

VIRGINIA AUTOMOTIVE REPORT



December 2023

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President's Message

The Holidays are here, and the year is almost over. A lot of changes, to our association, have taken place in the past year. Our leader for so many years has transitioned to a part time position and a new leader has stepped forward. I would like to thank Steve, Bo, and the Keeney Group for all of their hard work in making this transition. I know they worked very hard to make this change as seamless as possible, and they have done an excellent job.

We had many accomplishments legislatively in 2023 and we will go into these in more detail in the upcoming, State of the VAA letter. But I would like to congratulate Delegate Kim Taylor on her re-election in a very tough race. I know she worked very hard on this campaign, and we are very proud of her. Thank you, Kim, for your hard work.

Everyone is hard at work now on our upcoming Annual Convention April 19-21, 2024, at the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Va. Due to delayed contracts from past years the rates for this convention will never be this low again. In addition, they have just completed remodeling, and this will be a great time to come to the newly remodeled Homestead at a really great price. Steve is busy reaching out to our trade show vendors and our Partner Program members while Bo and Sarah are working on the many convention details with the hotel. They have an excellent line-up of speakers for us. I believe this is going to be a convention you don't want to miss.

Lastly, I would like to thank the hard-working people on our board of directors. I never realized how much work they do for our association and receive little recognition or gratitude. And I would like to give special thanks to our committee heads and members for the extra work they do.

I hope everyone has a safe and joyous Holiday Season with their family and friends.

Bill Hoal



Bill Hoal
President, VAA

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Chuck Swain, Modern Automotive, Christiansburg

Next Generation Advisory Council

Andrea Ellett, Patrick Little, Patrick McHugh, Wes Tatum, Joe Wood

Updates and Information from the VAA

We were recently alerted to a new bulletin from the State Police related to the components of the vehicle safety inspection program. Effective immediately a vehicle will no longer be rejected for an airbag readiness light. This revision is to include flashing or continuous illumination of the readiness light or failure of the light to turn on, if originally manufactured with an airbag readiness light.

Background on the administrative code change.

We have spoken with representatives from VSP and understand that a number of consumers had approached the state police with concerns with this component of the vehicle safety inspection. They noted that replacement parts were backordered or simply not available. As such their vehicle would never pass the safety inspection program and their vehicle may have to be scrapped. As a result of these consumer driven complaints/issues rumors of a legislative fix during the upcoming 2024 session started floating around. Hoping to avoid opening up the code of Virginia related to the vehicle safety inspection program, the VSP decided to address this issue through an administrative code change. There was a fear that if a piece of legislation was introduced it would actually jeopardize the entire safety inspection program.

VAA's next steps.

We still believe the airbag system and its corresponding lights are a vital part of the vehicle safety inspection. While we understand that desire to not open up the Code of Virginia related to the vehicle safety inspection program there are still concerns about possible liability and the ethics of passing a vehicle with an active warning light. In the near future we aim to gather other stakeholders and schedule a meeting with the VSP to see if there is an alternative fix to this issue. We will keep you updated on our actions and next steps.

Suggestions for our members and inspectors:

For any vehicle with an active airbag warning light, we suggest including a note in the comments section of any vehicle safety inspection report. Additionally speak directly to any vehicle owner about the possibility of a defective airbag or warning system. If you're able, include a note about this on any customer file.

Thank you,



Bo Keeney
VAA Executive Director

[Inspection Bulletin 455 Airbag Readiness Light.pdf](#)

WSJ: The Electric-Vehicle Bubble Starts to Deflate

In the beginning, China mandated EVs. California followed China, and Democrats made Virginia follow California. Now the bubble is bursting in China. Read the WSJ's take below.

By The Editorial Board
Wall Street Journal
August 21, 2023

[The Electric-Vehicle Bubble Starts to Deflate - WSJ](#)

It's ironic, to say the least, that the U.S. is seeking to imitate China's economic model at the moment that its industrial policy fractures. Look no further than its collapsing electric-vehicle bubble, which is a lesson in how industries built by government often also fail because of government.

Tesla last week slashed its prices in China to boost sales in an oversaturated EV market. In July Tesla and other auto makers in China agreed to stop their EV price war, only to scrap the cease-fire days later owing to government antitrust concerns. While lower prices may benefit consumers, auto makers in China are bleeding red ink and going bust.

