



INSPECTION UPDATE

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Mobile Inspector Gets Jail, Put Out of Business for Issuing Fraudulent Commercial Vehicle Stickers

The owner of a Massachusetts mobile inspection company was sentenced to 60 days in the Bristol County House of Correction and placed on five years' probation after admitting to a judge in November that he had issued state inspection stickers to numerous commercial vehicle operators without subjecting their school buses, tractor trailers or construction equipment to the required safety inspections or emissions tests.

In addition to the jail time and probation, Richard Silvia of Somerset was also prohibited from being involved in any way with motor vehicle inspections, associating with other companies that perform them, or handling Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) documents for any reason. His business, Bristol County Tire Service Inc., was also fined \$400.

Silvia and his company pleaded guilty to 41 criminal counts of violating vehicle emissions and safety inspection requirements and 24 criminal counts of fraudulently issuing inspection stickers.

The case, brought against Silvia by the Office of Attorney General (AG) Martha Coakley, was the result of a coordinated effort among RMV, the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and the state's Environmental Strike Force that included data analysis, witness interviews and undercover surveillance.

MassDEP, RMV, the Strike Force and the AG's office, working together, have successfully developed and brought to court more than 50 "phony sticker" cases. The Silvia case is the second to result in criminal charges and the first to involve a mobile inspector.



Bristol County Tire Service mobile inspection station has had its license revoked for performing fraudulent commercial vehicle inspections. Picture source: Fall River Herald News

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 Environment and Infrastructure Group, Inc.

New Program Changes Beginning January 1, 2014

► Windshield Sticker Changes

- Yellow 2014 Vehicle Information Reports (VIR) and windshield stickers began shipping to stations in late November 2013.
- Any station that did not receive the new sticker shipment by December 27 or that has a question about the new yellow 2014 stickers should contact the Technical Help Desk at 877-834-4677.
- Keep all new stickers in their unopened, shrink-wrapped packaging and in a secure location until they are needed. Always load the workstation with the lowest sticker book number.
- Stations should set aside all unused red 2013 stickers in a secure location at the year's end. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Registry of Motor Vehicles Division will come by to collect them.

► Program Changes

Effective on January 1, 2014, all 1999 model year light-duty vehicles will be exempt from the on-board diagnostics (OBD) emissions testing requirement. However, all 1999 model year vehicles will still be subject to annual safety inspections. In addition, all 1999 model year diesel-powered vehicles over 10,000 pounds GVWR will still be subject to the opacity emissions inspection requirement.

Also for 2014, the Massachusetts Vehicle Check emissions waiver and economic hardship repair extension minimums will increase to the following:

| Vehicle Age | Emissions Waiver Spending Minimum | Economic Hardship Repair Extension Estimate Minimum |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Five model years old or newer | \$855 | \$1,282 |
| Six to 10 model years old | \$755 | \$1,132 |
| Greater than 10 model years old | \$655 | \$982 |

► Workstation Changes

In late 2013, the program released a workstation software update that made the following changes:

- Improved vehicle identification number (VIN) and fuel type decoding for multiple makes and models
- Revised motorist messaging for the publication of the quarterly Registered Repair Shop Emissions Repair Success Ratings
- Revised motorist messaging for the changes in waiver spending limits

If you have any questions about downloading or installing these software updates, please contact the Technical Help Desk at 1-877-834-4677.

The Year In Review:

October 2013 marked the five-year anniversary of the Massachusetts Vehicle Check program. Congratulations to all who contributed to another successful year! The following is a summary of program statistics* from Year Five:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Number of vehicle inspections..... | 5,067,341 |
| Number of inspectors receiving initial training | 1,755 |
| Number of inspectors re-certified..... | 3,116 |
| Number of active Inspection Stations (excluding Motorcycle-only stations)..... | 1,724 |
| Number of active Registered Emissions Repair Shops..... | 223 |
| Number of Motorist Hotline calls..... | 12,883 |
| Number of Technical Helpdesk calls..... | 28,904 |
| Number of registered vehicles in Massachusetts | 4.9 million |
| Average age of vehicles in Massachusetts..... | 8.82 years |

Communities with the most registered vehicles:

1. Boston 317,651
2. Worcester..... 111,719
3. Springfield..... 92,098

Communities with fewest registered vehicles:

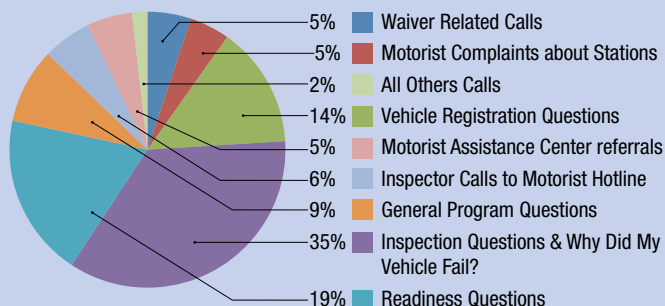
1. Gosnold 11
2. Monroe..... 34
3. Mount Washington 68

