



# INSPECTION UPDATE

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## STATION PROFILE

We recently sat down with Zain Naveed, owner and operator of Z's Inspection Center, located at 188 Federal Street in Greenfield, to learn more about his Inspection Station and his experience with the MA Vehicle Check program.

### **Tell us about your background. How did you get your start in the automotive industry?**

I am local to Greenfield and own three other businesses in town. I've always had a passion for cars since I was young. I've enjoyed learning about what makes a car tick and that led me to where I am now. I have been an entrepreneur ever since I was in my last year of high school. I am where I am because of the teachings and guidance of my parents, who I still see work every day. I was blessed with the opportunity to meet Beth Lorenz when I inspected my very first car with her. I kept in touch with her and asked her to keep me in mind when it came time for her to retire. She did and that's how I became the owner of Z's Inspections.

### **Tell us about Z's Inspection Center in Greenfield.**

The "Vehicle Inspection Center" had been in business since 1999. I purchased the business in October 2022 and renamed it Z's Inspection Center. Things couldn't be going better! On average we do close to 12,000 inspections a year and, with the recent change to Class B, we hope to surpass that in 2024. Currently, it's me and two other employees who perform inspections and one person working the front desk.



### **How is being an inspection-only facility different from being a repair shop that performs inspections?**

It's definitely challenging knowing that we can't perform some basic repairs, but it can also benefit us because our customers know that we are doing inspections only and that when we recommend repairs, we aren't trying to sell them anything. Customers come in with confidence and know they won't be waiting too long for a proper and thorough inspection.

### **What are the top reasons for a failed inspection that you see at your facility? When a vehicle fails, what is your process for referring them to a repair shop?**

*Article continued on to next page*

Most common reasons for failure may be broken/non-working headlights/brake lights, play in the front end, bald tires, and rocker panels that are rusted out.

I don't think that motorists intentionally avoid vehicle maintenance, but it does become a "to do" thing that often goes to the bottom of the list. I think inspections are a great way for a motorist to get an overall health check for the vehicle they drive every day and to identify issues that may go unnoticed by them. When we find repair issues during an inspection, we try our best to have a one-on-one discussion with the motorist to explain the needed repairs and give guidance to help them figure out a way to fix it or get parts.

**What changes in automotive technology do you feel have or will impact the vehicle inspection industry?**

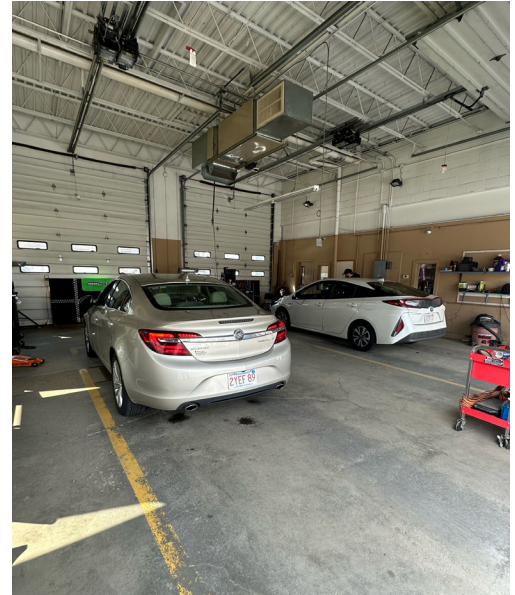
Electric vehicles for sure. Although they don't require emissions testing, looking over and jacking up EVs are trickier due to differences in battery locations and jack points. Overall, a lot of the new technology going into vehicles today will only benefit the safety and reliability of these vehicles.

**What aspects of the MA Vehicle Inspection program do you like the most?**

There are a lot of aspects I am fond of, but the motorist support and inspector support is top notch.

**Do you experience any challenges with the program or have any suggestions for future improvements?**

Currently, challenges can arise when we give rejections. Some people get upset or just don't understand why their vehicle failed, even though we explain everything. Also, explaining to the motorist why they have different number on their car than the current month because they think we have the ability to enter the current month number on the sticker, even though their previous sticker may have expired in a previous month.