A plethora of Chinese EV start-ups launched in the past decade, fueled by government support, including consumer incentives and direct financing. Auto makers churned out EVs to suck up subsidies. Giant property developer Evergrande Group launched an EV unit as its real-estate empire began to implode, but now the EV unit is foundering too.

About 400 Chinese electric-car makers have failed in the past several years as Beijing reduced industry subsidies while ramping up production mandates. Scrap-yards around China are littered with EVs whose technology has become outdated, redolent of its unoccupied housing developments created by government-driven investment.

Beijing recently extended an EV sales-tax exemption to soften the industry's problems. Auto makers are nonetheless having to slash prices to sell cars they are required to make, which is eroding margins. China's EV mandate is similar to those imposed by California and the Biden Administration and especially punishes the West's traditional fossil-fuel auto makers.

Volkswagen's joint-venture in China this month announced up to \$8,200 in incentives for its electric ID.6 X model. GM Chevrolet dealers in China are



discounting EVs by more than 25%. Although EVs now make up a third of auto sales in China, supply still far exceeds demand. This gap will likely grow as Chinese consumption weakens.

(Continued)

As with real estate, Chinese government support inflated EV investment and misallocated capital that could have been put to more productive uses. Now comes the destruction that invariably follows the government creation, which may be a harbinger for the U.S. as the Biden Administration emulates China’s EV industrial policy.

Cox Automotive reported this month that EV inventory had swelled to 103 days of supply in the U.S., about double that of gas-powered cars. Auto makers and dealers are discounting EVs to sell their growing supply. The average EV price paid by consumers has fallen 20% compared with a year ago to \$53,438, driven by Tesla’s price cuts and dealer incentives.

Ford recently reduced its EV production targets as its losses and unsold inventory grow. At the end of June, it had 116 days of unsold Mustang Mach-Es, and GM’s electric Hummer had more than 100 days of supply. And this is in a growing economy.

Traditional auto makers will have to raise prices on gas-powered cars to compensate for their EV losses. A United Auto Workers executive said Sunday that Stellantis is threatening to move production of its Ram 1500 trucks to Mexico from suburban Detroit, no doubt to reduce costs. The EV jobs President Biden touts will come at the cost of union jobs building gas-powered vehicles.

Meantime, EV start-ups are floundering as interest rates climb, and they struggle to scale up manufacturing. Lordstown Motors filed for bankruptcy in June. Nikola Corp. warned this year that it had “substantial doubts” about its ability to stay in business.

Business failures are inevitable in a dynamic economy, but government will be mainly responsible for the destruction that results from its force-fed EV transition—and the damage may only just be starting.

Information Needed: Fall Training Seminar

The VAA is discussing future opportunities to offer our membership including training seminars, both in-person and virtually (via Zoom).

In order to propose, plan and best assist our membership, we need your help! Should these seminars target technicians, inspectors, another group within the field? What is your interest in these sessions or seminars? Would it be best to hold them in-person, virtually or offer a hybrid option?

To provide insight and your opinion, please complete the survey available [here](#) or use the QR code below for access.

We look forward to working with you to develop new opportunities for and with our membership!



Using your phone’s camera, scan the QR code and click the link to access the survey.

Thank you in advance for your help and participation!

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Next Generation Advisory Council

We are excited to announce our new Next Generation Advisory Council!

Patrick Little, Patrick McHugh and Joe Wood

With the guidance of veteran members, Andrea Ellett and Wes Tatum, the NGAC serves as the leadership team of the Next Generation which seeks to provide networking opportunities, mentor programs, job boards, education and leadership training for the future of the automotive industry.

The Next Generation is looking for new members! If you are interested in joining the Next Generation and gaining the many benefits of the group, email the VAA today at MFitzhugh@VaAuto.org or VirginiaAutomotiveAssociation@gmail.com for more information. We encourage you to share this information with your staff as well!

Mentor Program

One of the new benefits to the Next Generation Advisory Council is the development of a mentor program. NGAC members have been paired with a board member to advise them on industry relations and develop leadership skills. This program provides a new opportunity for both the next generation and our board to impact the future of the VAA and the industry.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor of a Next Generation member, please let us know! Volunteer opportunities are available. Email or call our office at (804) 739-1400.

Requirements: Once per month “check-in” with mentee (examples: phone call, Zoom meeting, coffee, lunch, tour of shop, etc.).



