

State gears for auto emission tests

By TIM RICHARD

Auto-repair shops are beginning to line up for licenses to make tailpipe tests under Michigan's new vehicle-inspection-and-maintenance (I/M) law.

"We sent notices to all the licensed shops. Of 2,000 facilities, we get responses from 800," said Rodger James, director of dealer licensing for the Michigan Department of State.

But few shops are willing to make I/M tests, the Department of State could do the testing itself. But he added, "The results of the survey are encouraging."

New Jersey state government does its own inspecting, and Arizona contracts with a single private garage. Rhode Island and Michigan, however, opted to license private garages to make annual tests of motor vehicles.

UNDER THE federal Clean Air Act, states must improve air quality in order to qualify for federal aid.

The Michigan Legislature gave the state Department of Natural Resources the job of testing to see which counties had dirty air due to auto emissions. The DNR put the finger on Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Washtenaw.

James and other Department of State staff members were in Southfield last week at a meeting set up by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments to brief garages, fleet owners and the general public on the I/M law and departmental rules.

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TO BE LICENSED to test for emissions, he said, a firm must:

1. Register as a motor-vehicle repair shop. Such shops have been licensed in Michigan since 1975.

2. Acquire an emissions-analyzer machine, which costs about \$4,000 new. When a vehicle's motor is idling, a probe is inserted into its tailpipe to measure the concentration of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide. The tester's fee is limited to \$10 by law.

3. Employ a trained inspector. Auto manufacturers, private firms such as Chrysler's MoTech and community colleges are expected to provide the training.

The licensed testers will be inspected monthly by the Department of State, James said.

Owners of a fleet of 10 or more vehicles — such as municipal governments and their police departments — can be licensed to test their own vehicles.

HERE ARE answers to questions from dealers and the public:

Q. Who gets the test fee?
James: "The testing station. The test is a pass/fail one. If the vehicle passes, the testing station issues the owner a certificate, which the owner needs to purchase his license plates."

Q. How do you control a conflict of interest — where the inspection station also does tune-ups of emissions equipment?

James: "We plan to closely monitor each testing station. We should know soon into the system the percentage of vehicles that fail." This falling percentage will indicate to the Department of State whether a station is flunking too many cars in order to get repair business.

Q. If you check each inspection once a month, how many inspectors will you need?
James: "At least 25. We have 30 field people right now."

Q. What will be the cost of this program to the state?

James: "The Department of State is asking the Legislature for \$1 million," which would cover the inspectors, printing, licensing procedure and so on.

The cost could rise if the DNR determines that more counties fail to meet clean-air standards. Prime candidates, the southeastern counties of Livingston, St. Clair and Monroe, along with such outstate areas as those around the cities of Saginaw, Grand Rapids, Lansing and Niles.

MCF employees take gold award from UF

The Michigan Cancer Foundation will again receive the United Foundation's Gold Award in 1981 for its employees' participation in the annual Torch Drive Campaign.

"During our October campaign, Michigan Cancer Foundation staffers increased their total dollar contributions by 14 percent over last year," said Dr. Michael J. Brennan, president and medical director of the Michigan Cancer Foundation. "We are very grateful to the United Foundation for its sustained support throughout the year, and our 1981 pledges demonstrate this."

The Michigan Cancer Foundation receives approximately 15 percent of its funding from the United Foundation of Greater Detroit and various United Way agencies in Michigan. The United Foundation has supported the Michigan Cancer Foundation since 1947.

The Michigan Cancer Foundation's headquarters are in the Meyer L. Prentis Cancer Center in Detroit. The building is named for the late General Motors treasurer and Detroit philanthropist, who was a founder of the United Foundation.

The Michigan Cancer Foundation conducts a variety of research programs into causes and treatment of the disease. The foundation also conducts patient and community service and education programs through a network of local neighborhood offices. The Michigan Cancer Foundation, headquarters for the Comprehensive Cancer Center of Metropolitan Detroit, is also the headquarters for the International Association for Breast Cancer Research.

New booklet reviews toxics

The Cooperative Extension Service has issued a bulletin, "Understanding Toxic Substances."

It includes information on the possible dangers of toxic substances, the effect on the individual, and government safeguards.

The bulletin can be obtained by sending 30 cents to the Cooperative Extension Service, North Office Building, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac 460953.

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