One major suggestion I have is to add an "offline" inspection option to the system. When ATLAS or the internet goes down or system updates get performed during business hours, our business goes down. When we have to turn people away, it's not a good feeling for anyone. It would be helpful if we could perform inspections offline that get saved and then uploaded when we are back online. This way there wouldn't be any interruption or delays for our inspection-only business.

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## NORWOOD MAC

The Massachusetts Vehicle Check (MVC) program is pleased to announce that a new Norwood MAC facility and will be available to the inspection program by mid-April.

This is a newly constructed building located on Route 1 in Norwood. This MAC will be able to assist motorists, as well as the Inspection and Repair community in the south of Boston area. The property owner is performing our requested interior modifications which are expected to be completed by the end of March.

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## MAC CORNER

### 2012 Honda Accord Not Able to Pass Inspection

Recently, the Tewksbury MAC L1 Technicians assisted a struggling motorist with their 2012 Honda Accord. The vehicle, equipped with a 2.4L engine and an automatic transmission, failed its inspection and received a MAC referral because the inspection software identified an issue with its OBD signature.

The vehicle had recently changed ownership so prior to contacting the dealer, the MAC reviewed previous OBD inspection data noticing that for the last year's test, the Accord failed for readiness and reported two permanent codes: P0139, P1659.

Speaking with the dealer revealed the vehicle had been in an accident and after many attempts to repair, they were unsuccessful at resolving the underlying issues causing the check engine light to return with reoccurring downstream O2 sensor codes. The vehicle's ECM (engine control module) was replaced multiple times, along with the harness associated

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with it. The Accord had underlying damage to the engine harness around the module due to a previous collision. The O2 sensor had also been replaced with an original equipment part.

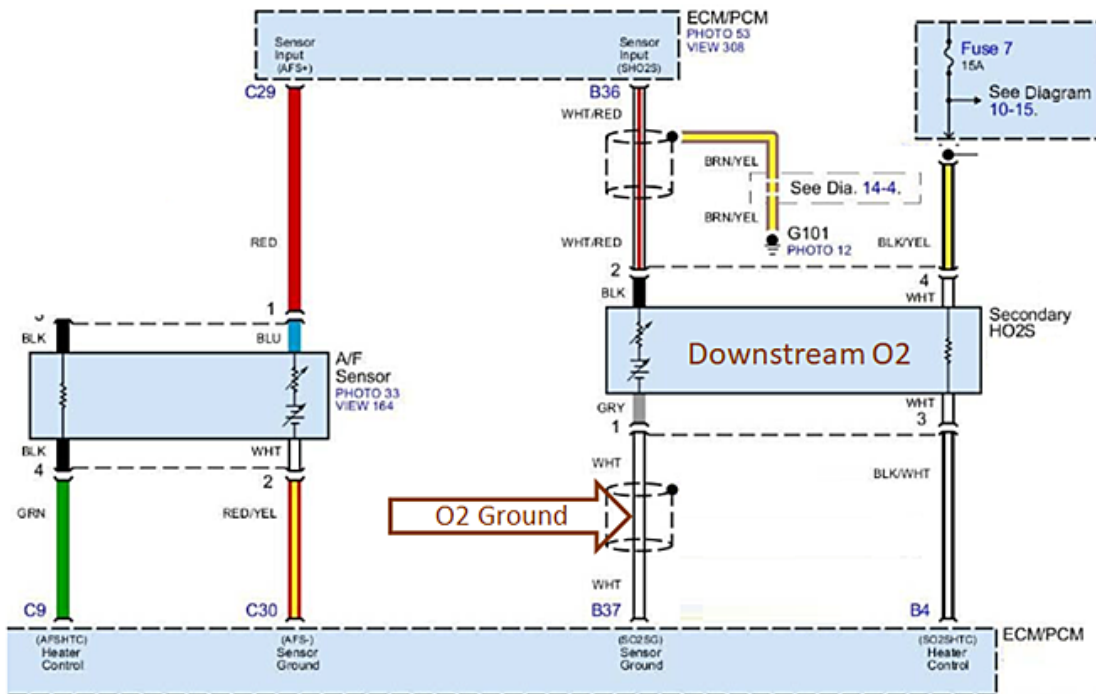
After multiple attempts to repair the vehicle, now believing the Accord's issue was programming, the vehicle was brought to a shop that specializes in ECM programming. Unfortunately, their solution was to reprogram the ECM with a non-compliant OBD software. This newly installed software was missing critical pieces of the OBD logic, which prompted the automatic MAC referral by the MVC's workstation software.