WWW.VAAUTO.ORG

NEXT GENERATION

WE ARE GROWING !

Are you:

- Under 45 years old or less than 5 years in the industry
- Involved in the automotive profession
- Interested in leading the industry's future



JOIN THE NEXT
GENERATION
TODAY!



CONTACT

VirginiaAutomotiveAssociation@gmail.com
FOR MORE INFORMATION

2023 VAA Sponsors

We want to thank the following vendors for being year round VAA Sponsors for 2023, and for financially supporting the work VAA does for the entire automotive and tire industry. This work is year round, and is vital to everyone who makes their living in this industry. We greatly appreciate their support, and will continue to recognize them throughout the year. We ask our VAA Dealer Members to support them back with your business in 2023.

Platinum Level Sponsors



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Don't Leave The Dock Without a Plan!

Patrick McHugh

Greetings from Patrick McHugh, proud owner of Auto Rescue, we started as Bimmer Rescue in 2008! As we embark on a period of rapid expansion with the recent openings of Auto Rescue of Midlothian (November 2022) and Auto Rescue of Lakeside (February 2023), our team has grown from 8 employees to an impressive 24 in just five short months. Our sights are set on doubling in size once again in the first quarter of 2024.

The past year has been an incredible journey of growth of which I am proud and immensely thankful. I've looked at lots of shops, been able to see passion and life's work and we've been able to help some shop owners achieve retirement goals. I always start with this question: "If we can strike a deal that works for both of us, what are you going to do with your time?" The responses have varied widely, ranging from "Drive an RV across the country with my spouse " to "Spend time with my grandkids" to "I have no idea." It's the uncertainty of the "I have no idea" response that raises the most concern for me. When we purchase a shop I want it to be positively life changing for both parties. I want to imagine the seller living a great life while we adopt their team and the shop cruises over the horizon.

I envision a shop as a speedboat, with its hull as the facility, engines as the team, a designated driver as the manager, and the captain, namely you, charting the course and calling out headings. The fuel powering this vessel is your car count, and the efficiency of your operation is represented by your profit margin. Establishing the correct heading early on and knowing your ultimate destination are crucial components of managing your shop effectively, as just a few degree variance early on can leave you at the wrong port or at no port at all out of fuel.

Hence, I challenge every shop owner, regardless of age, to sit down and articulate the following:

- When do I want to retire?
- How much do I need my shop to be worth in the eyes of potential buyers (not just based on my opinion)?
- What do I want to happen to my shop when that day comes—sell it, pass it on to my kids or a key employee? Is that possible right now?
- How will I spend my time post-retirement? Travel? Give back to my community?

So I urge you to have this ready before January First 2024. Map out what you want your business to look like and accomplish in the next year, three years, ten years and ultimately what is your end game? Pick a date and write it down! Do it in your way, as simple or complex as you like but I think you will find that the more seriously you take this the more everyone on your ship will be better off, your business will run safer, smoother and with less wasted fuel swerving... You might even enjoy the journey more! I wish you all a happy new year and here's to starting 2024 with our endgame in mind!

Patrick McHugh

Cell 804-727-9204

Husband, Father, Brother, Friend, Sailor, Pilot,

Coach, PTA, STEM Teacher, Beeman,

Shop Owner, Racebar



VAA Partner Program

The VAA is excited to announce our new Partner Program. The VAA Partner Program has been created to bring together key players in the automotive industry, creating a network of resources, shared knowledge, and opportunities for our members. The program is designed to allow industry suppliers to select the level of exposure that best suits their needs. Each level's corresponding benefits allow participants to generate relationships with Virginia's Automotive industry. We envision a stronger community that can address challenges and seize new opportunities in unison. Learn more about the Partner Program [here](#).

Benefits of joining our Partner Program and Sponsorship include:

Enhanced Visibility and Promotion: Gain exposure through our association's events, publications, and online platforms, putting your brand in front of a targeted and engaged audience.

Networking Opportunities: Connect with peers, potential clients and partners at exclusive events and forums, fostering valuable relationships within the automotive industry.

Industry Influence: Join a network of like-minded companies and automotive leaders, to share insights, stay updated on trends, and shape the future of the industry together.

Access to Resources: Utilize our association's resources, including data and industry insights, to drive informed decision-making and stay ahead of the curve.

