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AAMCO Unveils Eco-Green Initiative To Promote Cleaner Running Cars And Centers

by Staff Writers

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AAMCO has introduced Eco-Green Auto Service Certification, a new program designed to protect the environment, reduce vehicle emissions, and promote alternative fuels among the thousands of motorists AAMCO serves annually. Eco-Green Auto Service Certification will be awarded to qualifying AAMCO centers across America based on a stringent set of criteria that reduces the centers' environmental footprint, while giving AAMCO customers a new range of services that cut emissions, improve mileage, and reduce the hazardous waste associated with owning and maintaining their vehicles.



The certification is the first of its type in the automotive aftermarket industry.

Eco-Green Auto Service Certification seeks to move AAMCO centers to a zero-waste operating model that recycles solid and liquid waste, uses recycled products wherever possible, and promotes energy efficiency.

For example, Eco-Green certified centers will recycle used oil for heating fuel, ensure waste water doesn't enter sewer systems, install energy-efficient lighting and heating, use water-based alternatives to hazardous cleaning chemicals, and recycle used filters.

They will also work to improve vehicle efficiency by promoting alternative fuels, higher mileage oil and air filters and components, proper tire inflation, and new technologies that result in cleaner-burning vehicles.

"We have taken a close look at our business, and are providing a path for our franchisees to convert their centers into the cleanest car care businesses in the world," says Todd Leff, President and CEO of AAMCO.

"AAMCO's operating formula has always been based on recycling and rebuilding motorists' transmissions to new car standards. But with the Eco-Green program, we're doing more. We have created a closed-loop environment for our centers, where whatever comes in is reused, and whatever goes out has minimal or no environmental impact."

As part of the Eco-Green auto service, participating AAMCO Centers will use waste oil heaters that burn waste transmission fluid cleanly, generating BTUs without requiring heating oil.

Eco-Green certified dealers also must agree to use alternatives to in-ground lifts, which can contaminate ground water and soil.

For instance, in Spokane, Wash., AAMCO's first Eco-Green certified center owner, Mike Evans, was one of the first car care business in the country to convert environmentally hazardous hydraulic lifts at his three centers to electric lifts. Evans' three AAMCO centers, which service 700 vehicles each annually, are Eco-Green certified.

"Consumers in the Northwest are serious about protecting the environment, and they prefer to patronize environmentally responsible businesses," says Evans.

"Out here, going green is just good business. I've long believed the auto industry can do more to minimize our impact. I'm thrilled to be among the first AAMCO centers to become Eco-Green certified, and am proud to be part of this national organization that's out to make a difference."

Much of the impact will be seen in green services and products AAMCO offers motorists. For example, AAMCO's new Eco-Green Tune-Up uses a lifetime air filter and an extended life oil filter to reduce landfills.

Synthetic oil avoids the use of limited natural resources, while platinum spark plugs help burn fuel efficiently. And special checks of engine control sensors assure the highest possible mileage. Not only is the tune-up environmentally friendly, it makes economic sense as the new AAMCO tune-up extends traditional service intervals by five times.

"Our goal is to restore consumers' engine performance to peak efficiency, reduce pollutants, and prolong engine life," AAMCO's Leff says. "But that's just for starters. We have much more on the horizon."

Indeed, AAMCO just announced a partnership with Flex Fuel U.S. to install EPA-certified E-85 Flex-Fuel Smart-Box conversion kits at its centers nationwide. The conversions will initially be focused on fleet vehicles—the Ford Crown Victoria, Mercury Grand Marquis, and Lincoln Town Car models, which are the most widely used vehicles for livery, municipal fleets and police departments.

AAMCO's E-85 conversion kit lets the car use any blend of ethanol, without flipping a switch or emptying the gasoline tank. Currently, AAMCO is working with Flex Fuel U.S. to launch E-85 conversion kits for more automotive models such as the Dodge Charger, Chrysler 300, the Ford F150, and the Ford Expedition.

E-85 fuel makes it possible for fleet managers to help America reduce its carbon footprint and dependence on foreign oil.

It also costs 17 percent less, on average, than gasoline. And some states offer substantial tax breaks to operators who convert their fleets to E-85. AAMCO's E-85 conversion kits are scheduled to be available as part of the company's Eco-Green initiative in 2008.

"With a national footprint of more than 800 centers, AAMCO has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to dramatically transform the automotive industry into a fundamentally cleaner, more environmentally respectful business," Leff says.

"Our Eco-Green program commits our franchise owners to zero percent waste output. We're taking a stand for the environment, and our customers. We hope other auto care center business will follow."

AAMCO Transmissions is the world's largest chain of transmission specialists and one of the leaders in complete car-care services. AAMCO has more than 800 automotive centers throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. Established in 1962, AAMCO's more than 6,000 team members are proud to have served over 35 million drivers.