



Regulatory Announcement

Proposed Amendments to the Service Information Rule

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to amend the current Service Information Rule to assure that the aftermarket service industry has the necessary information and diagnostic equipment to perform emissions-related repairs on vehicles equipped with On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) systems.

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 (60 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.

Proposed Amendments

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 proposing to amend the regulations requiring the availability of emissions-related service information for the aftermarket service and repair industry. The proposed amendments will improve the ability of aftermarket service providers to access service information in a timely manner.

The proposed amendments are intended to ensure that all aftermarket 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 proposal would provide consumers more options on where to have their vehicles serviced.

Key Elements of the Proposal

- Make full-text emission-related service and training information available via the World Wide Web. With this provision, aftermarket 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 service providers will be able to provide customers with reprogramming services which are currently provided primarily by 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 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 an emission-related repair. With this provision, there will be more specific OBD information available to aftermarket service providers and Inspection/Maintenance Programs to more effectively diagnose and repair manufacturer-specific OBD problems.
- Propose service information requirements for 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 service providers will have increased access to emissions-related service information as required by the Clean Air Act.

Public Participation Opportunities

We welcome your comments on this proposed rule. For instructions on submitting written comments, please see the *Federal Register* Notice. You may submit written comments to EPA up to 60 days after the proposed rule is published in the *Federal Register*. A Public Hearing will be held 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register* at the Holiday Inn, North Campus, Ann Arbor, MI. Materials relevant to this rulemaking are available from the EPA Air Docket by calling 202-260-7548; please refer to Docket No. A-2000-49. In addition, you can access the proposed rule and related documents electronically on the Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) Web site at:

<http://www.epa.gov/otaq/vehserv.htm>

For More Information

For further information on this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, please contact Holly Pugliese at:

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