



OPUS INSPECTION

The Opus Inspection Emissions Industry Newsletter

January 2016

Dear Opus Inspection Customers:

Welcome to the January 2016 edition of our quarterly newsletter. We've combed a number of publications, blogs, and websites in search of articles that you will find both interesting and informative. I hope you enjoy it. This is your resource, so please feel free to share your comments and suggestions for improvement.

And, of course, thank you for choosing Opus Inspection!

Sincerely,

Chris Smith
VP Operations
Opus Inspection, Inc.

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In this Issue...

In our Feature Story, Virginia's DEQ announces the new **RapidPass** roadside Clean Screen inspection option, with new technology provided and operated by **Opus Inspection**. Also, **Opus Inspection** brings on a new Business Development Manager for North America. See these stories and more in ***The Latest from Opus Inspection*** below.

Feature Story

Virginia's RapidPass emissions testing system offers a time-saving option for motorists.

Fifteen roadside Clean Screen emissions testing systems-marked by orange signs proclaiming "Emissions Monitor Ahead"-will be set up in more than 150 locations throughout Northern Virginia. Motorists who drive through the green sensor boxes that use ultraviolet and infrared light beams to scan car exhausts will be sent passing notices (if their car passes the test), along with the fee notice which can be paid online. No visit to a testing station is necessary unless the motorist wants to,

or if their car has not passed the roadside test. The new testing option is offered by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Quality. (**Opus Inspection** provides and operates the RapidPass testing systems. See ***The Latest From Opus Inspection***, below.) *WTOP (Washington, DC)*

[Link to article](#)

Also:

- ***EPA expands random, real-world emissions testing on new vehicles;***
- ***Pressure from French authorities drives Renault to order recall;***
- ***Scottish councils decline to implement vehicle inspections;***
- ***New ultra-high tech transmissions face reliability issues;***
- ***Mazda looking at a Wankel resurgence;***
- ***Officials in New York and Massachusetts nail fraudsters;***
- ***Lawmakers in Pennsylvania mull longer delays to new vehicle testing;***
- ***and***
- ***Detroit area tinkerer builds a three-wheeled terror.***

Testing & Regulations

In wake of VW emissions cheating scandal, EPA to expand random, real-world emissions testing on new cars entering US market.



EPA's on-road emission testing equipment (Photo: Laura McDermott/New York Times)

In fact, according to the *New York Times* (which is quoted extensively in the article), the United States Environmental Protection Agency has already begun to test diesel powered vehicles in the Volkswagen Group, including VW, Audi, and Porsche models not disclosed in previous company admissions of cheating. Though the agency says that no other manufacturer has been caught using cheating software in testing thus far,

several weeks of testing still remain. According to an EPA spokesperson, when manufacturers ask about the test conditions, they are told that they "don't have a need to know," and that testing is random. The bulky, trunk-mounted equipment used to measure tailpipe emissions as a vehicle is driven on the public roads is

characterized by *The Times* as a "Rube Goldberg" machine. The EPA will also continue to perform lab-based testing on new vehicles.

Road & Track and *The New York Times*

[Link to Road & Track article](#)

[Link to companion New York Times article](#)

Europe

France: Renault to recall 15,000 vehicles to ensure compliance with emissions standards. The cars have not yet gone on sale, but the carmaker is said to have committed to the recall in order to make sure that the vehicles adhere to emissions standards at all temperatures. The decision may have come about in the wake of a raid on Renault's headquarters by French fraud investigators.

Testing on some Renault models revealed discrepancies between lab tests and "real-world" engine tests, though no evidence of VW-style defeat devices were found in the French cars. French authorities do say, however, that several foreign manufacturers were found to have exceeded emissions limits. *The Verge*

[Link to article](#)

United Kingdom: Why do Scottish councils fail to use their legal authority to test vehicle emissions? Air pollution is a demonstrated problem in Scotland, with documented health problems directly attributed to the populations' greater reliance on the automobile over cleaner, healthier options. While acknowledging that they do indeed take the air pollution problem seriously, officials have a variety of reasons for not exercising their powers to establish vehicle emissions testing programs. Funding may play a part in that the government has focused far more on building new roads than on environmental projects to mitigate the effect of the thousands of cars running on those new roads. *BBC News*

[Link to article](#)

Equipment, Tools & Gear

Some new generation high-tech transmissions turning out to be a gear box full of woe.

While automakers are hitting the market with vehicles that feature high-tech, fuel-efficient 6, 9, or even 10 gear transmissions--not to mention continuously

variable designs with infinite gear ratios--all that innovation is causing reliability issues. Since 2010, automakers have recalled 7.2 million vehicles for dangerous transmission defects. Fixes range from a simple software re-flash to total replacement of the affected transmission. Despite the recalls, NHTSA has been flooded with complaints from car owners. Until engineers get a handle on reliability, Jake Fisher, Director of Auto Testing at Consumer Reports, says that transmissions are likely to remain a problem in coming years.

Yahoo Autos

[Link to article](#)



Cut-away of Chrysler-ZF nine-speed transmission.
(Yahoo Au

Why in the world does Mazda want to resurrect the Wankel?

