



News Release

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DRIVE CLEAN IMPACT ON EMISSIONS DECREASING, AUDITOR GENERAL SAYS

(TORONTO) The Ministry of the Environment's Drive Clean vehicle emissions-testing program does ensure vehicles get properly tested, but the reduction in vehicle emissions in Ontario is due largely to factors other than the program, Auditor General Jim McCarter says in his *2012 Annual Report*.

"Vehicle emissions have declined significantly since Drive Clean's inception in 1999, to the point that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors to smog in Ontario," McCarter said today after the release of the Report. "As well, Ministry estimates show that more than 75% of the reduction in vehicle emissions is actually due to things like better manufacturing standards for emission-control equipment and federal requirements for cleaner fuel."

On a go-forward basis, policymakers must have this kind of relevant and up-to-date information on the actual impact of the Drive Clean program in reducing smog, the Report says.

The Drive Clean program tests vehicles seven years old or older, or those older than one year if ownership is to be transferred. Light-duty vehicles built before 1988 are exempt, but, otherwise, generally all vehicles in the Windsor to Ottawa corridor must pass an emissions test before the owner can renew a registration or transfer ownership.

Following are some of the Auditor General's other significant findings:

- Starting on January 1, 2013, the program is to begin using an on-board diagnostic (OBD) testing method that can only test vehicles built from 1998 on. Vehicles built from 1988 to 1997, which experienced a failure rate of 11% to 31% when tested with a dynamometer, will be tested using only the two-speed idle method, which uses less stringent emissions limits than either the dynamometer or the OBD methods.
- Because vehicle owners do not have to incur any repair costs if the repair estimate is more than \$450, about 18,000 vehicles were not fully repaired in 2011. For 25% of the vehicles with partial repairs, the emissions readings for all pollutants were actually worse after the repair.

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