Recognition: Be acknowledged for your support and contributions to our association's mission, demonstrating your dedication to the growth and sustainability of the automotive sector.

VAA PARTNER PROGRAM CONTEST

We are looking for new partners for the 2024 Partner Program.
Refer 5 companies and provide their contacts to the VAA to be
entered into our raffle.

Email: VirginiaAutomotiveAssociation@gmail.com to enter.

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**- Bo Keeney,
VAA Executive Director**



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Communication Is Key to Service Advisor Success

Madison Gehring

When customers first walk into a tire dealership, one of the first people they will meet is the company's service advisor.

This initial meeting and conversation can set the precedent for how well your technician performs a requested service and how well taken care of your customer feels.

JT Nichols, CEO of Motion Tire Pros, a three-store dealership based in Elk City, Okla.; Solomon Till, vice president and partner at Elite Tire & Suspension, a two-store dealership in Sandpoint, Idaho; and Russ Welsh, senior vice president of retail operations, North America, for Monro Inc., discuss the importance of clear, concise communication by service advisors.

The three C's

At Motion Tire Pros, the service advisor is responsible for getting all the information from a customer and their vehicle to build a work order and send it back to the technician, according to Nichols.

“Our work order is through a point-of-sale system and we have a specific section on it called ‘technician notes. In that section, service advisors will put any detailed services that we’re going to be doing and then they will include any special requirements or requests.”

Once that is completed, Nichols says the service advisor will print out the work order and physically highlight the technician notes section so the notes are clearly visible to the technician who will perform the work.

“Before the vehicle is even pulled back to the bay, the technician and service advisor will get together and discuss everything on the ticket to make sure the notes are clearly understood,” he continues.

“In my opinion, communication is probably the most important aspect of everything we do. We operate by what we call the three C's of communication — clear, concise and complete.”

The process is different at Elite Tire & Suspension, which is working on opening its third location, according to Till. “There are seven total employees at each location and we are all 20 steps away from one another.”

He says his Elite Tire & Suspension's two current stores hit around \$7 million in sales each year, so “at that level, you don't necessarily need a designated service advisor.”

Instead, three of the dealership's most experienced technicians are out front — diagnosing problems, quoting services and selling

(Continued)



“We work really hard to inspect, document and communicate,” says Solomon Till vice president and partner of Elite Tire & Suspension, a two-store dealership based in Sandpoint, Idaho.

to customers, while adhering to what Till calls “IDC — inspect, document and communicate.

“That is the most important part. We always inspect and then we always document and then we always, always communicate before spending anybody’s money.”

The best thing about having a smaller dealership, according to Till, is that it removes the potential breakdown in communication between advisor and technician because the same person who is taking the work order is the same person who services the vehicle.

Monro, which has almost 1,300 locations nationwide, uses a similar process, according to Welsh, who says there are usually two service advisors at the front of the store at each Monro location.

When a customer comes in, the advisor takes down their requests on a work order form at guest reception. (At some Monro pilot locations, this is done electronically.)

“We educate the guests on what we’re going to do for them that day by specifically starting with (Monro’s) ConfiDrive Performance Review, which is basically a health check for their vehicle,” says Welsh. “The advisors will document concerns in the write-up and give it to the technicians.”

When a confusing or complicated situation arises, Welsh says the advisor will invite the technician to have a direct conversation with the guest.

“This is just to make sure that the team member (who is) actually working on the customer's vehicle fully understands the concerns the guests have. We want there to be no misinterpretations on what the guest is trying to convey.”

Going the extra mile

“At Monro, we do something we refer to as a quality double check,” says Welsh. “When the repair work and courtesy inspection are done, one of the service advisors will go out to the vehicle and verify that everything sold was done and completed, along with the recommended services.”



This goes a long way toward making sure the customer is completely satisfied with their service, he notes. Elite Tire & Suspension does something similar with pre-test drives and post-test drives.

“The advisor will do these test drives to make sure that whatever issue that was showing up in the pre-test drive is now solved in the post-test drive,” says Till.

Communication between service advisor and technician can also determine how much the service will cost in time, money and labor. “Good communication ensures that we’re not costing ourselves more than we should, and it also helps us find ways to save money for the customers,” says Nichols.

