



Smog Check Licensing Restructure Questions and Answers

1 Q: What is the Smog Check Licensing Restructure?

A: The Smog Check licensing restructure realigned the program's licensing requirements with the best practices in automotive repair industry and marketplace. The restructure separated the Smog Check test-and-repair technician licenses into separate Inspector and Repair Technician licenses. The restructure also established a new Repair-Only station license, in addition to the existing Test-Only and Test-and-Repair stations.

Restructure License Options:

Individuals	Stations
*Smog Check Inspector	Test-Only
Smog Check Repair Technician	Repair-Only
Individuals may opt for both licenses	Test-and-Repair

*Inspectors may work in a Test-Only or Test-and-Repair station.

2 Q: When did the Smog Check License Restructure begin?

A: Implementation of the new Inspector and Repair Technician licenses and the new Repair Station license began August 1, 2012.

Smog Check Stations

3 Q: Does the Repair-Only station license allow an automotive repair dealer (ARD) to perform Smog Check related repairs?

A: Yes, with a Repair-Only station license, an ARD may perform Smog Check repairs and advertise for those repairs. Additionally, the repairs performed under this license may qualify their customers for a repair cost waiver, if needed.

4 Q: Does an automotive repair dealer need a Smog Check station license to perform repairs associated with an illuminated Check Engine light?

A: In accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 44032, all Smog Check related repairs, including repairs associated with an illuminated Check Engine light must be performed by a Licensed Repair Technician working at a Licensed Smog Check Repair-Only Station or Test-and-Repair Station.

Emissions repairs not related to Smog Check may be performed by an automotive repair dealer (ARD). However, because the Check Engine light is a function of the vehicle's emission control system (OBDII equipped vehicles), the ARD, like a Licensed Smog Check Station, must be aware of all options available to a consumer for emissions repairs, including repairs covered by any applicable emissions warranty.

It's important to note that the repairs performed by a Licensed Smog Check Station may apply toward a repair cost waiver. Additionally, depending on eligibility, low-income consumers may qualify for repair assistance through the Bureau's Consumer Assistance Program.

5 Q How much does it cost to apply for a Repair-Only station license?

A: The application fee for a Repair-Only station license is \$100. This \$100 fee applies to both the initial and annual renewal applications.

6 Q: Do Repair-Only stations have minimum equipment requirements?

A: Yes. Smog Check Repair-Only stations must have diagnostic equipment and repair tools for diagnosing and repairing engines, ignition systems, fuel systems, emission control systems, computer engine control systems, and other related components for each vehicle type that the station diagnoses and repairs. Repair-Only stations that only repair diesel powered vehicles are not required to possess equipment needed for the repair of gasoline powered vehicles. Repair-Only stations are not required to have inspection equipment, since that type of station is prohibited, based on its license classification, from performing any Smog Check inspections. For specific equipment and tool requirements, refer to the Repair-Only Station Checklist located under the Industry tab on the Smog Check Website.

7 Q: Does the license restructure affect equipment requirements for Smog Check Test-Only or Test-and-Repair station?

A: No, the station equipment requirements for Smog Check Test-Only and Test-and-Repair stations remain the same.

8 Q: Does a Repair-Only station have to employ a Licensed Smog Check Repair Technician?

A: Yes. A Repair-Only station must employ at least one Licensed Smog Check Repair Technician. A current EA or EB test-and-repair license will also satisfy this requirement. Upon license renewal, the licensed individual must choose to become a Licensed Smog Check Repair Technician.

9 Q: How do I apply for a Smog Check Repair-Only station license?

A: Applications are available on the BAR Web site at www.smogcheck.dca.ca.gov, under the Industry tab. You may also call BAR's Licensing Unit at (916) 403-8477 or toll free at (855) 735-0462 to request an application. Complete the application and return it with the application fee to the mailing address listed on the application.

10 Q: Can Repair-Only stations participate in the Consumer Assistance Program?

A: Since Repair-Only stations are not licensed to perform Smog Check inspections, they cannot be STAR certified and therefore cannot participate in the Consumer Assistance Program (CAP). However, like other Smog Check stations, they are expected to understand and communicate all options available to consumers for emissions-related repairs, including the repairs offered through CAP and any applicable manufacturer emissions warranties.

Only STAR-certified stations are authorized to provide repair assistance services under the Consumer Assistance Program.

