Garages – Vehicle Maintenance – Fact Sheets

WHAT ARE GOOD WORK PRACTICES TO FOLLOW?

Good work practices are essential.

- Never attempt repairs or maintenance for tasks for which you do not have the appropriate training.
- Always keep a neat and tidy work area.
- Good lighting and adequate ventilation are important.
- Refer to and follow the instructions on the safety date sheet (SDS) for any products you will be using.

What should I do when servicing or repairing a radiator?

- Allow the radiator to cool before inspecting.
- Cover the radiator cap with a heavy cloth material or cap remover. Do not use paper towels.
- Stand back at arm's length when removing the cap. Keep others away. If the radiator cap does not have a pressure-relief lever, first tighten the cap and then loosen it a half turn to the first notch. If it is equipped with a pressure-relief lever, lift the lever into the open position.
- Remember that all pressure may not have escaped – the cap gasket may be stuck to the radiator neck.
- Do not put your face directly over the radiator once the cap has been removed. Coolant may erupt unexpectedly.
- Check the hoses for leaks.
- Tighten the hose clamps if the hoses feel damp at either end of the hose.
- Replace the hoses if there are cracks, tears or other signs of wear or if they feel brittle when you squeeze them.
- Drain the radiator fluid in an appropriate container if the radiator has to be removed for repair.
- Dispose of the radiator fluid in accordance with local environmental agency requirements.
- If the radiator is cleaned by dipping it in a caustic soda (sodium hydroxide) solution, make sure that you know the hazards of working with caustic materials, how to work safely with them, the appropriate protective equipment and clothing is used, and what to do in case it splashes on you

or if it spills.
- Dispose of the tank solutions, tank sludge, and rinse solutions in accordance with local environmental requirements. The solutions will contain lead and the sludge will contain zinc, copper, and lead.
- Know and understand the hazards of exposure to lead in solder and how to work with it safely.
- If soldering is carried out to repair radiators, soldering operations should be done in well ventilated and maintained enclosures, ventilated exhaust hoods or ventilated booths.
- Wear an approved respirator that is intended to protect against lead exposure from soldering operations, or from grinding or buffing soldered surfaces if ventilation is not adequate.
- Use good housekeeping methods for keeping surfaces free of lead. Use a wet mop or vacuum equipped with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter to clean floors and other surfaces. Do not use a dry broom or compressed air for cleaning up lead dust – they will cause the lead dust to become airborne.
- Follow good hygiene practices. Wash your hands and face after soldering, grinding or buffing operations and before eating, drinking, or smoking to prevent accidental ingestion of lead.
- Employees should be provided with coveralls or similar full-body clothing and disposable or washable caps. Work clothing should be stored in a different place than street clothes to prevent contamination. Work clothing should be put in plastic bags and sent for cleaning. The bags should be tagged as “clothing contaminated with lead” and the work clothes should be washed separately from other clothing.

What should I know when servicing brakes and clutches?

- Clean and service brakes in a separate work area.
- Use approved respiratory protection when necessary.
- Remove dust with a vacuum equipped with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter.
- Wet assembly down with low pressure water or gentle spray when a vacuum cleaner is not available. Wipe clean with a damp cloth.
- Collect the washings and dust on floors and around equipment using a vacuum cleaner with HEPA filter or wet sweeping for proper disposal.
- Do not use compressed air or dry brush to clean brakes. Do not bang the drum to remove dust.
- Be aware that some brake and clutch pads may still contain asbestos. Asbestos can cause serious lung disease. Special regulations may apply so consult with your jurisdiction for more information.

Are there safety tips to know when greasing a vehicle?

Fasten all connections securely.

- Keep safety sleeves and grease nozzles free of dirt.
- Replace damaged nozzles before starting work.
- Check that the lubricating gun starting mechanism does not activate until the nozzle is set firmly against the fitting.
- Test the equipment by placing the open end of the nozzle into a waste container before operating the starting mechanism.
- Stand clear of lubricant spray.

- Use a cloth to catch excess grease and wipe up drippings immediately.
- Clean up spills and cover them with an absorbent compound.
- Inspect equipment weekly and repair defects.
- Do not heat the grease fittings to make them accept the grease – replace the fitting instead.
- Do not use a grease gun with an unshrouded nozzle.
- Do not place a grease gun nozzle against any part of your body.