Once the dealer was made aware of the incorrect software, they reinstalled an older ECM and called to set an appointment for the vehicle to be evaluated at the MAC. The MAC appointment confirmed that the newly installed ECM was stock and with the correct software; correct monitors were enabled and now testing the emission devices. A scan for codes found two codes stored: P0137 (O2 low voltage sensor 2), P0141 (O2 sensor2 heater circuit).

While monitoring generic OBD scan tool data, the MAC L1 noticed less than normal activity from the downstream O2 sensor - even after inducing rich/lean conditions. Visual inspection of the downstream oxygen sensor and the harness all appeared good. The MAC L1 captured pictures of the vehicle's wiring harness at the oxygen sensor to verify the proper pinout of the harness.

A discrepancy was identified when comparing wire colors between the vehicle's O2 sensor and the vehicle's wiring schematic. The oxygen sensor ground wire color in our Honda was a green/black wire, yet the wiring diagram for a USA built Accord showed the ground wire should be white in color and connected to cavity B37 of the ECM.

Emission Monitors	Accord Signature	Known Good Signature
Misfire	S	S
Fuel	S	S
Comprehensive	S	S
Catalyst	U	S
Catalyst Heater	U	U
Evaporative	U	S
Secondary Air	U	U
A/C	U	U
Oxygen Sensor	S	S
Oxygen Sensor Heater	S	S
EGR / VVT	S	S
S = Supported   U = Unsupported		



When searching ALLDATA, a different version of the undercar wiring harness was found for vehicles built for Mexico, which matched what the MAC L1 was seeing in person. The Mexico version ground wire was green and connected to a different PIN at the ECM (B34).

The MAC shared their findings with the selling dealer's repair technician who stated they sourced this harness used from a salvage sensor. The repair technician was able to repair the harness by moving the wires to align with the correct pins.

The vehicle was driven, completing monitors to confirm their repair. The vehicle was then able to receive a passing Inspection.

## 2023 PROGRAM IN REVIEW

Inspections Performed in 2023		
<b>Paid Inspections Performed</b>	4,972,965	
<b>Number of Active Inspectors</b>	7,495	
<b>Emission Test Type</b>	<b>Inspections Completed</b>	<b>Failure %</b>
<b>Diesel Opacity</b>	69,599	1.50%
<b>OBD Gasoline</b>	3,578,852	4.09%
<b>OBD Diesel</b>	43,808	12.46%
<b>TOTAL</b>	3,692,259	4.14%

<b>Safety Inspection</b>	<b>Top 5 Safety Failure Items</b>
<b>Non-Commercial</b> 4,666,317 Inspections 4.42% Failure Rate	Tires Front End Steering and Suspension Lighting Devices and Reflectors Muffler and Exhaust System
<b>Commercial</b> 160,695 Inspections 7.26% Failure rate	Lighting Devices Brake System - Service Brakes Steering - Tie Rods and Drag Links Brake System - Parking Brake System Steering - Ball/Socket Joints
<b>Motorcycle</b> 80,300 Inspections 1.50% Failure Rate	Tires Tail/stop lamps Turn Signals/reflectors Brakes: Pads & discs Fork tube/seals and alignment
<b>7D</b> 14,040 Inspections 2.35% Failure Rate	Tires, Minimum Tread Depth Front End School Bus Sign/Lights with Dashboard Indicator Fire Extinguisher & Fire/Evac Blanket Fluid Leaks
<b>TNC</b> 81,763 Inspections 1.18% Failure Rate	Suspension Trunk Interior Floors – Seats, Areas Beneath, Rear Parking Brake Windows – Function as Designed



## ACCESSING THE RMV'S eSERVICES PORTAL

The RMV's eServices Portal is a tool used to conduct business with the RMV. This tool is easy to use, convenient, and free of charge.

