

FIXING IT RIGHT **Motor Vehicle Repair**

Like most consumers, you're probably enormously dependent on your vehicle and when it needs service or repair, you want the work done quickly, correctly and at a reasonable cost. For this to happen on a consistent basis, you'll need to secure a quality mechanic that you can trust. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is charged with regulating motor vehicle repair shops in our state under the Florida Motor Vehicle Repair Act.

Any person who, for compensation, engages or attempts to engage in the repair of motor vehicles owned by other persons must register with FDACS biennially (every two years). This includes, but is not limited to: mobile motor vehicle repair shops, motor vehicle and recreational vehicle dealers; garages; service stations; self-employed individuals; truck stops; paint and body shops; brake, muffler, or transmission shops; and glass shops.

When choosing a facility, do your research! Find out if it is properly registered, and whether any complaints have been filed against it. This can be done by searching our "Business/Complaint Lookup" at www.800helpfla.com, or by calling 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352). If there are complaints on file, be sure to find out how they were resolved. The answers to the following questions should help take the guesswork out of choosing a quality motor vehicle repair professional.

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A REPAIR FACILITY?

- The registration certificate of the repair shop should be visible in a conspicuous location in the customer service area of the shop. Repair shops are also required by law to include their registration number in any advertisements, announcements or listings relating to motor vehicle repair.



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Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner

- Signs of professionalism in the customer service area (e.g., membership in an automotive trade organization, technician certifications, etc.) and a neat, well-organized service area with modern equipment.
- Clearly posted and easily explained policies on labor charges, guarantees and acceptable methods of payment.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS UNDER THE FLORIDA ACT?

- If the repair work will cost more than \$100, the repair facility must prepare a written estimate prior to the repair being performed. For a detailed list of the requirements, please visit www.800helpfla.com.
- The repair shop must obtain your approval if the cost of repair will exceed the cost listed on the estimate by more than \$10 or 10 percent, whichever is greater, but not to exceed \$50.
- If the customer does not give approval and the cost of repair exceeds the cost listed on the estimate as stated above, it is unlawful for the repair shop to hold the vehicle if the customer refuses to pay.
- Repairs may be canceled if they exceed the estimate as stated above and the repair shop must reassemble the vehicle, unless it is unsafe to drive. Please note, if you were given prior notice on the estimate, the shop may charge you fees for teardown, reassembly and destroyed items.
- Provided the repair shop has no warranty arrangement or exchange parts program with a manufacturer, supplier or distributor, you are entitled to receive any replaced parts if you requested them when you authorized the repair work.
- The repair shop must provide each customer, upon completion of any repair, with a legible copy of an invoice for such repair.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
POINT YOUR QR READER TO



For a detailed list of the requirements, please visit www.800helpfla.com.