According to JT Nichols, CEO of Motion Tire Pros, a three-store dealership based in Elk City, Olka., the first interaction between the customer and the service advisor will “immediately determine if the customer is going to have a good or bad experience.”

(Continued)

Welsh agrees that knowing exactly what needs to be done is the best way to preserve shop supplies. “We want to make sure we are using our working hours effectively,” he says. “We don’t want our techs to be doing a job that did not need to be done in the first place. It wastes everyone's time and money.”

The right person

According to Nichols, the first interaction between the customer and the service advisor will “immediately determine if the customer is going to have a good or bad experience.”

That's why it's important to have a person in this position who can communicate not only with the customer, but also with the technician, he says.

“The technician may throw out a lot more technical terms that an average person may not know. The advisor has to explain these things thoroughly in a way the customer can understand.”

He says tire dealers must be “very, very selective” in who they choose to hire for the service advisor position.

However, this doesn't mean the service advisor needs a lot of technical background, according to Welsh. He believes being personable, outgoing and confident are traits that make a great service advisor.

“I can teach anyone how to sell,” says Welsh. “I can't teach them how to be nice.”

Find this article and more from Modern Tire Dealer [here](#).

VAA Publications

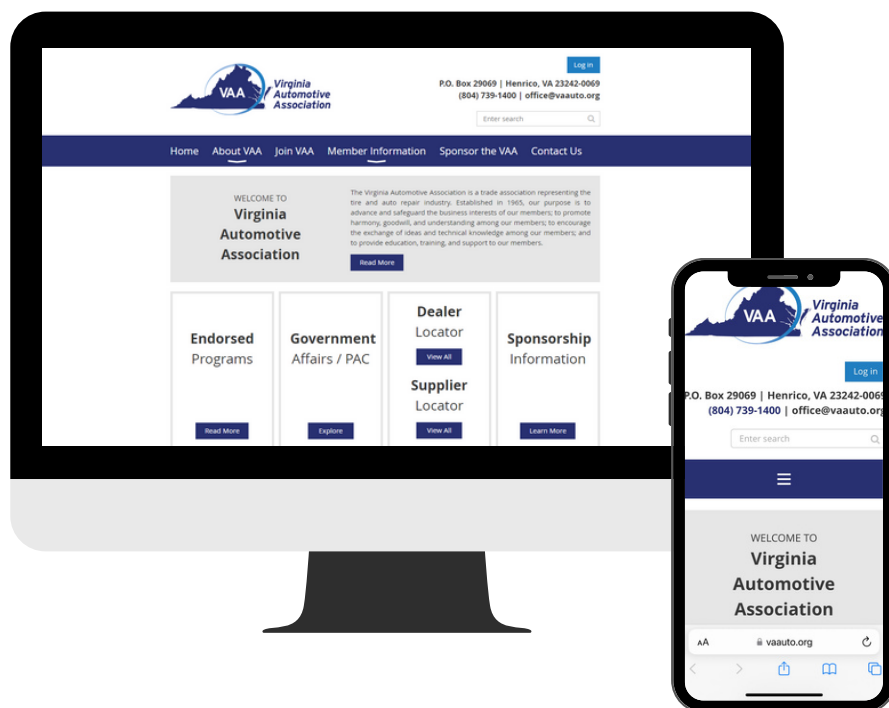
Our new website is up and running! Have you explored it yet?

A new feature of the website is an **internal database of publications** which includes newsletters (Virginia Automotive Report), Spark Plugs and VAA features such as cobranded literature.

Harassment claims continue to plague employers. SESCO shares guidance for determining what constitutes harassment, strategies to reduce the risk of harassment in the workplace and client feedback in their latest newsletter The SESCO Report.

The SESCO Report, a cobranded newsletter between the VAA and SESCO is available on the publications section of our new website. For more information and to read the latest newsletter, visit

<https://www.vaauto.org/publications> or [click here](#).





