



Is your vehicle's "Check Engine" light on?

If your vehicle is model year 1995 or older, the "Check Engine" light does not always tell you all you need to know about your emissions. This brochure provides information about emissions testing for 1995 and older vehicles.

If your vehicle is model year 1996 or newer and the "Check Engine" light is on, it will not pass the vehicle emissions test in Canyon County or Kuna. For more information about emissions testing for 1996 and newer vehicles, see the *Check engine light on?* brochure available at www.idahoVIP.org.

Quick Facts about the Vehicle Emissions Testing Program in Canyon County and Kuna

- Gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles that are model year 1981 and newer but older than five years must be tested, unless they are exempt.
- Certain vehicles are exempt, including some classic automobiles and motor homes, motorized farm equipment, agricultural vehicles, electric and hybrid vehicles, and vehicles five years old or newer.
- Testing is required every other year. Motorists are notified of their testing month by mail, or you can check online at www.idahoVIP.org.
- An emissions test costs \$11 per vehicle test, the fee is due at the time of testing. A motorist is allowed one free re-test, if completed within 30 days of the previous and at the same station.
- Testing is available at more than 20 conveniently located testing locations at small businesses throughout Canyon County and Kuna.
- Failure to obtain an emissions test can result in the vehicle's registration being revoked.

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Failed emissions test?

1981–1995 vehicle?

Vehicle emissions testing
in Canyon County and Kuna for
1981-1995 vehicles



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How are emissions tested?

For vehicles manufactured from 1981-1995, emissions are tested using a two-speed idle (TSI) test. During a TSI test, an analyzer measures exhaust emissions directly from the vehicle's tailpipe. The TSI test determines the level of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide in tailpipe emissions. Hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide are pollutants made up of unburned and partially burned gasoline molecules.

If your vehicle is model year 1996 or newer, it uses a different emissions testing system (OBD-II). For information about emissions testing for 1996 and newer vehicles, see the *Check engine light on?* brochure at www.idahoVIP.org.

How is a TSI test conducted?

The TSI test involves the following steps:

1. The inspector visually checks the vehicle for required emission control devices and performs a pressurized gas cap test.
2. The inspector places a probe in the tailpipe that measures hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide. A tachometer lead is attached as applicable to monitor proper revolutions per minute (rpm) at test intervals.
3. The analyzer samples the emissions at two different stages a high idle and a low idle if at any time within the two stages of testing the vehicle meets the criteria the test is complete and the overall test result is a pass. If the vehicle's sample fails stage one it is tested at stage two, if it fails both stages the overall test result is a fail. At the conclusion of the test the analyzer tells the inspector the results of the emissions test.

What can cause my vehicle to fail a TSI test?

Several common conditions can cause a vehicle to fail an emissions test.

- Levels of hydrocarbons are too high in the vehicle's tailpipe emissions.
- Levels of carbon monoxide are too high in the vehicle's tailpipe emissions.
- An emissions control device is missing or not functioning properly.
- The vehicle's exhaust has too many holes, preventing a constant, testable flow.
- The vehicle is not safe for testing.

My car didn't pass the TSI test. What should I do?

In most cases, the vehicle needs to be repaired. If you take the vehicle to a repair shop, bring the vehicle inspection report you received from the testing station. Various mechanical issues can lead to emissions problems:

- Excessive amounts of hydrocarbons and/or carbon monoxide can be caused by problems with the ignition system, the air/fuel mixture, or other engine issues.
- Missing or defective emissions control devices will need to be repaired or replaced.
- Blue smoke can indicate that engine oil is being burned in the combustion chamber. Black smoke can indicate that the fuel mixture is overly rich.



What repairs are common after a failed emissions test?

The following are just a few of the emissions control devices that often need to be repaired or replaced. Others are listed in frequently asked questions at www.idahoVIP.org.

- Catalytic converter—reduces the amount of pollutants in the exhaust stream by converting them to a safer form.
- Oxygen sensor—measures the proportion of oxygen in the exhaust stream. The electronic control module then uses this information to ensure that the fuel/air ratio is ideal for combustion.
- Hoses and gaskets—prevent vacuum leaks when properly maintained. Vacuum leaks cause the gasoline/air mixture to run lean (too much air, not enough fuel), which causes incomplete burning of gasoline. Vacuum leaks often decrease fuel efficiency.

I can't afford expensive repairs. What should I do?

Check to see if you qualify for a one-year repair or hardship waiver. Waiver instructions and forms can be found at www.idahoVIP.org or at any emissions testing location.

I think my vehicle will fail, so what good will a test do?

- TSI tests can provide clues about what's wrong with a vehicle. Early repairs of minor problems can prevent more significant problems from developing.
- A failed emissions test is necessary to qualify for a waiver.