

ChoicePlus: Introducing a More Convenient E✓Check

About ChoicePlus

E✓Check, administered by Ohio EPA, is now more convenient—with ChoicePlus, offering more testing sites in the seven-county E✓Check testing area!

ChoicePlus allows you to choose the easiest way to get your E✓Check

- 23 existing Full-Service E✓Check stations, where ALL vehicles can be tested.
- 53 new testing locations, including 37 Lube Stops and 16 independent repair facilities, where most newer vehicles— 1996 and newer gasoline vehicles and 1997 and newer diesel vehicles—can be tested.
- 16 self-service kiosks located outside many of the existing E✓Check stations, where you can conduct your own On-Board Diagnostic (OBD) test on newer vehicles. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year!

E✓Check works to reduce air pollution

Motor vehicles are a major contributor of pollutants that form ground-level ozone in Ohio. Cars and light trucks contribute up to 34 percent of the pollutants that contribute to ground-level ozone and more than half of the pollutants that cause respiratory problems. Most of these pollutants are invisible and would go undetected without an effective auto emissions program.

Here are some facts:

1. Ohio must continue to operate the E✓Check program in order to comply with the federal Clean Air Act. Without the program, Ohio could risk losing federal highway funds, or face limits on industrial and commercial growth and more stringent consumer product controls.
2. Because of the E✓Check program, 27,000 tons of vehicle emissions are removed from the air each year in the seven E✓Check counties.
3. A vehicle that passes the E✓Check test runs cleanly and efficiently, has improved gas mileage and lasts longer.

E✓Check Testing Procedures

The inspector enters your vehicle data and performs a visual inspection for emissions equipment on all vehicles tested.

Depending on the model year and make of your vehicle, the inspector will perform either an on-board diagnostics (OBD II) test for most 1996 and newer gas powered vehicles or 1997 and newer diesel vehicles; an enhanced treadmill test (for older vehicles); a two-speed idle or tailpipe test (for all-wheel or 4-wheel drive older vehicles); or an opacity test (for older diesel vehicles). Vehicles newer than four years old or older than 25 years old are exempt from testing.

The on-board diagnostic system of newer vehicles is accessed to check the operation of the emissions control system. During a *Key On/Engine Off* test, the check engine light is checked to verify that it is operating properly. An OBD II hand-held reader device is then connected to the vehicle's on-board computer that checks the emission system's status.

Your vehicle's gas cap pressure is tested to ensure the cap seals tightly and does not allow fuel vapors to evaporate into the air. If the vehicle passes, you receive an inspection certificate that enables you to renew your vehicle registration. If the vehicle fails, you should have repairs performed and return for a retest.



Continued from inside

3. A gas cap is required equipment if your model vehicle was originally equipped with a gas cap. It must be the correct type for your vehicle and be in place.
4. Do not overfill the gas tank. When you fill your tank, resist the impulse to get just a "little bit more" into the tank after the nozzle clicks off. The excess gasoline has nowhere to expand and may saturate a part of the emissions system.
5. Safety for E✓Check inspectors and customers is of the utmost importance; therefore all vehicles will be turned away from the testing station if the vehicle demonstrates any of the following:
 - Brake light illumination
 - Fluid leaks
 - Drivability problems
 - Doors or windows inoperable
 - Drive train noise

Tailpipe Test

Vehicles older than 1996 should be warmed up before testing. Until your vehicle reaches normal operating temperature, it emits excess pollutants. Run your vehicle for at least 15 minutes prior to undergoing an emissions test. Vehicles that are not driven often may experience carbon build-up which may cause them to fail. For those vehicles that are not driven on a regular basis, or are driven only short distances at low speeds, be sure to warm them up for 15 to 30 minutes at highway speeds.

- Vehicles with front-wheel drive should have the front suspension properly aligned. Poor front-end alignment will make the vehicle difficult to test on the dynamometer.
- Make certain tires are properly inflated. Unevenly inflated, under-inflated or mismatched tires make the vehicle difficult to test on the dynamometer.
- Make certain your brakes are in good condition. Poor brakes make the vehicle difficult to test on the dynamometer.
- Ensure the integrity of your exhaust system. Excessive exhaust leaks may cause your vehicle to be rejected from the emissions test and may be dangerous to the vehicle's occupants.

IMPORTANT!

Please notify the certified inspector prior to starting the emissions test if your vehicle has traction control or all-wheel drive.

REV. 8-7-2012

Ohio E✓Check Testing AT A GLANCE



Ohio E✓Check
Vehicle Emissions Testing Program

For more information, scan this QR code with your smartphone to visit our website. Our new website provides details on the specific type of tests that are performed at each location along with driving directions from your current location.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
1.800.CAR.TEST
www.ohiocheck.org
www.ohiocheck.info



OBD II

The OBD II hand-held reader device plugs directly into a vehicle's on-board computer to quickly check the status of the emissions system.

What is OBD II and how does it work?

On-board diagnostics (OBD II) is a complex computer package installed on 1996 and newer cars and light trucks and 1997 and newer diesel vehicles. This sophisticated system serves as an advanced warning to alert vehicle owners and auto technicians of failing engine components resulting in potentially high emissions. The vast majority of vehicles tested in the E✓Check program are equipped with an OBD II system.

