

# What to do if my vehicle fails the emissions test

**AirCheckTexas  
Repair & Replacement  
Assistance Program**



So we can breathe it. Not see it.

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

# AIRCHECKTEXAS

Emissions testing is a way to reduce pollution and clean the air.

## Why did my vehicle fail the emissions test?

The AirCheckTexas emissions test shows your vehicle has either high levels of exhaust pollutants or a problem with an emissions control part.

## What are some reasons why my vehicle failed?

Vehicles 1996 and newer are tested with an onboard diagnostic (OBD) test. The OBD test determines whether there is a malfunction or deterioration with one or more of about 175 emission-control parts. These parts, which are found throughout the vehicle, include the catalytic converter, oxygen sensors, and the exhaust gas recirculation system (EGR).

Vehicles 1995 and older are tested with an acceleration simulation mode (ASM) test that measures emissions of hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, and oxides of nitrogen. When these emissions are above acceptable standards, the vehicle fails. High levels of these emissions can be caused by unburned fuel, an incorrect air-to-fuel ratio with too much or too little air reaching the combustion chamber, high temperature in the combustion chamber, or a damaged catalytic converter.

Waivers, extensions, and repair and replacement assistance are available for eligible vehicle owners. The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) handles all requests for waivers and extensions. Repair and replacement assistance is handled by local program administrators in your area. Information on contacting the DPS and the local assistance programs in your area is included in this brochure.

For more information on vehicle emissions testing, go to the AirCheckTexas Web site, [www.airchecktexas.com](http://www.airchecktexas.com).

### **If my vehicle fails the emissions test, what are my next steps?**

The reason for failure will be indicated on the *Vehicle Inspection Report* (VIR). A qualified service technician should diagnose your vehicle's problem and recommend the appropriate repairs. After the repairs have been made, take your vehicle back to the same inspection station **within 15 days** of the initial inspection for a *free* retest.

### **What if the repair parts aren't available in time for the reinspection?**

If the repair part or parts are not reasonably available, you may be eligible to receive a *Parts Availability Time Extension*. The extension can be issued for either 30, 60, or 90 days, after which your vehicle must pass the emissions test.

### **What if I don't drive my vehicle very much?**

If a vehicle has been driven less than 5,000 miles in the last 12 months, then it is eligible to receive a *Low Mileage Waiver* if it meets *all* of the following requirements:

- emissions-related repairs costing at least \$100 have been performed,
- the vehicle is still unable to pass the emissions test, and
- the vehicle will be driven less than 5,000 miles in the next 12 months.

### **What if I can't afford to make repairs to my vehicle?**

The next step is to check out the state's financial assistance program for certain owners of vehicles that fail the emissions test. It is called the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program.

If your vehicle failed the emissions test and your annual income is below the national poverty level, you may be granted a one-year *Low-Income Time Extension*. However, a second extension is not available the following year.

### Are any other waivers or extensions available?

Yes. The *Individual Vehicle Waiver* is available, but only after every reasonable measure has been taken to repair the vehicle to comply with test standards, and when no other waiver is available.

For additional information on vehicle emissions testing or on one of the time extensions or waivers, contact a DPS waiver station in your area, as follows:

- Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, and Montgomery counties—Houston-Galveston DPS Waiver Station, 281/272-1150
- Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, and Tarrant counties—Dallas-Fort Worth DPS Waiver Station, 972/251-2404

## GETTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### How do I qualify for AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance?

You should fill out the application form in this brochure to apply for this program if you meet *all* the following qualifications:

- Your total annual family take-home pay is less than or equal to twice the amount of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for designated family units. Ask the assistance program for this information.
- You live in one of the following two areas where the emissions testing is performed:
  - Houston-Galveston Area—Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, and Montgomery counties; or
  - North Central Texas Area—Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, and Tarrant counties.
- Your vehicle has been registered for the past 12 months in one of the counties listed above.
- Your vehicle has failed an emissions test.

