

UPDATED INFORMATIVE DIGEST

Sections Affected: Amendments to Title 13, California Code of Regulations (CCR) sections 2190 and 2193(a), entitled "Heavy-Duty Diesel-Powered Vehicle Periodic Smoke Inspections".

Health and Safety Code section 43701(a) authorizes the Air Resources Board (the "Board" or "ARB") to adopt regulations requiring the owners or the operators of heavy-duty diesel vehicles to perform regular excessive smoke inspections. This statute directs the ARB to specify the inspection procedure, the frequency of inspections, the emission standards for smoke, and the actions vehicle owners or operators must take to remedy excessive smoke emissions. In accordance with this statutory requirement, the Board adopted regulations establishing the Periodic Smoke Self-Inspection Program (PSI) on December 10, 1992. The PSI was originally scheduled to begin on January 1, 1995.

The PSI program regulations require the owners and operators of California-based fleets containing two or more heavy-duty diesel vehicles (defined as over 6000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating) to perform annual excessive smoke emissions inspections. At the 1992 hearing, the Board approved a January 1, 1995 program implementation date. The Board chose this date to allow the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) sufficient time to develop a new smoke test procedure which will require substantially modified, or new, smoke test opacity meters. The Board acted out of a concern that the new meters would be available on the market before California implemented the PSI program. Unfortunately, as of late 1994, the SAE had not approved the new J1667 smoke test procedure. Consequently, the Board could not incorporate the yet unfinished test procedure into the heavy duty vehicle smoke inspection regulations by January 1, 1995. As a result, the ARB's staff recommended delaying the PSI program until July 1, 1996. At the December 9, 1994 hearing, the Board approved a delayed program start up date of January 1, 1996.

Additionally, the 1992 PSI regulations required all fleet owners to inspect at least 25 percent of their vehicles during the first quarter of 1995, followed by a requirement to inspect another 25 percent of the owner's fleet during each subsequent quarter. At the December 9, 1994 hearing, the Board modified the program's initial inspection schedule as follows: at least 25 percent of a fleet's vehicles must be tested within 180 calendar days of January 1, 1996; at least 50 percent of a fleet's vehicles must be inspected within the first 270 calendar days; at least 75 percent of a fleet's vehicles must be inspected within 365 calendar days of the start-up date; and finally, the remaining fleet's vehicles must be inspected no later than 455 calendar days after the effective date of this regulation.