Communities with oldest average vehicles:

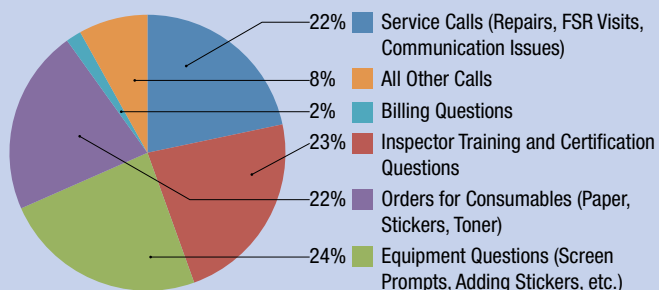
1. Aquinnah..... 14.30 years
2. Chilmark..... 14.25 years
3. Mount Washington 12.95 years

*Statistics as of September 30, 2013

Motorist Hotline Calls:

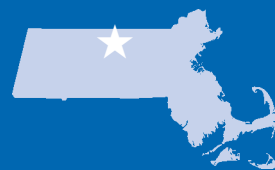


Technical Helpdesk Calls:



Inspection Update Profile

Beth Lorenz, Owner, Vehicle Inspection Center, Inc.
Greenfield, MA



Beth Lorenz, Owner, Vehicle Inspection Center, Inc.
Greenfield, MA

Q: What services does Vehicle Inspection Center offer?

A: Vehicle Inspection Center (VIC) is located in Western Massachusetts. We are the only test-only Class A inspection station in the Commonwealth that performs over 1,000 safety and emission tests a month. We are successful because over 80 percent of our business is with repeat customers. In 1999, we moved into an empty pizza chain building located on a main artery, which enables us to offer superior convenience and express service with amenities such as a coffee station, child play area and comfortable couches.

Q: What are your roles and responsibilities as owner?

A: In 2010, I downsized my 85-hour work week in dealership ownership and kept the smaller inspection business. Since surviving cancer in 2011, I really appreciate having a second chance to love life. Being the sole owner with the skills of an inspector, I thrive in a space that allows me time to chat with my customers as well as to enjoy other areas of my life such as playing with my Irish setter, fundraising for our community college and taking vacation time with my friends and family.

Q: How did you get your start in the automotive industry? What made you want to open your own business?

A: I began in the automotive industry in 1984, working with a company that helped dealerships improve their operations. I started VIC in 1999 after the dynamometer machines were introduced into the previous inspection program. At that time, I merged two separate stations, a family-owned Honda Service department and General Motors Service department, under one roof.

I believe the automotive industry offers incredible opportunities to women because they bring a different perspective to customer service and a clear understanding of how to manage the bottom line. In 2008, I was named the Dealer of the Year in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by my automotive peers at the Massachusetts State

Automotive Dealers Association (MSADA) convention. In 2009, I was also privileged to become a lifetime member of the TIME Quality Dealer of the Year at the National Automotive Dealers Association (NADA) convention, representing Massachusetts. I was the first woman to be selected in 40 years of representation and continue to be very proud of that distinction.

Q: How many employees do you have?

A: I have three part-time employees. My station manager Sylvia joined me at VIC in 2011; he previously worked with me as a service advisor at the former Honda Service department for 14 years. David has over 20 years of alignment experience and a great work ethic, while Jessica represents the youngest member of the team and recently graduated from Porter & Chester. They are a fun team to work with because they understand what is needed to provide an excellent customer experience. I believe that is one reason why our percentage of repeat customers is so high each year. Some motorists even travel to VIC from as far away as Boston, Florence, Northampton and Vermont!

Q: Because your business doesn't repair vehicles, how do you keep up with changes in vehicle technology and emerging technologies in the Industry?

A: We stay informed by attending various meetings in the automotive community, such as the Inspection and Maintenance Program Advisory Council (IMPAC), as part of the Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program. However, it is not imperative for us to keep up with the newer technologies involving repair since we are an inspection-only station. Our job is not to diagnose failures; rather, based on the regulations of the MA Vehicle Check program, we make motorists aware when something is not working properly with their vehicle so that they can knowledgeably seek repairs from the automotive repair shops of their choice.

Q: How do you advertise your business?

A: The Internet is the key to our new growth and direct mail is how we maintain our relationships. A Google search informs owners of our location if they need an inspection immediately, such as motorists who have recently relocated to the area. Direct mail reminders keep our repeat customers current in the month they are due for inspection. During some holidays we incorporate radio during the weather spots as bookends in 30 second segments. Overall, I still prefer the personal approach, such as attending the local Chamber of Commerce breakfast where I meet and shake hands with prospective customers.