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NLRB Issues New Joint Employer Rule

- The National Labor Relations Board (“Board” or “NLRB”) has issued a new joint employer rule. The Board changed its joint employer analysis by case law in 2015, and again in 2020. This time the change comes via issuing a new regulation.
- The Board has long held that when two or more employers share or co-determine essential terms and conditions of employment, they are both considered employers of the employees in question. They are “joint employers” of those employees.
- The new rule spells out what the Board considered “essential” terms and conditions of employment. They are: (1) wages, benefits, and other compensation; (2) hours of work and scheduling; (3) the assignment of duties to be performed; (4) the supervision of the performance of duties; (5) work rules and directions governing the manner, means, and methods of the performance of duties and the grounds for discipline; (6) the tenure of employment, including hiring and discharge; and (7) working conditions related to the safety and health of employees.
- The new rule emphasizes that an employer’s right to control one or more essential terms will be considered, even if it is not exercised. This is true whether the right is reserved or exercised directly or indirectly (via a third party). For example, where a contract states that the customer employer has the right to request that specific persons not be assigned to the customer employer, the Board would view that as a reserved right to control an assignment at the least, if not tenure of employment as a practical matter.
- The new rule is set to take effect on December 26, 2023.
- In the meantime, employers who provide or who utilize employees of another organization will want to review the terms of their agreements. To what extent is control reserved regarding one or more of the identified essential terms of employment? Is such reservation necessary under the circumstances? Are there ways in which the provider employer can be given more independence?

If you are not a retainer client, contact us to learn about our services by calling 423-764-4127 or [click here](#).

ALL EMPLOYERS MUST USE REVISED FORM I-9, STARTING NOVEMBER 1

Starting November 1, all employers must use the revised Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, with the edition date 08/01/23.

EEOC ANNOUNCES OCTOBER 31 OPENING AND DECEMBER 5 DEADLINE FOR 2022 EEO-1 REPORTS

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has announced that October 31, 2023, is the date the portal for submitting 2022 EEO-1 Reports will open.
- The EEOC also set a December 5, 2023, deadline for completion of 2022 EEO-1 Reports.
- The EEO-1 Report is a federally mandated survey that collects workforce data categorized by race, ethnicity, sex, and job category.
- Covered employers must usually submit EEO-1 Reports by March 31 each year. For 2022 EEO-1 Reports, however, the EEOC had previously extended the portal’s opening date twice—first until mid-July and then later until mid-fall— before making the most recent announcement.
- Federal regulations require that all employers in the private sector with 100 or more employees, and federal contractors and subcontractors with 50 or more employees and a federal contract or subcontract amounting to \$50,000 or more, file the EEO-1 Report annually.
- Although the EEOC sends notification letters to employers it knows to be subject to EEO-1 requirements, all covered employers are responsible for obtaining and submitting the necessary information prior to the appropriate deadline. Employers filing EEO-1 Reports for the first time must register to receive login information, a password, and further instructions for filing from the EEOC.



www.sescomgt.com

Inspection Bulletin # 456

TO: All Official Inspection Stations
FROM: Captain Sean L. Stewart
SUBJECT: Rear Impact Guards

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE
November 9, 2023

Effective immediately the following changes have been made regarding the process of inspecting rear bumper guards on trailers and semitrailers as currently outlined in 19VAC30-70-490. The changes are being made to mirror the current Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Standards. Please inspect for and reject for the following items.

Rear Impact Guard

1. Trailers and semitrailers with a GVWR or 4,436 km (10,000 lbs.) or more, manufactured on or after January 26, 1998.
 - a. Missing guard
 - b. Guard is not securely attached to the trailer.
 - c. Guard does not extend to within 100 mm (3.94 inches) of each side extremity of the vehicle, any not beyond.
 - d. Guard is more than 560 mm (22 inches) above the ground.
 - e. Guard is more than 305 mm (12 inches) forward of the rear extremity of the vehicle.
 - f. Guard does not have a cross sectional vertical height of at least 100 mm (3.94 inches) across its entire width.

2. Commercial motor vehicles manufactured after December 31, 1952 (except trailers and semitrailers manufactured on or after January 26, 1998).
 - a. Missing guard
 - b. Guard is not securely attached to the trailer by bolts, welding, or other comparable means.
 - c. Guard is more than 76.2 cm (30 inches) above the ground.
 - d. Guard does not extend to within 45.7 cm (18 inches) of each side extremity of the vehicle.
 - e. Guard is more than 61 cm (24 inches) forward of the rear extremity of the vehicle.

This bulletin will remain in effect until the current Motor Vehicle Inspection Manual is revised.

