



## MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTIONS

*Make a Difference*

Missouri's motor vehicle inspection program has been successful since its inception. The Missouri State Highway Patrol's Driver and Vehicle Safety Division plays a major role in ensuring that vehicles operating on Missouri's roadways are safe to do so. In addition to providing safer travel on Missouri's roadways, the program also works to improve public health by including air pollution control components in the safety inspection process.

Motor vehicle safety inspections play an integral role in Missouri's traffic safety program and make a significant contribution to the reduction of traffic crashes and their resulting fatalities, injuries, and property damage. Each year, nearly two million vehicles are safety inspected in Missouri. These inspections are designed to detect mechanical or safety defects that if left unidentified could contribute to or directly cause a traffic crash. Driver and Vehicle Safety Division statistics indicate that approximately 19% of inspected vehicles have at least one defect identified during inspection.

A 2022 national study by Carnegie Mellon University, encompassing a 44-year traffic crash history, indicates that states with some form of required safety inspection experience at least 5% less roadway fatalities than states without required safety inspections. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports in 2020 statistics that states with safety inspection requirements experience 10.3% fewer roadway fatalities per 100,000 population. While a motor vehicle safety inspection is not intended to serve as a yearly vehicle tune-up, through proper completion of such inspections, drivers should experience greater confidence that vehicles operating on Missouri's roadways are in proper working order.

## TRENDS

*Affecting Vehicle Safety*

Many of today's motor vehicle trends make it even more important to maintain a strong safety inspection program in Missouri.



Motor vehicles have become so complex that the average person can no longer perform needed mechanical and electrical maintenance themselves. Well-trained technicians with sophisticated equipment are often required to properly diagnose and repair modern vehicles.



Many vehicles do not receive regular maintenance checks because of the decrease in full-service stations. Motorists can rarely find a station where the mechanic checks the oil and tires on a vehicle while filling up the gas tank.



Recent trends indicate that many motorists drive vehicles to a high mileage before removing them from the roadway. The older a vehicle becomes, the higher the risk of safety component failure.



The volume of traffic on the nation's roadways combined with the dramatic increase of vehicle miles traveled places an additional strain on a motor vehicle's systems.



## REPORT COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

Citizens may report complaints/concerns regarding motor vehicle safety inspections by contacting the Motor Vehicle Inspection office at the nearest Missouri State Highway Patrol troop headquarters.

- Troop A — Lee's Summit..... (816) 622-0717
- Troop B — Macon .....(660) 385-6674
- Troop C — St. Louis .....(314) 416-2180, Ext. 4357
- Troop C — Service Center, Farmington.... (573) 431-0166
- Troop D — Springfield, MO.....(417) 895-6767
- Troop D — Service Center, Carthage.....(417) 359-1505
- Troop E — Poplar Bluff..... (573) 840-9500
- Troop E — Service Center, Sikeston.....(573) 472-5203
- Troop F — Jefferson City .....(573) 526-6262
- Troop G — Willow Springs .....(417) 469-3121
- Troop H — St. Joseph.....(816) 387-2345
- Troop I — Rolla ..... (573) 368-2221

**EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE**  
**1-800-525-5555**  
or Cellular \*55

**ROAD CONDITIONS**  
**1-888-275-6636**



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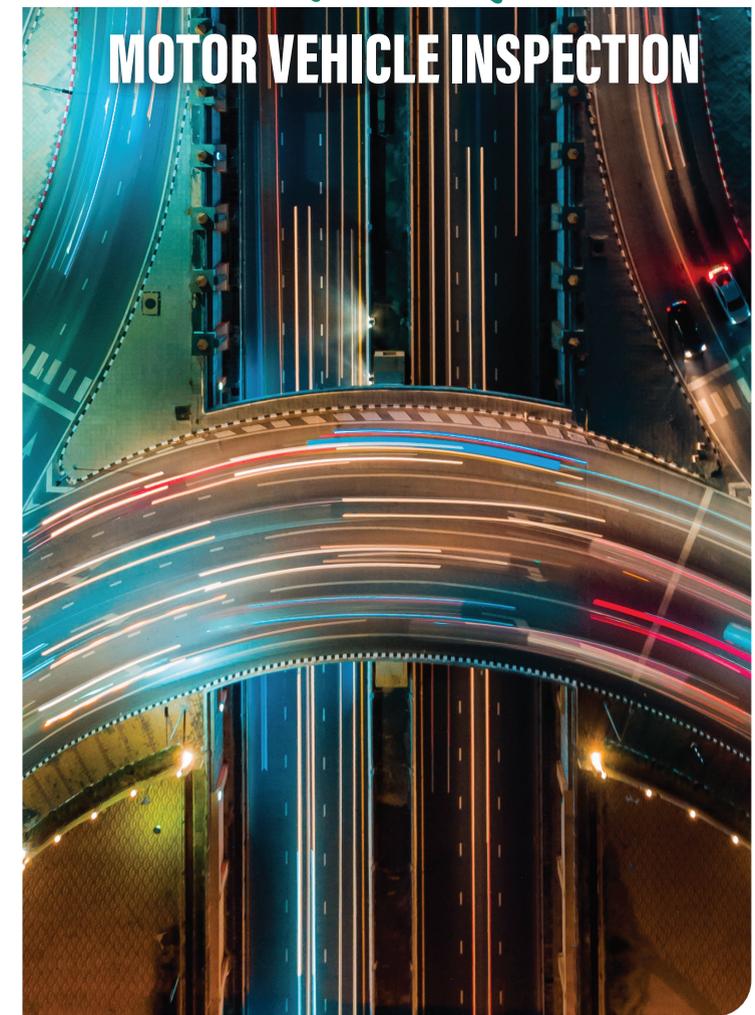
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## TRAFFIC & CONSUMER

*Protection*



## MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION

# THE PATROL'S *Motor Vehicle Inspection Program*

The Missouri State Highway Patrol oversees Missouri's motor vehicle safety inspection program. Licensing and monitoring of inspector/mechanics and inspection stations are just two of the duties of the Patrol's Driver and Vehicle Safety Division. Division personnel administer written and practical examinations to inspector/mechanics to ensure they are qualified to perform proper safety inspections. Division personnel also assist in the investigation of traffic crashes by providing evidence and testimony regarding whether the condition of motor vehicle components may have been a contributing factor to the traffic crash.