How is the driver notified about an emissions problem?

There is a special light on the dash that is reserved for emissions control and monitor systems. The light is turned on when OBD II finds a fault, error or failing engine component that could cause emissions to exceed standards. In some cases, it means that immediate service is needed to prevent expensive damage to the engine and high emissions.

Automobiles and light trucks use a variety of warning lights to notify drivers of different conditions. However, in the case of emissions malfunctions, the driver will see either the phrase "service engine soon" or "check engine," or a standard engine-shaped light will come on, as in the following examples:



If the light is flashing, immediate service is recommended. Expensive damage may result if the problem is left unattended.

My vehicle didn't fail, but my readiness monitors are not set. How can I set them?

There are many reasons why the monitors could be cleared or *not ready*. Usually this is caused during routine maintenance. For example, if the battery is disconnected for any reason, the monitors of most vehicles are cleared. Also, a technician may have to clear them as part of a repair process.

To set the monitors to *ready*, the vehicle must be driven through a drive cycle. The length of time and driving

conditions necessary to reset the readiness monitors can vary from one vehicle model to another. Some owner's manuals explain driving procedures needed, while others do not. The vehicle manufacturer or a qualified service technician is the best source for this information. It is possible that up to three weeks of driving may be necessary to reset the readiness monitors. Newer vehicles typically reset much quicker.

What is "readiness"?

Your vehicle performs up to 11 diagnostic checks of specific emissions control components, such as engine, transmission, fuel systems and other emissions controls. Each diagnostic check communicates with a monitor called a readiness monitor. These diagnostic checks are performed while the vehicle is driven. Certain driving conditions must be met to determine if all components are functioning within allowable standards. If all diagnostic checks have been performed, the computer reports systems as "ready." If diagnostic data has been erased during vehicle repairs or through battery disconnection, the computer reports systems as "incomplete" or "not ready." Vehicles are rejected from testing when these diagnostic checks are not completed.

How can I get my vehicle to become "ready"?

If your vehicle has recently been repaired or the battery was recently replaced or disconnected:

- Drive the vehicle for approximately one week under normal driving conditions including highway and city driving. The newer the vehicle, the less time it should take.
- Check your vehicle's owner's manual, contact your local dealership or visit www.ohiocheck.org for information on specific drive cycles that may be required.

How can I check if my vehicle is "ready"?

Some vehicle owner's manuals provide information on how a vehicle owner can determine if the diagnostic system is ready for emissions checking by performing a certain procedure. Visit www.ohiocheck.org for detailed procedures from Ford/Lincoln/Mercury, Jeep/Chrysler/Dodge, and Honda/Acura owner's manuals. Based on

these owner's manuals, to check for readiness, turn the ignition switch to the ON position, but do not crank or start the engine. The check engine light may light solidly then either turn off, remain illuminated or blink multiple times. If the check engine light blinks multiple times, the readiness codes are not likely set. If the light stays on or turns off, the readiness codes are likely set. Note that when the engine is started, the check engine light should turn off unless there are emissions control problems.

How do I know if my vehicle is covered by warranty?

Federal law requires that the emissions control systems on 1995 and newer model year vehicles be warranted for a minimum of two years or 24,000 miles. Warranty coverage for the on-board computer and catalytic converter (only) is extended to eight years or 80,000 miles for these same vehicles. Many automakers provide extended warranty coverage beyond that required by law. Consult your vehicle's warranty documents or your auto dealer for more information.

Self-Service Kiosk

Get an E✓Check at your convenience with one of our 16 self-service kiosks, located at selected E✓Check stations throughout Northeast Ohio. These easy-to-use kiosks walk you through the simple process of conducting your own OBD test 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



RapidScreen

For about five percent of the vehicles that are really clean, the new RapidScreen vans will travel throughout Northeast Ohio and remotely scan vehicles as they drive by to measure the vehicle's emissions. If the vehicle is really clean and has passed RapidScreen's emissions qualifications, the owner will receive a notification in the mail. For the few vehicles that pass this, they will not be required to go to an emissions testing facility.

Visit www.ohiocheck.org for the schedule and locations of the vans.



If your vehicle passes

When a vehicle passes its E✓Check test, you receive an E✓Check Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR). This report is valid for one year from its initial test date, even though the vehicle won't need another test for two years. This report should be saved with the vehicle's registration since it may be transferred to a new owner if the vehicle is sold.

If your vehicle fails

Motorists whose vehicles fail the test will be given a list of approved and licensed E✓Check repair facilities. If a vehicle fails the emissions test, you can take it to the repair facility of your choice. Or, you can make your own repairs.

PREPARING FOR AN INSPECTION

Following these simple tips will help you breeze through the E✓Check process.

General (All Tests)

1. The emissions control equipment for your vehicle must be intact and functioning. Vehicles missing a catalytic converter will be rejected from the emissions test if that model vehicle was originally equipped with a catalytic converter. Removing or tampering with emissions equipment may cause your vehicle to fail the test.
2. Follow recommended maintenance schedules for your vehicle. Read the owner's manual and follow maintenance guidelines. Your vehicle will perform more efficiently, increasing its chances of passing the emissions test. Regular maintenance includes periodic oil and filter changes and tune-ups.