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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EL MONTE SMOG CHECK STATION'S LICENSE SUSPENDED

Bureau of Automotive Repair alleges "clean piping" by Advanced Smog Test Only Center

EL MONTE – An El Monte Smog Check station accused of illegal "clean piping," and two technicians have had their licenses suspended pending a revocation hearing as a result of an investigation by the Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR).

An Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) has granted BAR's request for Interim Suspension Orders (ISO) to immediately suspend the Automotive Repair Dealer registration and the Smog Check Test Only Station license of Fernando Jacinto, the owner of Advanced Smog Test Only Center, located at 9614 E. Garvey, Unit C, El Monte. The ALJ also suspended the Advanced Emission Specialist Technician Licenses of Peter Alfonso and Ghevond Vahe Avedian.

BAR's undercover investigation of Advanced Smog revealed multiple instances of "clean piping".

"Clean piping" is when a vehicle, that would not pass a Smog Check inspection on its own or is not present for testing is fraudulently certified as passing. To accomplish this, a technician or other individual uses a clean exhaust sample from another vehicle that will pass a Smog Check while entering data for the vehicle for which the Smog Certificate is required.

"Auto pollution is a threat to public health," said DCA Acting Director Brian Stiger. "BAR will continue to prosecute smog check station operators and technicians who defraud and endanger the public by keeping polluting cars on the road."

“Clean piping is a serious problem that undermines the integrity of the Smog Check program and adversely impacts the air we breathe,” said BAR Chief Sherry Mehl. “BAR is committed to taking swift action against Smog Check station owners and Smog Check technicians who engage in these practices.”

BAR sought the ISO to shut down Advanced Smog Test Only Center and prevent Alfonso and Avedian from being able to work as licensed Smog Check technicians while BAR proceeds with its enforcement case. BAR is seeking to permanently revoke all licenses.

An administrative hearing will be held at a later date to address the violations found during the investigation. Additionally, BAR has submitted the results of the investigation to the Office of the Los Angeles County District Attorney for criminal prosecution.

The Department of Consumer Affairs promotes and protects the interests of California Consumers. Consumers who wish to file a complaint against an auto repair facility can contact the Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair at (800) 952-5210. Consumers can also file a complaint online at www.autorepair.ca.gov.