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Maryland state emissions test

You may be trying to access this site from a secured browser on the server. Please enable scripts and reload this page. Emissions testing in Maryland is a process overseen by the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP) under the authority of the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). Generally, drivers must complete a vehicle inspection once every 2 years. As a reminder of an upcoming smog inspection, the MVA emails drivers 11 weeks prior to the testing due date. The MVA sends a reminder by mail at least 6 to 8 weeks in advance if the state does not have an email address on file for the motorist. However, drivers do not need an inspection notice to perform the VEIP test, and vehicles may undergo a car emission test at any time. To learn more about vehicle testing in Maryland, review the sections below. Maryland Emissions and Smog Check Requirements Unless a vehicle is exempt from Maryland emissions testing, it must undergo a VEIP inspection every two years around registration renewal periods. Generally, safety and smog inspection requirements vary depending on a vehicle's model year, weight and the county in which the vehicle owner registers the vehicle. Currently, emission test requirements pertain to Baltimore City and the following counties: Anne Arundel Baltimore Carroll Calvert Cecil Charles Fredrick Howard Hartford Montgomery Prince George's Queen Anne's Washington During the vehicle emissions testing process, the MVA conducts the following tests, depending on the vehicle's model year and weight: An onboard diagnostic test (OBD) – for vehicle model years 1996 and newer weighing less than 8,500 lbs. or heavy-duty vehicles with model years newer than 2008 and weighing between 8,501 and 14,001 lbs. Gas cap test – for vehicle model years between 1977 and 1995 with a vehicle weight of less than 8,500 lbs. Tailpipe test/idle test – for vehicle model years between 1977 and 1995 weighing up to 26,000 lbs. and heavy-duty vehicles with model years newer than 2008 and weighing between 14,001 and 26,000 lbs. To obtain a smog certification in MD, vehicle owners must bring their vehicle, the VEIP testing notice and payment for the test fee to a testing center. Drivers may pay for the smog inspection by cash, check, traveler's check, money order or credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express. Checks must be made payable to VEIP. If vehicle owners did not receive a smog testing notice, then they may present their vehicle's registration card instead. Smog Check Exemptions in Maryland Car emissions testing is a requirement in 14 different regions of the state. Unless car owners register their vehicles outside of the counties requiring an emissions certification, vehicles must undergo an exam before the testing due date. However, eligible vehicle owners may apply for a MVA inspection exemption by completing the reverse side of the VEIP inspection form (Form EP-1) and mailing or hand-delivering the form to the MVA. Generally, safety and emissions test exemptions are allowed for the following vehicles: Vehicle models older than 1976 or vehicles weighing more than 26,000 lbs. Electric or diesel-powered vehicles. Motorcycles, farm equipment and historic/antique vehicles. Hybrid vehicles, following the first 36 months after titling and registration. New vehicles, following the first 24 months after titling and registration. Fire apparatus, ambulances, military vehicles, and Class H, N or P vehicles. Vehicles owned by senior citizens over 70 years of age or qualifying vehicles with metal disability tags (if the vehicle is driven less than 5,000 miles per year). Drivers may mail the MD emissions check exemption form to the following address or submit it in person at any VEIP location in the state. Maryland MVA Attn: VEIP 6601 Ritchie Highway, NE Glen Burnie, MD 21062 Out-of-State Emissions Testing in Maryland If drivers cannot complete their MD safety and smog test before the test date, they may request an extension from the MVA using the reverse side of the VEIP inspection notice. After requesting a test extension, the state sends motorists a notice 6 to 8 weeks before the new testing deadline. Alternately, drivers may complete a smog check while out of state if the state they are in conducts emissions testing. If the state does not offer smog testing, then drivers must contact the VEIP by telephone at 410-768-7000. Note: There is no charge to request an extension for car smoke tests, as long the vehicle undergoes the test before the next deadline date. Emissions Waivers in Maryland Cars that have been inspected but do not pass the smog test may be eligible for a repair waiver after spending at least \$450 on emissions-related repairs. However, car owners cannot obtain a smog testing waiver until they meet the minimum repair requirement of \$450. To apply for a car smoke test repair waiver, vehicle owners must complete the repair waiver request on the opposite side of the inspection certificate and submit it to the VEIP station. Additionally, motorists must submit all original invoices, repair orders and emissions-related repair receipts. Note: Two other types of emissions check waivers are also available. These waivers include the senior citizen and disabled citizen emissions waivers. To apply for waivers such as these, motorists must complete the reverse side of the VEIP inspection form (Form EP-1) and submit it to the MVA. Testing Fees in Maryland The MD smog check price is \$14. However, there is a \$15 penalty for late tests. The emission test cost begins to increase the day after the testing deadline and an additional late fee accumulates every 4 weeks thereafter. When