

Georgia's Clean Air Force Releases Tips on Avoiding Common Emissions Test Failures

Georgia's Clean Air Force releases a new educational resource: "Top Reasons Your Vehicle Might Fail an Emissions Test."

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An emissions test failure is more than just a hassle. It can indicate a problem that contributes to harmful pollution and poor vehicle performance.”

*Michael Odom, Georgia
Environmental Protection
Division*

(GCAF) is helping motorists steer clear of costly and inconvenient emissions test failures with the release of a new educational resource: "Top Reasons Your Vehicle Might Fail an Emissions Test."

Each year, certain vehicles in 13 metro Atlanta counties must pass an emissions test before they can be registered with the state (see 2025 testing requirements). While the majority pass with no issue, a number of vehicles fail due to common — and often preventable — problems.

“An emissions test failure is more than just a hassle. It can indicate a problem that contributes to harmful pollution and poor vehicle performance,” said Michael Odom, Manager of the Mobile and Area Sources Program at the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. “With some basic knowledge and preventive maintenance, many of these issues can be avoided.”

Top Reasons for Emissions Test Failures:

- Some of the most common causes of failure include:
- Faulty oxygen sensors
- Malfunctioning catalytic converters
- Evaporative system (EVAP) issues such as bad fuel caps or purge valves
- Worn spark plugs or ignition coils
- Vacuum system leaks and dirty air filters

These issues typically trigger the "Check Engine" light, a warning that should never be ignored. GCAF encourages motorists to seek diagnostics and repairs promptly to prevent more serious (and expensive) damage.

How to Avoid a Fail: Smart Prep for Your Next Emissions Test

Preparation is key. Motorists can reduce the risk of failure and contribute to cleaner air by:

- Following the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule
- Ensuring the fuel cap is tightly secured
- Keeping tires inflated properly and belts and hoses in good condition
- Having the oil changed regularly
- Checking and replacing air filters and spark plugs as needed

What to Do If Your Vehicle Fails:

Vehicles that fail the emissions test are eligible for one free retest at the original station within 30 calendar days of the initial test. GCAF recommends:

- Getting a diagnostic assessment.
- Completing necessary repairs.
- Ensuring the repair technician fills out the Emissions Repair Form.
- Returning for a retest with that form in hand.

Tools and Resources

GCAF provides a variety of resources to help with emissions testing and repairs:

- Before You Test tips
- After You Test next steps
- Helpful documents and educational tools
- Contact options for additional help

About Georgia's Clean Air Force

Georgia's Clean Air Force (GCAF), in partnership with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD), is responsible for the management of the Vehicle Emission Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program throughout Atlanta's 13 metro counties (Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale). Since 1996, Georgia's Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented more than 2.2 million tons of harmful ozone-forming pollutants from entering the air we breathe. The program has also identified and repaired more than 4.7 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit www.cleanairforce.com.

TIME FOR YOUR ANNUAL GEORGIA EMISSIONS TEST!
Preparation is key. Here's how to steer clear of costly and inconvenient failures.

THESE ISSUES OFTEN TRIGGER YOUR "CHECK ENGINE" LIGHT — DON'T IGNORE IT!
Georgia's Clean Air Force (GCAF) recommends prompt diagnostics and repairs to avoid bigger problems down the road.

Top Reasons Your Vehicle Might Fail An Emissions Test

IF YOUR VEHICLE FAILS THE TEST:
You're eligible for one free retest within 30 days at the same station.

AVOID A FAIL: SMART PREP FOR YOUR NEXT TEST

- ✓ Stick to your vehicle's maintenance schedule.
- ✓ Tighten the fuel cap securely.
- ✓ Keep tires properly inflated.
- ✓ Change your oil regularly.
- ✓ Check and replace air filters and spark plugs.

TOP REASONS VEHICLES FAIL EMISSIONS TESTS

- ✗ FAULTY OXYGEN SENSORS
- ✗ VACUUM LEAKS OR DIRTY AIR FILTERS
- ✗ WORN SPARK PLUGS OR IGNITION COILS
- ✗ MALFUNCTIONING CATALYTIC CONVERTERS
- ✗ EVAP ISSUES (E.G., LOOSE GAS CAPS, BAD PURGE VALVES)

HERE'S WHAT TO DO:

1. Get a diagnostic check.
2. Complete the necessary repairs.
3. Ask your repair technician to fill out the Emissions Repair Form.
4. Return for your retest with that form in hand.

For more info and tips, visit: www.cleanairforce.com
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Sara Lips
Georgia Environmental Protection Division
[email us here](#)

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