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Trooper or Safety Area Office listed below:

Area 61	Richmond	Area61@vsp.virginia.gov	804-743-2217
Area 62	Culpeper	Area62@vsp.virginia.gov	540-829-7414
Area 63	Appomattox	Area63@vsp.virginia.gov	434-946-7676
Area 64	Wyethville	Area64@vsp.virginia.gov	276-228-6220
Area 65	Chesapeake	Area65@vsp.virginia.gov	757-925-2432
Area 66	Salem	Area66@vsp.virginia.gov	540-387-5437
Area 67	Fairfax	Area67@vsp.virginia.gov	703-803-2622

A Company Vehicle Crash Could Impact Everyone

[A Company Vehicle Crash Could Impact Everyone \(federatedinsurance.com\)](https://www.federatedinsurance.com)

A devastating company vehicle crash can leave a lasting impact at your business in more ways than you may realize. Businesses may need to consider the negative repercussions stemming from “social inflation,” or, negative public sentiment and mistrust towards businesses among jury members. They may also need to contend with “nuclear verdicts;” an award that is significantly higher than would be expected given the facts of the case.

In litigation, jurors are sending a clear message that businesses can be held accountable for the actions of their employee drivers; but have you considered the long-term effects that the crash itself could have on your employees — or your business?

Employee Impact. As your most valuable asset, your employees need to understand the real dangers of operating company vehicles in order to avoid potential life-altering, or life-ending crashes.

A crash could be a traumatic experience, not only for the driver or passengers, but for their fellow employees. Knowing that one of your employees may have sustained severe injuries, or perhaps did not survive, could have a lasting impact on everyone at your business. Any injuries or long-term disabilities sustained might lead to costly workers compensation claims and settlements. On top of that, your employee may be out of work for an extended period of time.

Business Impact. With the costs of nuclear verdicts continuing to rise, your business may be on the line as well. For example, if a jury awards a claimant a nuclear verdict, insurance may only cover a portion of that payment. The rest of the cost could go to you as the business owner, which may lead to bankruptcy if you cannot pay — and the loss of your business and your employees’ jobs. The harsh realities of these crashes occur all too often. Using proper training and creating a strong company driving policy could help avoid crashes and help to keep your employees — and your business — safe.

Create a Strong Driving Policy. A strong policy could:

- Prohibit company drivers from using mobile devices and other distractions behind the wheel
- Where appropriate, incorporate driver standards and screening for company drivers
- Outline expectations for safe vehicle usage
- Clarify consequences for failure to follow the company policy
- Go beyond the minimum local, state, and federal laws applicable to your business

Communicate, Demonstrate, and Enforce Your Policy. Every employee should be trained, and regularly retrained, on your driving policy. Be sure to keep records of any trainings that are completed by employees. Lead by example, and present information in a fresh and memorable way to increase retention. Follow through on the consequences of consistently failing to comply with your company driving policy.

Knowing that all employees have access to life-saving knowledge can benefit their health and safety, and your company’s bottom line. A strong commitment to workplace safety, and a solid driving policy, could help prevent vehicle crashes from occurring in the first place. Evaluate your company policies, look for opportunities to reduce distractions, reinforce your safety culture, and help make the roads a safer place for everyone.

[A Company Vehicle Crash Could Impact Everyone PDF](#)

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Customer Rights Poster

As a reminder, there's a provision in Virginia Law that requires each automobile repair facility to display in a conspicuous place at any point where vehicles are normally received for repairs, a sign which states that:

1. The customer may receive a written estimate on request;
2. No repair work charge may exceed the written estimate by more than 10 percent unless the additional work represented by the excess charge has been authorized by the customer;
3. Any conditions imposed by the automobile repair facility in providing written estimates, such as the limited hours when written estimates will be prepared or the amount of the reasonable fee charged for preparing a written estimate and for related diagnostic work;
4. The facility shall offer to return all replaced parts except warranty, core charge or trade-in parts required to be returned to a manufacturer or distributor; and
5. Any complaints can be made to the Division of Consumer Counsel of the Department of Law.

A VAA endorsed Customer Rights poster is now available to purchase for \$30*!

Posters have been designed and made to meet state standards and requirements. If you are interested in purchasing this poster through the VAA, please complete an order form on our website [here](#). You will be prompted to sign into your VAA account for exclusive member only purchasing.

Two options are available for delivery: ship the poster to your shop/address for an additional fee* *or* pick up your pre-ordered poster at the 2024 convention at the Omni Homestead Resort in April ([register here](#)).