11 Q: Can a Repair-Only station sublet Smog Check inspections and repairs?

A: Smog Check inspections may not be sublet by any station, including Repair-Only stations. The sublet of Smog Check related repairs is prohibited except under of the following circumstances:

1. Repairs of exhaust systems that are normally performed by muffler shops, provided that the malfunction has been previously diagnosed by the specific Smog Check station originally authorized by the customer to perform repairs to the vehicle.
2. Repairs of individual components that have been previously diagnosed as being defective and that have been removed by the Smog Check station originally authorized by the customer to perform repairs to the vehicle.
3. Repairs of diesel-powered vehicles provided the Smog Check station has obtained authorization from the customer to sublet repairs to the vehicle.
4. Repairs to a vehicle's transmission provided the Smog Check station has obtained authorization from the customer to sublet repairs to the vehicle.
5. Corrections to the vehicle's on-board computer systems' software provided that the malfunction has been previously diagnosed by the Smog Check station originally authorized by the customer to perform repairs to the vehicle.

In any of these cases, the Smog Check station originally authorized by the customer to perform the repairs is responsible for the repair in the same manner as if the station or its employees had done the repair. At the request of the customer, the station must inform the customer where the sublet work will be performed.

The Repair-Only station license provides automotive repair dealers that specialize in particular types of repair or the repair of particular types of vehicles the opportunity to perform Smog Check related repairs, thus minimizing any need to sublet repairs.

Smog Check Inspectors and Technicians

12 Q: How does licensing restructure affect individuals licensed before August 1, 2012?

A: Existing licenses for both stations and technicians are not affected. Current EB or EA “test-and-repair” technician licenses will remain valid through their normal term. At the time of license renewal, the licensed individual will have the option to select the license or combination of licenses that best suits his or her needs and qualifications. See questions 24 and 25 for more information.

The restructure eliminated the option for an Intern Technician license. Any existing Intern licenses will remain valid through their normal term.

13 Q: What are the qualification requirements for the Smog Check Inspector license?

A: Applicants for the Inspector license must pass a state licensing examination. Before taking the exam, candidates with minimal or no experience must complete both Level 1 Engine and Emission Controls training and Level 2 Smog Check training. This training must be completed within 2 years prior to applying for the Inspector license.

Candidates who demonstrate that they meet one of the three experience prerequisites below must successfully complete Level 2 Smog Check training within the last 2 years. Experienced candidates are not required to take Level 1 Engine and Emission Control training.

Proof of Experience: Possess ASE A6, A8 and L1 certifications; or possess an AA/AS degree or a Certificate in automotive technology and have 1-year experience; or have 2 years experience and have completed 72-hour BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training.

14 Q: Can a licensed Smog Check Inspector perform any repairs?

A: Licensed Inspectors are not allowed to perform any Smog Check related repairs, with the exception of the replacement of a fuel cap, minor repair of a component damaged by the Inspector during an inspection, or the reconnection of hoses or vacuum lines.

15 Q: What are the qualification requirements for the Repair Technician License?

A: Candidates may qualify for the Smog Check Repair Technician license in any one of the following four ways:

- 1) Possess certification in the categories of Electrical/Electronic Systems (A6), Engine Performance (A8) and Advanced Engine Performance Specialist (L1) from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence and pass the state licensing examination; or
- 2) Possess an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree or higher in Automotive Technology from a state accredited or recognized college, public school, or trade school, and have one year automotive repair experience in the engine performance area, and pass the state licensing examination; or
- 3) Possess a certificate in automotive technology from a state accredited or recognized college, public school, or trade school with a minimum of 720 hours of course work that includes at least 280 hours in the engine performance area, and have one year of automotive repair experience in the engine performance area, and pass the state licensing examination; or
- 4) Have a minimum of two years of automotive repair experience in the engine performance area, and successfully complete bureau specified diagnostic and repair training within the last five years, and pass the state licensing examination.

16 Q: Are there separate licenses for the Basic and Enhanced Smog Check program areas?

A: No. There are two licenses available: Smog Check Inspector and Smog Check Repair Technician. Both of these licenses are available and valid statewide for employment in all Smog Check program areas. The Basic (EB) and Enhanced program area (EA) designations associated with the old Test-and-Repair license was eliminated under licensing restructure. Individuals currently holding an EA or EB license will stop seeing this designation when they renew their license.

17 Q: Are candidates for the Inspector license required to pass a licensing examination?

A: Yes. State law (H&S 44014) requires that candidates for licensure pass a qualification examination administered by BAR.

