



Drive Clean

A “check engine” light can be a headache for any vehicle owner, but you shouldn't ignore it. According to the website CarMD, 10 percent of all cars on the road have a check engine light on, and the drivers of half of these cars have ignored the light for more than three months. If the light is on, there's a good chance the car is releasing excess pollutants or consuming too much gas. Air emissions from motor vehicles are a major contributor to unhealthy ground-level ozone and smog formation in Central Texas. Always refer to your vehicle’s service manual for what to do when your check engine light comes on. It is important not to ignore the check engine light, even if your car is running fine, because the problem could get worse and cost more to fix down the line.

If the check engine light isn't on, continue to keep up with regular vehicle maintenance. Some simple ways to keep your vehicle maintained are: replacing clogged air filters, using the recommended grade of motor oil, properly inflating and aligning your tires, and getting regular tune-ups. Routine maintenance will not only keep your car running smoothly, but will help protect the environment, improve fuel efficiency and extend vehicle life. For added benefits, regularly take transit, ride your bicycle or walk instead of driving – your car will thank you in the long run!

The State of Texas has financial assistance programs available to help individuals or companies with the repair or replacement of older vehicles. Read about these opportunities at aircentraltexas.org.