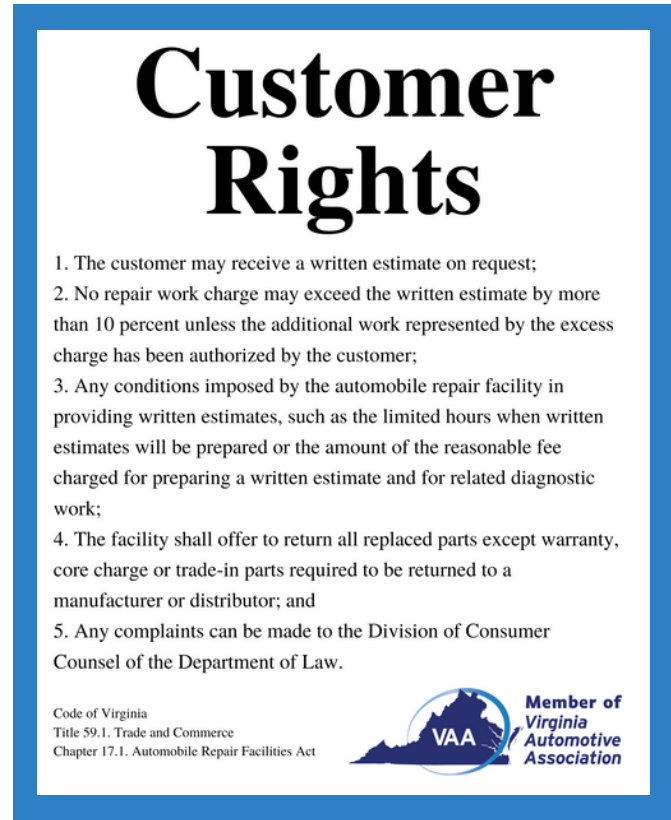


[Click to order your Customer Rights poster now!](#)

VAA Facebook Page

Are you on Facebook? Make sure you have 'liked' us on Facebook to follow all that is going on with the VAA! Updates, reminders and new information is shared on our social page to keep you informed.

Follow [this link](#) or click the Facebook logo to access our VAA page.



Welcome New VAA Members

Please join us in welcoming the following supplier as our newest VAA member:

AutoFix - Auto Shop Coaching
Firewater Transport LLC

Chris Cotton
Carley Letchworth

Wichita Falls, Tx
Stuart, Va

Support the organization that supports you, and help VAA grow our membership – recommend a shop or a supplier you know and sign them up online at www.VaAuto.org/join-vaa. VAA Membership starts at less than a dollar a day!

Registration is OPEN! 2024 Convention

Click [here](#) to register.

Omni Homestead Resort

Hot Springs, Virginia | April 19–21, 2024

You can look forward to the following activities and events:

- Golf Tournament
- Wine Tasting **New Event for 2024!**
- Trade Show
- Next Gen. Ax Throwing **New Event for 2024!**
- Sporting Clay Event **New Event for 2024!**
- Welcome Reception & Cookout
- Keynote Speaker
- Seminar
- Banquet



Support our Endorsed Programs

VAA proudly endorses the following Endorsed Programs, and they offer great value and service to our members.

Federated Insurance (Liability/Worker's Comp) – Manuel Vazquez Ederra P: 919-923-6736

E: mfvazquezederra@fedins.com

Unifirst Corporation (Uniforms) – Heather Esparza P: 540-532-7588 E: heather_esparza@unifirst.com

Reliable Payments (Credit Card Processing) – Zack Snead P: 804-302-6776 x121 E: zsnead@reliablepayments.com

Dominion Payroll (Payroll Processing) – Scott Byer P: 804-355-3430 E: sbyer@dominionpayroll.com

The Supply Room (Office Supplies, Furniture) – Ron Lindsey P: 804-412-1200 E: rlindsey@thesupplyroom.com

ARI/TCS Technologies (Website) - Brian Rhode P: 414-973-4377 E: brian.rhode@arinet.com

Optimize Digital Marketing (Social Media) – Hunter Sorensen P: 715-379-4695 E: hsorensen@whyoptimize.com

**SESCO (HR Related Information) – Jamie Hasty and Bill Ford P: 423-764-4127 E: jamie@sescmgt.com;
bill@sescmgt.com**