The eServices Portal will give inspection stations the ability to do the following:

- Renew Inspection Station Licenses
- Add an Additional Bay
- Bay Change
- License Class Change
- Location Change
- Name Change
- 7D Endorsements
- Order motorcycle inspection stickers
- Request a rebate for unused motorcycle stickers.

To use the Portal, you will need to designate at least one eServices Administrator. An eServices Administrator will have the ability to add/remove additional users to the portal, reset passwords, and process the available transactions.

### New eServices Portal Users

To obtain online access to your account, please visit <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/renew-your-vehicle-inspection-station-license>

- Scroll down and go to the "How To Renew" section.
- Click on the "+" symbol in the "Online" box under "How to Renew" for instructions to apply for portal access.
- Complete these TWO required forms:
  - [RMV Business Partner Contact Form](#) with your most up-to-date business information.
  - [e-Services Administrator Access Form](#)\* for each person you designate as an "eServices Administrator\*." This form should only be completed for the designated user, not all the users that need eService Portal access.

Note: You must complete both forms to obtain a web logon.

Once you click "Submit" or the "Click to Sign" button, both documents will be sent automatically to the RMV. Once your online access has been set up, you will be notified via email by [RMVBusinessPartners@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:RMVBusinessPartners@dot.state.ma.us).

**Please allow up to 5-7 business days for processing of request documents.** When your documents have been processed you will receive two emails.

- The first email will include username/password requirement information, eServices Administrator details and documentation.
- The second email will include username and link to login and change your password. along with a link to training materials.

### Existing eServices Portal Users

If you already have access, log on to <https://atlas-myrmv.massdot.state.ma.us/eservices>.

If you have not logged into your e-Service portal for over 400 days, your access has become inactive, and you will get the message "THIS USERNAME IS NO LONGER ACTIVE."

You will need to contact your e-Services Administrator. If you are the e-Services Administrator, you can email us at [RMVBusinessPartners@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:RMVBusinessPartners@dot.state.ma.us) requesting to be reactivated. Please include your Username (email address).

For additional Administrator help, please review the [eServices Administrator Help Documentation](#).

# INSPECTION REMINDERS

## License Plate Inspection

Why is the license plate considered a safety item during an inspection? Why is the plate important?

- Law enforcement can research the vehicle by the plate before approaching the vehicle
- The license plate is critical in cases involving missing persons, and especially for an “Amber Alert”
- The reflective material of the license plate makes them highly visible, especially at night or in low-light conditions.

License plates serve as a primary means of identifying vehicles. Your plate inspection ensures that the license plates on vehicles are in good condition and securely attached to the vehicle. This aids law enforcement in identifying vehicles involved in crimes or accidents. It could be your loved one they are searching for.

## Inspection Guidance

License plate(s) overall appearance includes the numbers, letters, and the reflective background, and should not be chipped, faded, or worn. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is the plate clearly visible?
  - A plate covered by a glass or plastic plate is permissible but if the cover is so dirty, scratched, faded, oxidized or otherwise non-transparent, reject the vehicle.
- Is the plate itself in good shape, no missing pieces, not cracked or split.
- Is the condition of the reflective material in good shape?
  - Remember the reflective material is for you. Imagine a vehicle sitting on the edge of a road at night; that material reflecting your headlights may prevent an accident.

License Plate mounting and location – The plate(s) should be securely attached to the front and the rear of the vehicle, while being in plain view and not obstructed by any other object.

There are too many different types of vehicle configurations for our inspection regulations to provide specific mounting locations.

- The rear plate location is the easier one, this plate is located by the rear plate light so that it is illuminated to be plainly visible at 60 feet.
- The front plate can be confusing when the manufacture does not provide a mounting location. Whether the plate is located on the left side, right side, or in the middle is not important. Try not to complicate your inspection, simply ensure the front plate is located so that is clearly visible when approaching the vehicle from the front.

License plate(s) securely mounted to the vehicle is a decision by you, the Inspector. When considering how the plate is attached, will it be there in a week, in a month, in a year? It really is that simple.

License plates in most cases are issued in pairs. In Massachusetts, most all vehicles are issued two license plates and, in this case, both plates must be present.

