



NEWS RELEASE

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Students to Benefit from Seized Smog Shop Equipment

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- Future automotive technicians at Columbia College in Sonora are getting some hands-on experience using Smog Check inspection equipment seized by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR) pursuant to a court order. DCA/BAR is donating a BAR 97 analyzer and a dynamometer to the college after shutting down an illegal Smog Check operation in Los Angeles.

“BAR enforcement actions protect consumers from illegal business practices,” said DCA Director Charlene Zettel. “We try to have the result benefit local education. BAR frequently donates confiscated machines to train local students.”

Investigators from the South El Monte Field Office and the Los Angeles County District Attorney seized the equipment following a criminal/administrative investigation that found both felony and misdemeanor Smog Check violations. DCA/BAR revoked the facility’s auto repair registration and Smog Check licenses, as well as the Smog Check technician’s license for “clean piping,” the illegal practice of obtaining emissions samples to substitute for actual vehicles that needed testing.

“The goal of California’s Smog Check Program is to reduce air pollution by bringing vehicles into compliance with emissions standards,” said BAR Chief Sherry Mehl. “When a shop illegally certifies vehicles that do not meet emissions standards, it only makes the problem worse.”

DCA/BAR regulates both auto repair and Smog Check shops throughout the state. If consumers have a complaint or suspect illegal practices, they can contact the Department of Consumer Affairs Consumer Information Center toll-free at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also submit Smog Check complaints on the BAR Web site at www.smogcheck.ca.gov.