



Bureau of Automotive Repair

## VISIBLE SMOKE TEST FAILURE CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET


[www.smogcheck.ca.gov](http://www.smogcheck.ca.gov)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Vehicle License No. or VIN: \_\_\_\_\_

### Your vehicle FAILED its Smog Check for “Visible Smoke” because

Smoke was seen coming from your vehicle's:
<input type="checkbox"/> Tailpipe during the Idle Test
<input type="checkbox"/> Tailpipe during the BAR Snap Test
<input type="checkbox"/> Crankcase during the underhood visual inspection

### Visible Smoke

Color of Smoke	Condition	Common Causes
<b>Blue or Bluish-White</b>	Engine or transmission oil being burned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worn valve guides or seals</li> <li>• Worn piston rings or cylinders</li> <li>• Defective head gasket</li> <li>• Defective turbo charger</li> <li>• Defective transmission vacuum modulator</li> </ul>
<b>Black or Gray</b>	Incomplete fuel combustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clogged air filter</li> <li>• Fuel injection, carburetor, choke, or emission system malfunction</li> <li>• Incorrect timing (ignition or injection)</li> <li>• Misfire caused by faulty ignition</li> <li>• Misfire caused by burnt/damaged valve</li> <li>• Low compression from engine wear</li> </ul>

Vehicular smoke pollutes the air that we breathe. The smoke consists of small particles that can cause lung problems, heart disease, and other health consequences. In addition, smoke from an engine can also damage emission control systems on a vehicle, like the catalytic converter and oxygen sensor, making them less effective. Less effective emissions control systems translates to dirtier air for all in California.

Section 44012.1 of the Health and Safety Code requires that vehicles subject to a Smog Check inspection undergo a visual test for smoke from the engine crankcase and tailpipe. California Vehicle Code section 27153 has for many years prohibited the operation of smoking vehicles on California's roadways. Doing so could subject the operator/owner to the issuance of a citation by the California Highway Patrol or a local law enforcement agency. The new smoke test may help protect vehicle operators/owners from receiving a citation for the illegal on-road operation of a smoking vehicle. Any vehicle that fails a “Visible Smoke Test” must be repaired in order to PASS a Smog Check.

Please take this Consumer Information Sheet with you to a licensed Smog Check station to perform the needed repairs. You may be eligible for repair assistance or California's Voluntary Vehicle Retirement Program. Contact the Bureau of Automotive Repair's Consumer Assistance Program to see if you qualify.

If you wish to dispute your vehicle's smoke test results, you may schedule a Bureau of Automotive Repair Referee verification test by calling (800) 622-7733 for an appointment.

For more information or for any other questions, call the Bureau of Automotive Repair at (800) 952-5210, or visit the Bureau's Web site at [www.smogcheck.ca.gov](http://www.smogcheck.ca.gov).