



Frequently-asked questions about the electronic inspection program.

1. Why are we changing the way we perform safety and emissions inspections?

We are not changing the way we perform safety and emissions inspections, but only the way we record the results. In the past, vehicle owners would receive a windshield sticker to note the vehicle had passed its inspection and the month its next inspection was due. Beginning November 1, 2008, when you have your vehicle inspected, you will no longer receive a windshield sticker. At that time, your next vehicle inspection date will be due the same month date on your vehicle license tag.

2. What does this new system achieve for vehicle owners, for the environment, for the state?

For the first time, inspections will be synchronized to vehicle owners' ability to renew their registration. Because owners will not be able to renew their vehicle's registration until after it has passed its safety and/or emissions inspection, the state expects inspection compliance to increase to 97 percent. Increased compliance means vehicles will be kept in better running order, their emissions properly controlled, and the emissions fees will be paid as required.

3. Will safety and emissions inspection fees increase?

Safety inspection fees will increase from \$9.10 to \$13.60. Emissions inspection fees will remain the same, \$30.

4. How will the new stickerless program work?

Starting November 1, 2008, North Carolina Vehicle safety and emissions inspections will go electronic. This means that windshield stickers will no longer be issued at your next inspection performed on or after November 1. After that date, the vehicle's inspection will become due the same month as the vehicle's registration renewal as shown on your license tag sticker. Beginning November 1, vehicles will be required to pass a vehicle inspection prior to registration renewal by the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles.

5. How is the program electronic?

The program is electronic because a record of the vehicle's inspection will be entered into the DMV's vehicle registration database. DMV license tag agencies and law enforcement personnel use this database to look up information about your vehicle, such as its license tag number and registration information. The database will be updated anytime an inspection occurs.

6. How will my inspection change on or after November 1, 2008?

When you go to get your inspection on or after November 1, you will go through the same process you always have. The mechanic will inspect and test your vehicle, you will pay for the inspection and receive a receipt and inspection report, but you will not receive a windshield sticker showing your car has been inspected. Instead, a record of your vehicle's inspection will be entered electronically into the DMV vehicle registration database. Then, your next inspection will be due the same month your vehicle registration renewal is due. It is important to note that no vehicle will have to be inspected more than once in a 12-month period.

7. How is this new system supposed to help?

Synchronizing your vehicle's inspection and registration dates is expected to increase compliance with the state's inspection program, further benefiting North Carolina air quality and highway safety.

8. How will I know when my next inspection is due if I don't have a sticker in my windshield?

Vehicle owners will receive an annual vehicle registration renewal notice to renew their license plate and/or license tag sticker. The renewal notice will also indicate when your vehicle is due for inspection. The vehicle must be inspected before the registration can be issued.

9. Once the new program begins, there will be two dates listed on the vehicle registration renewal notice. What do they mean?

The first date listed is the expiration date of the license tag/sticker including a 15-day grace period. The second date listed is the inspection due date, listing the last date an inspection can be obtained before the registration is blocked.

10. What happens if I do not get my vehicle inspected by the due date indicated?

Your vehicle registration will be automatically blocked the day after the due date. This means that you must get your vehicle inspected or face a potential \$50 penalty.

11. Which should I get first, my vehicle registration or my inspection?

Your vehicle must pass inspection before its registration can be renewed. You may have your vehicle inspected up to 90 days prior to your annual vehicle registration due date, but it must be inspected no later than the last day of the month your vehicle registration expires or your registration will be blocked.

12. How will the police know that my vehicle has passed inspection?

A record of the inspection will appear on the DMV computer database that police now use to check registration information about vehicles.

13. How will I get a license plate for a new vehicle I just purchased?

A new vehicle must be inspected before it is sold at retail in this state. Upon purchase, you will be provided a receipt certifying inspection compliance. The inspection conducted prior to your purchase is valid until the license plate is due for renewal.

14. How will I get a license plate for a used vehicle I just purchased from a dealer?

A used vehicle must be inspected before it is offered for sale at retail in this state. Upon purchase, you will be provided a receipt certifying compliance. The inspection conducted prior to your purchase is valid until the license plate is due for renewal.

15. I purchased a used vehicle from an individual, not a dealer. How do I get my license plate?

A used vehicle acquired from a private sale in this state must be inspected before it is registered unless it has received a passing inspection within the previous 12 months.

16. I have an unregistered vehicle that I now wish to drive. What do I need to do?

An unregistered vehicle must be inspected before the vehicle can be registered.

17. If the registration cannot be issued until it is inspected, and I can't drive the vehicle to the inspection station, how do I legally get the car in compliance?

DMV may issue a three-day permit to a person that authorizes the person to drive an insured vehicle for the purpose of inspection and registration. You should contact your local License and Theft Bureau office for the permit. (License and Theft office addresses and phone numbers are available at www.ncdot.org/dmv.)

18. My vehicle is due for inspection, but I will be out of the state. What do I do?

A person who is out of state may obtain an emissions inspection in the jurisdiction where the vehicle is located in lieu of an inspection in North Carolina as long as it meets the requirements of 40 C.F.R 51. For a detailed list, [click here](http://www.autocenter.weber.edu/OBD-CH/obdstatus-1.html). {<http://www.autocenter.weber.edu/OBD-CH/obdstatus-1.html>}

19. I'm moving from a non-emissions county to an emissions county. Do I have to have my vehicle inspected again?

No. You will not have to get your vehicle inspected until the current registration expires.

20. I'm moving to North Carolina from another state. Will my vehicle need to be inspected before I obtain my North Carolina license plate?

Generally, your vehicle should be inspected first. However, inspection officials will check to see if your vehicle has received a North Carolina inspection within the past 12 months.

21. Are some older vehicles exempt from an emissions inspection?

Yes. If a vehicle is a model 1995 or older, it is exempt from having an emissions inspection.

22. My vehicle is 35 years old or older. Does this new law affect me?

No. Vehicles that are 35 years old or older are exempt from North Carolina safety and emissions inspections.

23. Does a heavy-duty vehicle require an emissions inspection?

A heavy-duty vehicle, a vehicle with a GVWR greater than 8,500 pounds, requires only a safety inspection.

24. I have permanent plates on my vehicle. When is my inspection due?

Permanent-plated vehicles must be inspected between January and December of every year, but their inspections are not synchronized with registration renewal. The date the inspection is conducted will not affect the vehicle's registration, as long as the inspection occurs on a yearly basis.