



Regulatory Announcement

Final Rule for Service Information Availability

On June 8, 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed changes to the 1995 Service Information Rule. As a result of that proposal, amendments to the current Service Information Rule are being finalized to assure that the aftermarket auto service and repair industry has the necessary information and diagnostic equipment to perform emissions-related repairs on vehicles equipped with On-Board Diagnostics (OBD). All 1996 and newer cars and trucks are equipped with OBD systems which monitors a vehicle's performance. A "check engine" light will alert consumers if an emissions control component is not working properly.

The Final Rule

In order to effectively service OBD-equipped vehicle and trucks, repair technicians must have access to emissions-related service information developed by vehicle and engine manufacturers to utilize the OBD system. EPA is finalizing revisions to the 1995 service information regulations requiring the availability of emissions-related service information for the aftermarket auto service and repair industry. The amendments will improve access to this information by making it publicly available via the Internet.

The amendments are intended to ensure that all aftermarket auto service and repair facilities have access to the same emission-related service information, in the same manner as that provided by the manufacturers to their authorized dealerships. In addition, this final rule will provide consumers with more choices in where to have their vehicles serviced.

Key Elements of the Final Rule

- Make full-text emission-related service and training information available via the Internet. With this provision, aftermarket auto service providers will have real-time access to the same information available to manufacturer dealerships.
- Provide equipment and tool companies with the information that allows them to develop equipment with vehicle reprogramming capabilities. With this provision, aftermarket auto service providers will be able to provide reprogramming services to their customers which currently are mostly limited to manufacturer dealerships.
- Make enhanced diagnostic information available to the aftermarket diagnostic scan tool manufacturers. With this provision, aftermarket service providers will have more advanced generic OBD diagnostic scan tools available to them at a reasonable cost.
- Make manufacturer-specific diagnostic tools available for sale to interested parties. With this provision, aftermarket auto service providers who specialize in particular manufacturers will have access to the highly specialized diagnostic equipment.
- Require manufacturers to provide any supplemental OBD technical information necessary to perform emissions-related repairs. With this provision, there will be more specific OBD information available to aftermarket auto service providers and Inspection/Maintenance Programs to more effectively diagnose and repair manufacturer-specific OBD problems.
- Require service information from heavy-duty vehicle and engine manufacturers. OBD systems will be required on heavy-duty vehicles and engines up to 14,000 pounds beginning in 2005. With this provision, heavy-duty aftermarket auto service providers will have increased access to emissions-related service information as required by the Clean Air Act.

Background

Section 202(5) of the Clean Air Act directs EPA to promulgate regulations requiring manufacturers to provide persons repairing or servicing motor vehicles any and all information needed to make use of the vehicle emission control diagnostic system and other information for making emission-related diagnoses and repairs. In addition, no information may be withheld under section 208(c) if that information is provided to franchised dealers. On August 5, 1995, EPA published a final rulemaking ([FR 40474](#)) which set forth the Agency's service information regulations. As we implemented the 1995 regulations, EPA learned that service information providers are still unable to receive the information they need to perform emission-related repairs on OBD-equipped vehicles. Additionally, changes in technology for electronic access to information (i.e., the Internet) make it necessary to revise the current requirements to improve timely access to emissions-related service information.

For More Information

You can access the rulemaking documents on EPA's vehicle service information Web site at:

www.epa.gov/otaq/vehserv.htm

For further information on this final rulemaking, please contact Holly Pugliese at:

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