



Consumer Tips

1. Do not use your vehicle to perform a jump start.
2. Do not disconnect the battery.
3. Diagnostics and repairs should only be made by a skilled emissions technician, not at an auto-parts store or lube/oil change shop.



Vehicle Emissions Center

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What does my Check Engine light mean?

On-Board Diagnostics (OBD II)

SERVICE
ENGINE
SOON!

CHECK
ENGINE





Automobiles and Air Pollution

“What is OBD and how does it work?”

The first on-board diagnostic systems were introduced in the 1980s to lower emissions and help repair technicians diagnose computerized engine controls. New and improved OBDII systems came along in the mid 1990s.

The new system monitors the vehicle's electronic sensors and actuators while the vehicle is being driven to ensure they are working. The on-board computer has the ability to identify problems such as high emissions, lack of performance and poor fuel economy. Early detection helps avoid costly repairs and can improve the vehicles emissions.

All 1996 and newer cars and light-duty trucks are equipped with an OBDII system. Check your owner's manual.

GOOD NEWS: Your warranty likely covers OBD II repairs

Federal law requires emissions control systems on 1995-and-newer vehicles be warranted for 2 years or 24,000 miles. Many auto manufacturers provide extended warranty coverage. Federal law also stipulates that Catalytic converters on 1995-and-newer vehicles be covered for 8 years or 80,000 miles. Consult the owner's/warranty manual to find out about your vehicle's coverage.

“How do I know if there is a problem with my emissions?”

The computer will illuminate a light on the dashboard to notify the driver of a problem. Most dash lights will display “*Check Engine*,” “*Service Engine Soon*” or a simple picture depicting an engine.

Each time the OBD system detects a problem, a diagnostic trouble code is stored in the vehicle's computer. The repair technician can retrieve the codes and repair the problems.

“Why can't I pass inspection if my light is on?”

When a vehicle's “*Check Engine*” light is on, it means that the on-board diagnostic system has detected a problem that could cause the vehicle to produce higher than normal emissions. The problem most likely will cause premature deterioration of your vehicle's engine and emissions control equipment, resulting in costly repairs.

“What does it take to turn the light off?”

The vehicle's computer has the ability to turn the light off once it evaluates the suspect component three times and no longer detects the problem. Having the light turned off without correcting the problem does no good as it will come back on when the computer detects the problem again.

“What's in it for me?”

The OBD system is designed to alert the driver when something in the engine management or emissions control systems begins to fail. Early diagnosis and timely repair can prevent more costly repairs to the system.

In addition, vehicle manufacturers have an increased incentive to build a higher quality vehicle with better performance, reduced emissions and a more efficient power train. A vehicle identified by the OBDII system as having a problem is running inefficiently. This results in poor fuel economy and performance while shortening the life of the engine.

OBDII systems also provide far more information than ever before to help the repair technician properly diagnose and repair vehicles the first time, saving you time and money.