drivers visit one of the 10 self-service emissions testing stations, the testing fee is \$10. Where to Perform an Emissions Check in Maryland Currently, there are 18 VEIP testing locations throughout the state. Drivers may visit a Maryland emissions testing center in any of the 14 cities or counties requiring a test. Alternately, drivers may visit one of the 10 self-service smog testing stations in Columbia, Curtis Bay, Halethorpe, Owings Mills, Annapolis, Beltsville, Frederick, Waldorf, Bel Air and Gaithersburg. Note: Not all vehicles may undergo an emissions check at a self-service station. Self-service smog testing centers are only available for tests on qualifying vehicles that are not past due. For instance, self-service auto emissions testing is available to vehicle model years newer than 2005 and with a gross vehicle weight rating of less than 8,500 lbs. and vehicle models newer than 2008 and with a gross vehicle weight rating of between 8,501 and 14,001 lbs. Additionally, motorists must pay by credit card when using a kiosk. Failing a Maryland Smog and Emissions Test If a car fails its emissions certification in Maryland, the vehicle owner is permitted one free re-inspection after performing all necessary car repairs. However, a driver must pay a car inspection fee for each subsequent retest. A vehicle must undergo smog checks until it passes inspection or until the car owner obtains a repair waiver. Note: When making emissions testing repairs, a car owner must present the repair technician with the diagnostic report and the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Certificate (VEIC). / service, truck repair / By Tara Brittingham Post navigation Maryland's vehicle emissions testing program plays a critical role in maintaining air quality and protecting public health. By ensuring vehicles meet environmental standards, the state reduces harmful pollutants and promotes sustainability. Compliance helps avoid penalties and supports environmental goals. This guide explains the key aspects of Maryland's emissions testing program, including testing criteria, penalties for non-compliance, and available exemptions. Criteria for Emissions Testing The Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program (VEIP), managed by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Motor Vehicle Administration, requires most gasoline-powered vehicles registered in Maryland to undergo emissions testing every two years. Vehicles from model year 1977 and newer, weighing 8,500 pounds or less, are typically subject to these requirements. The program ensures compliance with Clean Air Act standards to mitigate air pollution. Testing evaluates exhaust emissions using a dynamometer and an on-board diagnostics (OBD) system, which identifies malfunctioning components like the catalytic converter and oxygen sensors. Vehicles that fail testing must undergo repairs and retesting. A gas cap pressure test is also conducted to detect leaks that contribute to evaporative emissions. The VEIP testing fee is \$14, covering the operational costs of testing facilities. Multiple locations are available statewide, and an online scheduling tool helps minimize wait times for vehicle owners. Penalties for Non-Compliance Maryland enforces emissions testing requirements with a structured penalty system. Vehicle owners who fail to comply initially receive a notification. Continued non-compliance results in a \$15 fine, which can escalate to a maximum of \$1,000. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) may suspend the vehicle's registration, prohibiting its operation until compliance is achieved. Vehicles found operating without valid registration due to non-compliance may be impounded, underscoring the state's commitment to air quality standards. Exemptions from Testing Certain vehicles are exempt from VEIP requirements. Vehicles newer than three model years and weighing 8,500 pounds or less are exempt, as they typically meet stringent emissions standards. Historic vehicles, at least 20 years old and used primarily for exhibitions or parades, are also exempt due to their limited use. Electric vehicles, which produce zero tailpipe emissions, are excluded from testing in alignment with the state's environmental objectives. Other exemptions include farm trucks used for agricultural purposes, diesel-powered vehicles, and military vehicles, given their specialized use and fuel type. Legal Framework and Legislative Background The legal foundation for Maryland's emissions testing program is rooted in the Clean Air Act, which requires states to implement measures to control air pollution. Maryland's compliance with this federal mandate is codified in the Maryland Transportation Code, Title 23, Subtitle 2, granting the state authority to conduct inspections and enforce compliance. The Maryland Department of the Environment, in partnership with the Motor Vehicle Administration, oversees the program. The legislative intent is to ensure vehicles on Maryland roads adhere to emissions standards that protect public health and the environment. The program is periodically updated to reflect advancements in vehicle technology and emissions control. Appeals and Dispute Resolution Vehicle owners in Maryland have the right to appeal decisions related to emissions testing failures or penalties. If a vehicle fails the emissions test, the owner can request a reinspection after making necessary repairs. Disputes regarding test results or penalties can be addressed through the Maryland Office of Administrative Hearings. The appeals process involves submitting a formal request for a hearing, where owners can present evidence and arguments. An administrative law judge reviews the case, considering factors such as test accuracy, penalty