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# APPLICATION

The county program administrator of the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program must receive your application no later than 30 days from the date of failing the emissions test.

For more information, or for directions on where to take or send this form, call the phone number in your area that is listed in this brochure.

## SECTION I : APPLICANT'S INFORMATION *(filled out by applicant)*

1. Applicant's name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. City \_\_\_\_\_

4. State \_\_\_\_\_ 5. ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

6. Telephone number (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

7. If you are not the owner of the vehicle, provide owner's name and telephone number:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number (        ) \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II: VEHICLE INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS *(filled out by applicant)*

8. County where vehicle is registered \_\_\_\_\_

*Information for items 9-14 can be taken from the Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR).*

9. Vehicle make \_\_\_\_\_

10. Vehicle model \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Model year \_\_\_\_\_

12. Vehicle ID Number (VIN): \_\_\_\_\_

13. License plate \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Odometer reading \_\_\_\_\_

15. Attach a copy of the *Vehicle Inspection Report* (VIR). \_\_\_\_ yes

16. Was the vehicle driven under its own power to the emissions inspection station  
and could it be driven to a vehicle retirement facility? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

**Section III: VEHICLE OWNER ELIGIBILITY (Filled out by Applicant)**

17. Total annual family take-home pay \$ \_\_\_\_\_

18. Number of members in family at home \_\_\_\_\_

19. Proof of income (check one and include photocopy):

Pay stubs (last 3 months); \_\_\_\_\_

Tax return; \_\_\_\_\_

OR Case number from a federal or Texas Department of Human Services program

\_\_\_\_\_

20. Name of any other financial assistance program: \_\_\_\_\_



Affidavit: I hereby certify under penalty of perjury, that all information contained herein is true and correct. I acknowledge that all information given is subject to verification and/or monitoring. I authorize AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program representatives to verify information needed to certify my eligibility.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You may be eligible for assistance if you already get financial assistance from a county, state, or federal social service program. If you receive services through the Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) or from a federal agency, you should have your eligibility information and identification number available.

### How do I apply for help?

Start by calling the assistance program in your area, as follows:

- In the Houston-Galveston area for Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, and Montgomery counties—call toll free, 1-866-237-9392
- In the North Central Texas area for Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, and Tarrant counties—call toll free, 1-800-898-9103

You also need to submit a completed application form **within 30 days** of the failed emissions test, along with the following documents:

- Your *Vehicle Inspection Report* (VIR) that the inspection station gives you at the end of the safety and emissions inspection.
- Proof of income: pay stubs for the most recent three consecutive months, your most recent tax return, or proof of any other financial assistance program.
- If your vehicle failed the safety portion of the inspection, proof that the safety items have been repaired.

### When will I find out if I am eligible for assistance?

In most cases, once you have given the program administrator all of the necessary documentation, you should find out within a few days.

### What happens if I am eligible to get assistance?

You will be given a voucher for payment and a list of DPS Recognized Emissions Repair Facilities that perform emissions-related repairs and are participating in the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program. Another option might be to retire your vehicle and get assistance toward a replacement vehicle.

### Can I do the repairs myself?

No. Under the assistance program, a DPS Recognized Emissions Repair Facility participating in the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program must perform all repairs.

### How much help can I get?

All assistance will be paid directly to the repair facility by the county program administrator for the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program. Assistance for repairs is limited to no more than \$600. You pay:

- the first \$30 of the repair bill; and
- any costs over \$600.

If you choose to retire your vehicle, a voucher good for up to \$1,000 toward the purchase of a replacement vehicle will be granted.

### Can I use the assistance to repair other problems so I can pass the safety inspection?

No. Financial assistance is only provided for emissions-related repairs. You are responsible for making sure that your vehicle passes the safety portion of the inspection.

### Can I get reimbursed for emissions-related repairs already done?

No costs will be reimbursed if your vehicle was repaired before you received approval from the AirCheckTexas Repair & Replacement Assistance Program.



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