Exceptions of the 2-plate rule are:

- General Registration Section 5 plates (repair, farm, contractor etc.)
- Green and white plates
- Motorcycle plates
- Year of Manufacture plate when approved by RMV.

Free Plate Replacement - Review the workstation message released on 11/27/2023 discussing free-plate replacement. For your customer to obtain the plate for free, you must fail the vehicle using the ‘License Plate Mounting and Condition’ located on the safety Inspection Items screen.



## Obtaining The Failure Brochure

Reminder to go to our [Program website](#) and scroll down for the “[Vehicle Fail brochure](#).”

To view the Vehicle Fail brochure information in a language other than English, use one of the available translator languages from the “Motorists” tab at the top. Go to “Test Results” and select the language from the drop-down menu on the website tool bar and “Select Language” option located at the top right of the screen.

# STATION REMINDERS

## Return Workstation Components

Please remember to return all loaned and defective workstation parts as soon as you receive your part shipment from Opus.

When it is determined that you have an inoperative component, not due to neglect or abuse, Opus will arrange for delivery of a replacement component at no cost to the Facility. As a reminder, in the Station Participation Agreement (SPA) you agreed to return the old part promptly after receiving the replacement component. You will find instructions and a return shipment label inside the box.

Facility's failure to return inoperative components as outlined in your SPA agreement hinders the program from providing prompt parts exchange with every facility and may result in you being invoiced for the component.

## Inspector Training

The Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) provides inspector licenses to applicants who have:

- Completed certification training
- Applied for the Inspector License
- Paid all applicable fees
- Holds a driver's license for type of vehicle you will be inspecting

Steps to Becoming an Inspector

1. Submit an Inspector License Application to the RMV.
  - You can complete the application online at the [Online RMV Service Center](#) Professional Licenses>>Apply for a Vehicle Inspector Credential
2. Submit Training Application to Opus
  - Application is available on our program website: [https://www.mavehiclecheck.com/Stations & Inspector Tab >> Stations and Inspectors Resources >> Inspector Training Application](https://www.mavehiclecheck.com/Stations%20%26%20Inspector%20Tab%20%3E%3E%20Stations%20and%20Inspectors%20Resources%20%3E%3E%20Inspector%20Training%20Application)
3. Once you have successfully completed training Opus will notify the RMV directly and the Inspector license will be mailed to you directly.

Once you have completed your training, please wait 7- 10 days prior to contacting our station support hotline (1-844-358-0135). Our hotline will be able to answer any questions you may have, provide you with your workstation password along with assigning you to the facility where you will be working.

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## IMPAC MEETING

### Next IMPAC Meeting –at the Shrewsbury MAC

DATE: June 11, 2024

TIME: 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM

LOCATION: 787A Hartford Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA

## PROGRAM STATISTICS

MASSACHUSETTS VEHICLE CHECK PROGRAM AT A GLANCE October 1 through December 30, 2023			
Enforcement Statistics		Count	
Violations Issued to Inspectors		42	
Violations Issued to Stations		48	
Inspector Privileges Revoked		2	
Inspectors Required to Retrain		1	
Inspectors Suspended		29	
Stations Suspended		33	
Customer Service Center Calls		Count	
Motorist Calls Received		1,683	
Inspection Station Calls Received		9,354	
Inspector Training		Count	
Initial Non-Commercial Inspectors Trained		378	
Initial Commercial Inspectors Trained		81	
Initial 7D Inspectors Trained		8	
Initial Motorcycle Inspectors Trained		0	
Licensed Stations		Count	
Class A Stations		1,167	
Class B Stations		218	
Class C Stations		15	
Class D Stations		294	
Class E Stations		8	
Waivers and Repair Hardships		Count	
Emissions Waivers Issued		9	
Repair Hardships Issued		11	
Inspections/Tests		Count	Failure Rate
Non-Commercial Safety Inspections		1,166,686	7.34%
Commercial Safety Inspections		37,394	8.34%
7D Safety Inspections		6,556	2.49%
TNC Inspections		21,352	1.26%
OBD Emissions Tests		991,620	7.38%
Opacity Emissions Tests		14,481	7.64%