validity, and mitigating circumstances. This process ensures a fair opportunity for vehicle owners to contest decisions and seek resolution. You may be trying to access this site from a secured browser on the server. Please enable scripts and reload this page. The Maryland Vehicle Administration (MVA) runs a vehicle emissions test program in an effort to help clean the air and water in Maryland. Vehicles required to meet Maryland's testing standards must pass a smog check every two years. Maryland also requires new residents to get their vehicles to pass a vehicle safety inspection. If you know you need an Emissions test done click here to select your county and find the nearest location. Requirements to Pass the Maryland Smog Check All required Maryland - registered vehicles must get an emissions inspections every two years. Smog checks usually coincide with a vehicle's registration renewal date. Vehicle owners will receive a smog check notice in the mail 8 weeks before their registration renewal deadline. As of 2012, hybrid vehicles must get a smog check after they are 3 years old. Smog Check Exemptions for Maryland Drivers The state of Maryland, offers smog check extensions, waivers, and exemptions if vehicles meet certain criteria. Maryland Smog Check Extensions Vehicle owners unable to have their vehicle tested by the specified due date may be eligible for an extension. There are a number of ways to apply for a Maryland Emissions Testing Extension: The MVA website MVA kiosks In-person at any of the 18 VEIP stations located throughout Maryland In-person at any of the MVA full-service branch offices Contacting the Glen Burnie branch office by mail Contacting VEIP office by phone Contacting the MVA Customer Service Center by phone Maryland Vehicle Smog Check Exemptions The following vehicles qualify for a vehicle emissions test exemption: Vehicles made in the 1976 model year or older Vehicles weighing more than 26,000 lbs Vehicles powered solely by diesel or electric Motorcycles Vehicles registered as a farm truck, farm truck tractor, or farm-area vehicle Historic or Antique vehicles New vehicles for the first 24 months, and qualified hybrids for the first 36 months after receiving their title and registration Firefighting vehicles owned or leased by the State of Maryland, a county, a municipality, a volunteer fire department, or a rescue squad Maryland-registered ambulances currently exempted will remain exempt Vehicles registered to senior citizens over 70 Vehicles registered with metal disabled registration tags and driven less than 5,000 miles per year (if co-owned, both owners must qualify for the waiver and can apply for a waiver for the balance of the two-year test cycle) Mileage must be recertified every two years to continue to receive the waiver Vehicles registered as a Class N street rod Military vehicles owned by the federal government and used for tactical, combat, relief operations, or training Vehicles registered as a Class H school vehicles or as a Class P passenger bus Maryland Vehicle Emissions Repair Waivers If a vehicle owner meets the following requirements after failing the initial smog check and failing one retest, the owner may be eligible for a Repair waiver: The owner spends \$450 or more on emissions-related vehicle repairs The owner completes the backside of their VIR after the vehicle's initial test The owner submits receipts/invoices for the emissions-related repairs completed on the vehicle The owner had the repairs done within 30 days of the initial inspection and up to 120 days after the vehicle's last inspection The Maryland Vehicle Administration provides a list of Certified Emissions Repair Facilities (CERF). Vehicle owners, however, may find their own mechanic or complete the repairs themselves. If the vehicle is still under its emissions system warranty, a dealership may complete the repairs for free. Note: Maryland also provides waivers for the elderly and the disabled. Smog Check Fees The State of Maryland charges a \$14 fee for a vehicle's initial smog check. The first retest if a vehicle fails its initial smog check is free. There is an additional \$15 fee for getting tested late after the initial testing deadline, and an added \$15 fee for every subsequent 28 days the vehicle owner is late getting the vehicle tested. Maryland vehicle emissions testing locations accept the following forms of payment: credit card, money order, cash, and personal check(vehicle owners must provide two valid forms of ID when paying by personal check). Performing Emissions Testing in Maryland Maryland vehicle owners will receive a vehicle testing notice about eight weeks before the test deadline. Once the owner receives the notice, they must drive their vehicle to a Maryland testing facility before the deadline to get tested. If a vehicle owner forgets to bring their testing notice to the test facility, they may provide the vehicle's registration instead. During the test procedure, vehicle owners must pull their vehicle into one of the facility's test lanes, leave the vehicle running, and place it in the park. A certified Maryland emissions inspector will do a visual inspection for leaks, excessive smoke, exhaust system tampering, gas cap malfunction, warning lights, and worn tires. Then, the inspector will administer one of the following tests. OBDII Test - The Maryland Vehicle Administration (MVA) requires this test for: Passenger Vehicles and light-duty trucks made in the 1996 model year or later Heavy-duty vehicles up to 14,000 pounds made in 2008 model year or later During and OBDII Test an emissions inspector connects a diagnostic computer to a port under the vehicle's dashboard. The diagnostic computer then checks the emissions control components to make sure they