The Wankel rotary engine is an inseparable part of Mazda's heritage and still endures as a key part of the company's branding. But the powerful rotary engine that prowled under the hood of the RX-7 proved to be a gas-guzzling, emissions heavy monster, and has been relegated to history. In fact, most of Mazda's inventory for the past 35 years features models with conventional piston engines. So why would Mazda want to invest tons of R&D into the dirty old Wankel? Turns out that rotary engines may offer some potent solutions, such as an EV range extender, especially when hydrogen is used as a fuel source. It could be fantasy, but Mazda is betting their money on winning concepts from deep in their DNA.

Wired.com

[Link to article](#)



Mazda RX Vision Concept Car (Photo: Mazda)

Enforcement

New York: Smuggling fake stickers may land Bronx man in prison.

A customs officer at Kennedy Airport detained Bronx resident Luis Cabral for allegedly attempting to smuggle more than 935 counterfeit 2016 New York inspection stickers into the country from the Dominican Republic. Cabral, who is a DR national, faces up to seven years for second degree possession of a forged instrument. Officials say that the stickers were no doubt intended for customers who would rather pay an inflated price for a forged safety/emissions sticker rather than spend the funds necessary to bring their car into compliance, potentially endangering everyone else on the road. *New York Daily News*

[Link to article](#)

Massachusetts: AG sues station owner for Clean Air Act violations.

Inspection station owner Randy L. Currie of West Newbury has been sued by Attorney General Maura Healy. Currie allegedly conducted at least 8 fraudulent inspections at his business, Compass Autoworks, on cars subject to OBD diagnostic tests, using the illegal practice of "clean screening." In addition, Currie allegedly conducted at least 40 fraudulent diesel opacity tests on heavy-duty diesel vehicles by using three different illegal methods for falsifying test results. The lawsuit seeks civil penalties up to \$25,000 per violation of the Massachusetts Clean Air Act, and civil penalties up to \$5,000 per violation of the Massachusetts Regulation of Business Practices Consumer Protection Act. The case is one in a series of closely coordinated inter-agency phony emission sticker cases that have been identified and developed by the Environmental Strike Force of the MassDEP, which has been working in tandem with the Department's Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance program, and officials from the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Currie and Compass Autoworks also face complaints related to improper handling and storage of hazardous waste.

The official website of the Attorney General of Massachusetts Maura Healey
[Link to article](#)

Focus on Safety

New York authorities on sharp lookout for rash of fake stickers.

Despite stiff penalties for drivers and repair shops convicted on felony sticker fraud charges, authorities still say that some drivers are shopping for cheaper alternatives to expensive repairs. Evading that responsibility puts everyone on the road at risk, but as long as some motorists continue to do it, scam artists will continue to provide counterfeit stickers, many of which are all too easy to spot, as the sticker color is either completely wrong, or fades quickly in sunlight. One man was recently busted while attempting to smuggle nearly 1,000 fake stickers through Kennedy Airport (see story in Enforcement News above).

CBSNewYork.com

[Link to article](#)

State News

Pennsylvania: Bills to delay testing for newer vehicles pondered by both houses.

No fewer than three bills are under consideration: two in the state House and one in the Senate. At least one proposes to give owners up to 10 years before having to get an emissions check, though exemption limits are subject to negotiations. The bills are enjoying bipartisan support, and even support from at least one environmental group. The selling point is that modern cars are not only cleaner, but also possess anti-tampering technology. Critics however, clearly mindful of the recent VW scandal, insist that the only way to ensure that cars haven't been designed to evade emissions standards is to test them. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

[Link to article](#)

The Latest From Opus Inspection

Kristin Hunicke joins Opus Inspection in new role of Business Development Manager for North America

PMP-certified Program Manager with extensive track record in I/M industry joins Opus team to focus on building relationships with all I/M states and provinces.

[Link to press release](#)

On-Road Vehicle Emissions Inspection Option Now Available in Northern Virginia, Offering Choice, Time-Savings and Convenience to Motorists.

The new testing option, authorized by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Quality, has been deployed in five counties and five cities in Northern Virginia.

[Link to press release](#)

[Click here for full stories and more Opus Inspection News](#)



Off The Beaten Track

Beware the Tri-pocalypse!

The story here is best told by the photograph. We're not sure what it is, but golly, it not only looks impressive, it looks LOUD! *MSN Autos*

[Link to article](#)



Detroit Diesel V8 Trike (Photo: Road & Track)

Opus Inspection, Inc., established in 1999, is part of the Opus Group and provides turnkey vehicle inspection program management services, including vehicle information databases, and advanced emission and safety test systems to various levels of government agencies (federal, state and regional) and to individual inspection stations. The Opus Group is in the business of developing, producing and selling products and services within Automotive Test Equipment, Vehicle Inspection Systems and Fleet Management for the global market. The products include emission analyzers, diagnostic equipment, and automatic test lines. Services include management of mandatory vehicle inspection programs. The Group sells its products and services in more than 50 countries all over the world and currently employs around 900 persons. Opus' shares are listed on NASDAQ OMX Stockholm under the ticker OPUS.