	6.7%	Inspector Required to Retrain		9
Opacity Emissions Inspections		26,206	3.0%	Inspectors Suspended		13
Emissions Waivers Issued		1		Stations Suspended		29
Repair Hardship Extensions Issued		13		Penalties Assessed		\$93,000
Hotline and Training Statistics		Count		Inspection & Repair Facilities		Count
Motorist Calls Received		3,892		Class A Stations		1,207
Inspection Station Calls Received		8,156		Class B Stations		187
Initial Non-Comm. Inspectors Trained		280		Class C Stations		36
Initial Commercial Inspectors Trained		72		Class D Stations		243
Initial 7D Inspectors Trained		15		Class E Stations		9
Initial Motorcycle Inspectors Trained		41		Registered Emissions Repair Shops		303



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