In addition to monitoring and regulating the state's motor vehicle safety inspection program, employees of the Driver and Vehicle Safety Division facilitate the sale and exchange of motor vehicle safety inspection stickers and motorcycle inspection decals, perform VIN (vehicle identification number) verifications and salvage title examinations, administer Missouri's School Bus Inspection program, and provide administrative support for the Gateway Vehicle Inspection Program of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The division also addresses citizen complaints regarding motor vehicle safety inspections. The Driver and Vehicle Safety Division thoroughly investigates every complaint it receives, with appropriate action taken when problems are identified.

## DETECTING *Auto Theft*

The Driver and Vehicle Safety Division administers the statewide VIN/Salvage Examination program. The program's purpose is to prevent stolen vehicles from being titled and to prevent stolen parts from being used in rebuilding wrecked motor vehicles. Motor vehicle inspectors assist the public in correcting minor title errors and often serve as a liaison between citizens and the Department of Revenue. Motor vehicle inspectors can provide VIN verification on boats, although this task is typically handled by marine operations troopers assigned to Missouri's lakes and rivers.

## BUYER *Protection*

Perhaps the most unheralded aspect of motor vehicle safety inspection is the consumer protection provided by the law's requirement that the "seller" is responsible for obtaining a motor vehicle safety inspection prior to sale of a used vehicle. Driver and Vehicle Safety Division personnel investigate numerous complaints each year regarding defective mechanical components on recently purchased vehicles. Missouri's inspection requirements involve repair or replacement of defective components identified during a motor vehicle inspection. The Driver and Vehicle Safety Division inspectors' objective investigations help consumers and businesses resolve any issues in a fair and respectful manner.

## PROPER MOTOR VEHICLE *Safety Inspections*

Licensed inspector/mechanics receive instruction in the regulations governing the safety inspection of motor vehicles. Prior to being a licensed inspector/mechanic, individuals must successfully complete both written and practical tests to verify their ability to properly perform a motor vehicle safety inspection.

In the performance of every motor vehicle safety inspection, the inspector/mechanic must effectively inspect brake performance by either driving the vehicle on the station premises or utilizing an approved computerized brake testing machine. In addition, a proper motor vehicle safety inspection cannot occur without the hood of the vehicle raised and the vehicle lifted from the ground using either a lift or jack. For most vehicles, at least one wheel must be removed for the inspection of brake components.

Regulations governing the safety inspection of motor vehicles require that the following items be inspected: steering wheel bind and play; brake pedal reserve; power brake reserve; brake warning light; windshield wiper operation and blade condition; mirrors; horn; high beam indicator; front windshield; front and rear lights; signaling devices; reflectors; fuel system, including the filler cap; brake master cylinder; brake lines and hoses; brake components including pads or linings, drums or rotors, and internal brake mechanisms; power steering system including fluid level, drive belt, and hoses; air pollution control devices including the catalytic converter; tires and wheels; suspension and steering linkage including springs/torsion bar, shocks, wheel play, wheel bearings, tie rod ends, idler arm, pitman arm, stabilizer links, control arms, ball joints, struts, steering wheel, and steering column; exhaust system; bumpers; and seat belts.

Every safety inspection must be complete and proper before an inspector/mechanic issues an approval certificate or rejection notice. If no defective items are found during the inspection, the vehicle is approved and an inspection sticker will be properly affixed by the inspector/mechanic. If any defective items are identified, the vehicle is rejected, and the identified defective items must be repaired or replaced. The defective components must be re-inspected. Vehicle owners are entitled to one re-inspection at no additional cost, provided the vehicle is returned to the original inspection station within 20 consecutive days of the original inspection date, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays. The vehicle owner may have repairs completed by the station where the original inspection was performed, or the vehicle may be removed from the inspection station and repaired at the discretion of the vehicle owner.

Inspection stations are required to begin a safety inspection no more than two hours after a vehicle is presented, unless other inspections are being performed. A re-inspection must begin within one hour of presentation. The maximum fee a station may charge for the safety inspection of a motor vehicle is \$12. The maximum fee allowed for the inspection of a motorcycle or autocycle is \$10.00.

## SCHOOL BUS *Safety*

Missouri statutes require the owners of all school buses to ensure that each school bus is safety inspected no more than 60 days prior to operating the vehicle during the school year. Such inspections may be performed by the bus owner, if such owner is established as a station with a valid inspector/mechanic in the motor vehicle safety inspection program, or may be performed at any public inspection station licensed to inspect such vehicles. In addition, after February 1 of each year, inspectors of the Driver and Vehicle Safety Division complete an annual inspection of nearly 12,000 school buses operated in the transportation of Missouri students to and from school. During the fall of each year, inspectors randomly inspect at least 10% of Missouri's school buses as part of the division's spot check inspection program. Driver and Vehicle Safety Division personnel also actively participate in professional pupil transportation organizations at both the state and national levels, fostering positive working relationships within the pupil transportation community.



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