



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BUREAU OF AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR OBTAINS INTERIM SUSPENSION ORDER AGAINST LOS ANGELES SMOG CHECK STATION

Guero Test Only accused of multiple counts of “clean piping”

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Smog Check Test Only station accused of illegal “clean piping” has had its license suspended pending a revocation hearing as the result of an investigation by the Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR).

An Administrative Law Judge has granted BAR’s request to immediately suspend the Automotive Repair Dealer registration and Smog Check Station license of Francisco Vazquez, owner of Guero Test Only, 460 W. 92nd Street, in Los Angeles, and the Smog Check Technician license of James Edward Knox.

In August 2010 a BAR undercover investigator purchased three smog certificates, that were issued by Guero Test Only and James Edward Knox to vehicles that were never at the smog station and never smog tested. Knox used a method called “clean piping” to certify the vehicles.

“Clean piping” is when a vehicle, that would not pass a Smog Check inspection on its own is fraudulently inspected and certified as passing. To accomplish this, a technician or other individual uses a clean exhaust sample from another vehicle that will pass a Smog Check while entering data for the vehicle for which the smog certificate is required.

“Auto pollution is a threat to public health,” said DCA Acting Director Brian Stiger. “BAR will continue to prosecute smog check station operators and technicians who defraud and endanger the public by keeping polluting cars on the road.”

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“Clean piping is a serious problem that undermines the integrity of the Smog Check program and adversely impacts the air we breathe,” said BAR Chief Sherry Mehl. “BAR is committed to taking swift action against Smog Check station owners and Smog Check technicians who engage in these practices.”

BAR sought the Interim Suspension Order to shut down Guero Test Only and prevent Knox from being able to work as a licensed Smog Check technician while BAR proceeds with its enforcement case.

BAR is seeking to permanently revoke the Automotive Repair Dealer registration and Smog Check Station license for Guero Test Only and the Smog Check Technician license for Knox. An administrative hearing will be held at a later date to address the violations found during the investigation.

The Department of Consumer Affairs promotes and protects the interests of California Consumers. Consumers who wish to file a complaint against an auto repair facility can contact the Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also file a complaint online at www.autorepair.ca.gov.

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