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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY SMOG CHECK STATION'S LICENSES SUSPENDED

State Bureau of Automotive Repair alleges "clean piping" by Starmiie Test Only

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Smog Check Test Only station owner has had his licenses suspended pending a revocation hearing as a result of an investigation by the Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR).

An Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) has granted BAR's request for Interim Suspension Orders to immediately suspend the Automotive Repair Dealer registration and the Smog Check Test Only Station License of Starmiie Test Only, 1231 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles. The ALJ also suspended the Advanced Emission Specialist Technician License issued to owner Jong Gu Bang.

BAR's investigation of Starmiie Test Only revealed multiple instances of "clean piping".

"Clean piping" occurs when a vehicle that would not pass a Smog Check inspection on its own or is not present for testing is fraudulently 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 serious health threat," said DCA Director Brian Stiger. "BAR will continue to prosecute smog check station operators and technicians who defraud and endanger the public by keeping high polluting cars on the road."

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

BAR sought the ISOs to shut down Starmie Test Only and prevent Bang from being able to work as a licensed Smog Check technician while BAR proceeds with its enforcement case. BAR is seeking to permanently revoke all of his licenses.

An administrative hearing will be held at a later date to address the violations found during the investigation. BAR will also submit the results of its investigation to the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office for criminal prosecution.

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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.