Q: What is your business motto?

A: Our business motto is "Two Bays, No Delays." We're extremely efficient and our customers love us for it! My personal motto is "Be Kind."

Registered Repair Technician Updates

► Emissions Repair Success Ratings Reminder

The Emissions Repair Success Rating (ERSR) system for registered repair shops is now live. Each repair shop is responsible for entering its vehicle repair information for any given month by the tenth day of the following month. For more information about repair data entry, visit: http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection_repair_data_entry.php

► Emissions Repair Extensions and Waiver Assistance

When working with motorists who are applying for emission repair extensions or waivers, please consider contacting your nearest Motorist Assistance Center (MAC). The Massachusetts Vehicle Check program issues emission waivers on a case-by-case basis, so it is dependent on obtaining accurate documentation from you to determine vehicle outcomes. All of the MACs can assist you with the extension and waiver regulations and ensure that you have accurate guidance through each step of the process. MAC locations, services, and contact information is listed on the program website at http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/motorist_emissions.html#mac.

► Fall 2013 Training Recap

In September, the Massachusetts Vehicle Check program offered a Registered Repair Technician ongoing training module titled "How to Diagnose P0420 (Catalyst Below Threshold) Diagnostic Trouble Codes (DTCs)."

At the trainings, Instructor Jerry "G" Truglia spoke about effective diagnostics and repairs on vehicles that have failed their emission inspections because of catalyst DTC problems. In total, 55 repair technicians attended the trainings which were held at four Motorist Assistance Centers (MACs).



On October 8, 2013, "G" Truglia instructed Registered Repair Technicians on the fundamentals of diagnosing and repairing vehicles with OBD failures.

In October, nine prospective Registered Repair Technicians took the On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) Diagnosis and Repair Training course taught by "G" at the Braintree MAC.

In November, the Massachusetts Vehicle Check program offered a Registered Repair Technician ongoing training module titled "OBD II Evaporative Essentials."

At the trainings, "G" spoke about effective diagnostics and repairs on vehicles that have failed their emission inspections because of evaporative DTC problems. In total, 77 repair technicians attended the trainings which were held at four Motorist Assistance Centers (MACs).

► Prospective Registered Emissions Repair Technicians

If you would like to become a Registered Repair Technician, please visit http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection_repair_tech.html and review the application and training requirements.



Motorist Assistance Center Repair Technician's Corner

► Myth Busted: If the MIL is not on, there is nothing wrong with the vehicle

Motorists continue to come to our Motorist Assistance Centers (MACs) with unset readiness monitors. They tell our L-1 technicians that their mechanics and/or inspection stations have told them "there is nothing wrong" with the vehicles and to "keep driving" them because there are no diagnostic trouble codes (DTCs) and malfunction indicator lights (MILs) are not illuminated. However, these statements are simply not true.

When these vehicles arrive at MACs, our L-1 technicians usually find there are one or more stored *pending* DTCs or that the required enabling criteria for a vehicle's powertrain control module (PCM) to perform the diagnostic tests to initiate the unset monitor(s) is not being met.

For example, a basic readiness monitor enabling criteria is the measured engine coolant temperature. As a general rule of thumb, the minimum coolant operating temperature for monitor enabling is about 185 °F. If the vehicle has an engine cooling system or coolant sensor problem, then the PCM can't "see" the correct engine temperature to command the monitors to run their tests. Until the PCM has seen the coolant sensor circuit indicate a temperature reading above the threshold of 185 °F, the vehicle won't get its monitors set to *ready*.

Mechanics and repair technicians should not rely solely on connecting a scan tool to the vehicle looking for stored DTCs or checking to see that the dashboard MIL is off. In most cases, if the monitors have not run to ready, the MIL *will not illuminate*. So if readiness monitors are *not ready*, there will be no PCM command to turn the MIL on. It is a basic function

(Continued on page 7)

MAC Success Story

(Continued from page 4)

of all second generation on-board diagnostic (OBD II) systems that the diagnostic test(s) that turn MILs on have to run at least once in order for the monitor for that emission component to set to ready.

So next time you have a motorist whose vehicle is struggling to get monitors to run to *ready*, don't just plug in your scan tool and check for *current* DTCs and/or tell your customers to continue to drive their vehicles. Spend the time to check for correct values to the PCM and look for *pending* and/or *previous/history* DTCs. If there are no pending or history codes, find out what the enabling criteria are for that particular vehicle and check that the vehicle is capable of meeting those criteria.

