

# **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Ventura County Smog Check Technician Sentenced for Illegally Certifying Cars**

*Pleads guilty to charges that he falsified Smog Check, vehicle registration information*

SACRAMENTO – A former Ventura County Smog Check Technician was sentenced today to 60 days in the Ventura County jail and three years' probation after pleading guilty to issuing illegal Smog Check Certificates of Compliance following an investigation by the Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR) in conjunction with the Ventura County District Attorney's office.

Charles Proctor pled guilty to submitting false information to BAR's emissions information system, and to filing a false vehicle registration document, both of which are felonies.

BAR [had revoked](#) Proctor's Smog Check Technician license in June 2009, after a BAR investigation found he had "clean piped" and conducted improper inspections on numerous vehicles at Airport Smog on South Oxnard Blvd. in Oxnard. BAR also submitted the findings of its investigation to the Ventura County District Attorney's office, which used the findings to undertake a criminal prosecution that led to today's sentencing.

"Clean piping" is a method to fraudulently inspect and certify vehicles that would not pass a Smog Check on their own. In most instances, 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 Check is required.

“Auto pollution is a threat to public health,” said DCA 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.”

“The goal of California’s Smog Check Program is to reduce air pollution by bringing vehicles into compliance with emissions standards,” said BAR Chief Sherry Mehl. “When a shop illegally certifies vehicles that do not meet emissions standards, it only makes the problem worse.

BAR [took administrative action](#) against the shop and its owner Pouya Moalej, revoking Airport Smog’s Auto Repair Dealer (ARD) Registration in May 2010. After the shop’s registration was revoked, it was acquired by a new owner and recently re-opened under new ownership and new management.

Today’s sentencing marks the third criminal conviction for “clean piping” in Ventura County in the past 10 months.

Last November, [Jesus Jimenez Lopez](#) was sentenced to three years of probation and 120 days in the Ventura County jail for charges arising out of an undercover operation by BAR, involving smog testing fraud.

In June 2010, [Santiago R. Lopez](#) of Oxnard was sentenced to 36 months’ probation and 150 days in the Ventura County jail for felony falsification of smog certificate information.

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