



OBD: Benefits for State Inspection and Maintenance Programs

All 1996 and newer cars and light trucks have a powerful computer that uses second generation on-board diagnostics (OBDII) technology to manage and monitor the vehicle's operation. The computer not only does a good job of making sure the engine runs at peak efficiency, but it also will alert the consumer of any malfunctioning emissions control components that require attention.

Many states' vehicle emissions inspection and maintenance (I/M) programs have already begun using OBD systems to inspect 1996 and newer vehicles. All mandatory inspection and maintenance programs will eventually incorporate OBD.

Real world data has shown that the use of OBD for inspecting vehicle emission control systems offers many benefits to the consumer, the technician, and the environment:

- Accurate diagnosis that leads to effective, durable repairs.
- Short inspection time for the public.
- Early vehicle maintenance opportunity, which leads to greater fuel efficiency and reliability.
- Incentive to car manufacturers to produce more durable engines and emission controls.
- Simple and affordable testing method.
- Early detection of potential emission exceedance.
- State-of-the-art evaporative emission detection.

For more information on OBD and vehicle inspection and maintenance programs, visit EPA's Web site at <www.epa.gov/otaq/obd.htm>.

Existing OBD I/M programs have successfully tested millions of vehicles:

- More than half the vehicles on the road today are OBD-equipped.
- OBD checks at centralized stations are being completed in five minutes or less.
- OBD fail rates currently average less than 3 percent.
- The average repair cost for OBD failed vehicles is comparable to costs for the most rigorous tailpipe tests.
- OBD is sensitive enough to detect pinhole-sized leaks in the fuel system or gas cap.