18 Q: Are candidates for the Repair Technician license required to pass a licensing examination?

A: Yes. State law (H&S 44014) requires that candidates for licensure pass a qualification examination administered by BAR.

19 Q: How do I apply for the Smog Check Inspector and/or Repair Technician license?

A: A single application can be used to apply for the Inspector license and/or Repair Technician license. The application is available on the BAR Web site at www.smogcheck.dca.ca.gov under the Industry tab. You may also call BAR's Licensing Unit at (916) 403-8477, or toll free at (855) 735-0462 to request an application. Complete the application and return it to the BAR Licensing Unit with the application fee to the mailing address listed on the application.

20 Q: Is update training required when renewing an Inspector license?

A: Yes. Licensed Inspectors are will be required to complete up to 4 hours of update training when renewing their license. Training may be offered on-line and likely related to program improvements or changes in vehicle technology. BAR will provide advanced notification on the Smog Check Web site, through ET Blasts and Newsletters.

21 Q: Is update training required when renewing a Repair Technician license?

A: Yes. Licensed Repair Technicians are required to complete a minimum of 16 hours* of update training every two 2 years. Update training is offered as on-going education by BAR certified schools. BAR-certified schools and instructors offer training classes in which they determine are necessary for technicians to stay current with vehicle technology. In turn, licensees may choose the type of training that best suits their particular needs. This needs based process ensures that quality repairs continue to be a focus of the Smog Check Program.

*An individual with both the Inspector and Repair Technician license is not required to complete more than 16 hours of update training. However, any update training required to renew the Inspector license must be completed, regardless of the number of hours completed for the Repair Technician license. Certified schools may offer 4, 8 or 16 hour training courses for technician renewal, depending on student needs/demand.

22 Q: What are the renewal requirements for the Smog Check Repair Technician License?

A: To renew the Repair Technician license, a licensee must possess all three of the following certifications from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE): Electrical/Electronic Systems (A6), Engine Performance (A8) and Advanced Engine Performance Specialist (L1), and have successfully completed 16 hours of update training within the last two years.

Renewal applicants must complete a renewal form providing proof that they have all three current the ASE certifications along with proof of completing the required update training. Applicants must submit this form along with the application fee to the BAR Licensing Unit.

A Repair Technician who has completed the BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training is not required to possess the ASE certifications. The BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training is valid for 5 years.

23 Q: Is an individual with an existing Test-and-Repair license (EA or EB) required to take a qualification examination when applying for either the Inspector license or Repair Technician license?

A: No, a currently licensed individual is not required to take a qualification examination for either the Inspector license or Repair Technician license. The individual has the option, as provided on the license renewal form, to select one or both licenses based on his or her professional interests and qualifications.

- Individuals with an existing EA or EB license who choose to renew with only the Inspector license, do not have to meet any new qualifications and are currently not required to obtain any update training.
- Individuals with an existing EA or EB license who choose to renew with only the Repair Technician license, or with both the Inspector and Repair Technician licenses, must have completed 16 hours of update training. In addition, they must possess current ASE certifications (A-6, A-8 and L-1), or have current alternative training courses, or have completed the new BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training. See question 24 for more information.

24 Q: Can an existing Test-and-Repair Technician (EA or EB) qualify to renew with the Repair Technician license using the old alternative training courses, or does the technician have to possess the ASE certifications?

A: Through July, 2014, an existing EA or EB technician can renew with a Repair Technician license using alternative training as a substitute for the ASE A-6, A-8 and L-1 certifications, provided the alternative training courses are current (alternative courses are valid for 5 years). However, beginning August 1, 2014, as their old alternative courses expire they must obtain the corresponding ASE certifications, or they must complete the 72-hour BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training, when renewing their license.

Alternative training courses will remain available for existing EA and EB technicians renewing with the Repair Technician license through July 2014 only. As of August 1, 2014, the alternative training will no longer be available.

25 Q: How do I find out about the BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training?

A: BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training is administered by BAR-certified schools and is intended to provide students with comprehensive knowledge related to the diagnosis and repair of Smog Check failures. Repair Technician candidates with at least two years of engine performance repair experience may complete this training to qualify for the state licensing examination. BAR Specified Diagnostic and Repair Training is a singular training program consisting of a minimum 72 hours of course work. The training is valid for 5 years and individuals who have completed this training can use it to substitute for the ASE A-6, A-8 and L-1 certifications when renewing the Repair Technician license. The Industry tab on the Smog Check Web site provides a School Locator tool that helps individuals find a BAR-certified school in their area.