are in working order. If the vehicle's "Check Engine" light is on, on the vehicle will fail the test. Idle Tailpipe Test - The MVA requires this test for: Passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks made between the 1977 and 1995 model years Heavy-duty vehicles weighing up to 14,000 lbs and made between the 1977 and 2007 model years Heavy-duty vehicles weighing between 14,000 and 26,000 pounds made in 1977 model year or later. Before getting this test, the MVA advises vehicle owners to drive their vehicles at highway speeds for at least 20 minutes before testing to "warm up" the vehicle. If the vehicle has exhaust holes or leaks, it will fail the test. Gas Cap Test - The MVA requires this test for: Passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks made between the 1977 and 1995 model years Heavy-duty vehicles weighing up to 14,000 lbs and made between the 1977 and 2007 model years Heavy-duty vehicles weighing between 14,000 and 26,000 pounds made in 1977 model year or later. A vehicle will fail the gas cap test if it leaks, has damage, the vehicle does not have a gas cap, or the vehicle does not have the correct gas cap for the make and model of the vehicle. Visual Catalytic Converter Inspection - all vehicles will have a visual inspection of their catalytic converter to check to see if it's working correctly, hasn't been damaged, or shows signs of tampering. After a vehicle completes its emissions inspection, test personnel will provide a Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) detailing the results of the inspection. In the event a vehicle did not pass the emissions test, the VIR states in detail the required emissions-related repairs the owner must address for the vehicle. Failed Smog Inspections - Next Steps There are several possible reasons a vehicle does not pass a Maryland smog check, including: The vehicle's hydrocarbon emissions exceeded the allowable limits The vehicle's carbon monoxide emissions exceeded the allowable limits The vehicle had a sample dilution failure The vehicle failed some portion of the OBDII test The vehicle could have missing, disconnected, or broken emissions control equipment The vehicle failed its gas cap test due to vapors or fuel leaking from the fuel system The Maryland MVA requires all vehicles that do not pass their smog check to get their emissions-related mechanical issues fixed and then retested. When getting a vehicle retested, the vehicle owner should bring the initial test results and any paperwork from the garage or service center that repaired the vehicle's emissions issues. The first retest of your vehicle is free, but if the vehicle does not pass the first retest, the second retest is not free. Moved to Maryland - Smog Check Requirements New residents have 60 days after establishing residency to get their vehicles registered. Once registered, typically residents will receive a testing notice in the mail from the MVA notifying the vehicle owner of when their testing date deadline is. Special Tips to Pass the Maryland Emissions Test Maryland vehicle owners may want to get their vehicles tested as soon as they receive their first testing notice. Allow extra time to get any needed repairs done before your registration expires. Also, if a vehicle owner plans to be out of town during the date when their registration expires, planning early will give owners time to meet the deadline. Here are some tips to keep in mind to ensure passing a Maryland vehicle emissions test: Make sure the vehicle does not have its "Check Engine" light on; If it does, it will not pass the test. To fix, check to make sure the gas cap is on tight and is not broken. Keep the sealing surfaces in the cap clean so it can make a good seal. If it is not, tighten it and drive around to see if the light goes off. Follow the vehicle's recommended maintenance schedule. Many of the mechanical issues that cause vehicles to fail their tests can be addressed during a routine check-up If your vehicle is a make and model year when catalytic converters came standard on the vehicle, make sure your vehicle has one and is not malfunctioning; If it does not have one or it is not working, it will not pass the test Allow your vehicle to run for at least 10 minutes before it takes a test to ensure an accurate reading Research your vehicle manufacturer's recalls Technical Service Bulletins (TSBs), and warranties before getting any repairs done. The cost of their repair may be covered by the manufacturer. If your vehicle's On-Board Diagnostic (OBDII) system is showing trouble codes, make sure to get them fixed by a certified emissions mechanic. Do not just try to clear the codes.Test personnel will know and the vehicle will not pass inspection. If your vehicle is misfiring when it is idling, make sure to get this addressed before taking the test If a vehicle's battery is brand new, drive the vehicle for a couple of days before taking it to get an On Board Diagnostics test so as to allow the OBD system to reset Make sure the vehicle's oil is not dirty. Get the oil changed on a routine basis Maintain the recommended air pressure in your vehicle's tires Inspect your vehicle's hoses and belts for wear. Get them replaced if necessary Get any mechanical issues with your vehicle's transmission address and fixed. Transmissions problems can affect your vehicle's emissions and cause your vehicle to fail its test. If your motor vehicle's emissions system has a mechanical issue, check your manufacturer's warranty. Emissions Test Maryland vehicle owners may want to get their vehicles tested as soon as they receive their first testing notice. Allow extra time to get any needed repairs done before your registration expires. 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