Inspection Procedure Reminders

► Inspection Station Ownership and Licensing Responsibilities

The Registry of Motor Vehicle (RMV) receives numerous calls from inspection station owners who want to sell or relocate their existing station, purchase additional inspection stations, or make alterations or move existing inspection bays. There are established regulations and policies for such situations. Below are a few reminders for all vehicle inspection station owners about the requirements for station licensing.

- Inspection station licenses are not transferrable. Station owners must notify the RMV in writing with a letter of intent if there is any pending change of ownership or interest in the business. In the event of any change of ownership or interest in the business, an application for a new license must be filed.
- Station owners are prohibited from sub-leasing their licensed inspection station locations.
- Station owners must notify the RMV in writing and receive prior approval regarding any relocation of their inspection bay, and any equipment configuration changes, such as the installation of new vehicle lifts.
- Multiple business interests in the same physical location is prohibited unless there is a complete separation of the two businesses. Any licensed inspection station leasing or owning space in a facility which physically adjoins another legally separate and distinct business must maintain a complete separation and entrance and be able to secure the premises from access by any personnel of the adjoining business.
- Non-licensed station employees must not have access to the workstation, sticker stock or the information available on the RMV database.
- Inspection services must be offered a minimum of six (6) hours a day, Monday through Friday. Station owners must ensure that at least one licensed and trained vehicle inspector is physically present at their inspection station and available to conduct inspections during all posted

hours. Station owners must submit requests to alter hours of inspection to the RMV in writing. Requests will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

- Commercial License class B station owners must have an inspector who has passed Commercial training and Commercial License class C, D and E station owners must have an inspector who has passed Commercial training and has a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) physically present at their inspection station and available to conduct inspections during all posted hours.

The RMV will immediately lockout any station from performing inspections and issue a violation if found in violation of these ownership change, facility alteration, or license requirements. If the reason for the lockout and violation has not been resolved within six months the license will be revoked.

For more information about station licensing requirements, please see the program website at http://www.massvehiclecheck.state.ma.us/inspection_stations.html. This webpage contains a link to all of the safety inspection regulations, including 540 CMR 4.08.

► Exhaust System and Snow Clearing Reminders

Vehicle exhaust should leave the vehicle only from the end of the tailpipe. If exhaust emissions escape from anywhere else, motorists and passengers face an increased risk for carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. During the winter months, when motorists and passengers choose to warm themselves in idling vehicles, there is a greater risk of CO poisoning due to exhaust leaks and snow-obstructed tailpipes. The RMV would like to remind all inspectors to be vigilant when inspecting exhaust systems, manifolds, pipes, mufflers, and tailpipes to ensure that they are tightly fit, securely fastened, undamaged, and free of leaks or blockages.

While it is not a safety inspection requirement, the RMV and Parsons encourage inspectors to remind their customers that one of the most important things they can do over the winter is to remove all snow and ice from vehicle roofs, hoods, trunks, headlights, tail lights, windows and exterior mirrors before driving. This will ensure maximum driver visibility and safety, as well as prevent frozen debris from falling or blowing into the paths of other vehicles, where it can endanger other motorists and their passengers.



RMV and Parsons encourage inspectors to remind their customers to clear all snow and ice from vehicles before hitting the road.



Inspection Update
Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program
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2014 MA Vehicle Check Program Changes and Station Licensing Reminders Inside!

Massachusetts Vehicle Check Program At A Glance

| Program at a Glance | | | Count | Failure Rate | Enforcement Statistics | Count |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|-----------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| Non-Commercial Safety Inspections | | | 1,260,393 | 4.6% | Violations Issued to Inspectors | 82 |
| Commercial Safety Inspections | | | 42,950 | 5.3% | Violations Issued to Stations | 98 |
| 7D Safety Inspections | | | 523 | 4.8% | Inspector Privileges Revoked | 3 |
| OBD Emissions Inspections | | | 1,008,711 | 5.9% | Inspector Required to Retrain | 1 |
| Opacity Emissions Inspections | | | 26,949 | 1.7% | Inspectors Suspended | 18 |
| Emissions Waivers Issued | | | 0 | | Stations Suspended | 30 |
| Repair Hardship Extensions Issued | | | 13 | | Penalties Assessed | \$0 |
| Hotline and Training Statistics | | | Count | | Licensed Stations | Count |
| Motorist Calls Received | | | 3,424 | | Class A Stations | 1,190 |
| Inspection Station Calls Received | | | 6,815 | | Class B Stations | 189 |
| Initial Non-Comm. Inspectors Trained | | | 308 | | Class C Stations | 28 |
| Initial Commercial Inspectors Trained | | | 57 | | Class D Stations | 308 |
| Initial 7D Inspectors Trained | | | 17 | | Class E Stations | 9 |
| Initial Motorcycle Inspectors Trained | | | 3 | | Reg. Emissions Repair Shops | 223 |

For period 07/01/2013 through 09/30/2013



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