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**CarMD.com Corporation Releases its 2015 CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™  
During April Car Care Awareness Month  
*Encourages Drivers to Address Dashboard Warnings as Year-Over-Year Car Repair Costs Are Flat and  
More Than 5 Percent of Check Engine Light Repairs are Free***

IRVINE, Calif. (Apr. 21, 2015) – [CarMD](#), provider of leading-edge car repair data and Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions, today released its **2015 CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™** report on common check engine-related car repairs, associated costs and annual trends for model year 1996 to current vehicles. After two years of increases in average repair costs, 2014 saw virtually no change, up only 0.6 percent, comprised of a 2.7 percent increase in average labor costs offset by a 2.8 percent decrease in parts costs. The oxygen sensor, which can negatively impact fuel economy by as much as 40 percent, remained the most common check engine light repair. For the fifth consecutive year a majority of hybrid repair costs declined – some by as much as 50 percent. The most expensive repair was “replace transmission assembly” at \$6,400, conversely more than 5 percent of check engine lights resulted in free repairs. Appearing on the list of 10 most common check engine repairs for the first time are “replace thermostat” and “replace fuel injectors,” which can be affected by weather extremes, as well as fuel choices and maintenance decisions.

“Whether you are the owner of a single vehicle or the manager of a fleet, today’s on board diagnostics technology, data and devices can empower you to extend vehicle life and minimize cost of ownership,” said David Rich, CarMD’s technical director. “This CarMD Vehicle Health Index reminds drivers to address check engine light warnings because it’s more likely to be a simple, affordable fix than a catastrophic repair, but either way addressing it early will improve fuel economy and minimize the likelihood of needing more than one repair.” Rich adds that 2014 saw simultaneous record heat in the West and cooler than average temperatures in the Midwest and Northeast, marking the need for vehicle owners to adapt their car maintenance schedules accordingly.

The 2014 CarMD Vehicle Health Index analyzed more than 98,000 repairs reported to and validated by CarMD’s network from Jan. 1, 2014 to Dec. 31, 2014. Click [here](#) to see the full Index, including the 25 most common check engine-related repairs, a 9-year history of U.S. car repair costs, list of most common repairs by region, 10 least expensive and 10 most expensive car repairs.

According to CarMD, the following are the 10 most common check engine light-related car repairs and associated average repair costs:

1. Replace oxygen sensor – \$259
2. Replace catalytic converter – \$1,150
3. Tighten or replace fuel cap – free in most cases
4. Replace ignition coil(s) and spark plug(s) – \$414
5. Replace ignition coil(s) – \$247
6. Replace mass air flow sensor – \$409
7. Replace spark plug wire(s) and spark plug(s) – \$362
8. Replace thermostat – \$213
9. Replace Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) valve – \$350
10. Replace fuel injector(s) – \$554

(more)

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The following are highlights from this year's report:

- Evidencing the notion that drivers should not panic when their car's check engine light comes on, the 10 least expensive fixes accounted for more than 11 percent of repairs in 2014, while the 10 most expensive repairs accounted for less than 1 percent of repairs. Problems that were typically free to fix included tighten loose gas cap and remove USB device.
- Where you live can impact the cost of car repairs.
  - o In 2014, drivers in the West paid the most at \$423 on average for check engine light repairs, while drivers in the Midwest paid the least at \$375.
  - o Drivers in the South paid \$400 on average, and car owners in the Northeast paid \$418 for parts and labor combined.
- While type and cost of repairs varied by region, replace oxygen sensor and replace catalytic converter were the no. 1 and no. 2 most common repairs respectively from coast to coast.
  - o The no. 3 most common repair on cars in the West was a mass air flow sensor (MAF), which can be susceptible to dry, dusty summer road conditions or snow, salt and ice. An easy and affordable way to keep this sensor healthy is by keeping your car's air filter clean, which can cost as little as \$30 to replace versus as much as \$400 for a MAF.
  - o The no. 3 most common repair in the Midwest and Northeast this past year was a damaged or loose fuel cap, which is something that can be easily diagnosed with a handheld OBD2 tool such as the [CarMD® Vehicle Health System™](#).
  - o The third most common repair on cars in the South was the replacement of both the ignition coil(s) and spark plug(s). A prime example of how ignoring a smaller problem can result in the need for more than one repair, if left unaddressed a spark plug can cause eventual ignition coil and catalytic converter failure resulting in 15 percent to 200 percent in additional repair costs, as well as a 25 percent reduction in fuel economy.
- New to the top 10 list of common check engine repairs this year are "replace thermostat" and "replace fuel injectors."
  - o Those who own or are responsible for servicing vehicles should know that some parts like the thermostat have to work harder and may need to be replaced more frequently in extreme temperature environments.
  - o The fuel injectors can be susceptible to clogging resulting from fuel tank debris that can occur by frequently driving with the fuel light on, fueling up with low-grade gas or putting off regular maintenance such as fuel filter replacement.
- CarMD found that while some hybrid repairs have increased, the more expensive repairs continue to drop in price as hybrid part availability and technicians trained to service hybrids grow.
  - o Hybrids accounted for only one of the top 10 most expensive repairs in 2014 as opposed to three the previous year.
  - o For the fifth consecutive year, the cost to "replace hybrid inverter assembly" trended down dropping as much as 50 percent from \$2,800 in 2013 to \$1,350 in 2014.
  - o The average cost to replace a hybrid battery was up 11 percent in 2014 from \$3,140 in 2013 to \$3,479 in 2014.

Click here to view the complete 2015 CarMD® Vehicle Health Index™ report. Click [here](#) to view archived Vehicle Health Index reports.

### About CarMD

Based in Irvine, Calif., CarMD is a leading edge Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions provider. CarMD's applications leverage and empower the capabilities of the on-board diagnostics (OBD2) port. This enables CarMD's partners and their vehicle owners to implement solutions featuring industry-changing innovations and ideas. Using the OBD2 port, CarMD's easily deployed software reads and delivers information on the health and scheduled maintenance of the vehicle. CarMD's business solutions also include an array of fleet management products. Our vehicle asset management, health and service management products are designed to lower the cost of vehicle ownership. CarMD's network of Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)-certified technicians has built the largest, most up-to-date database of expert repairs and related costs, from which CarMD draws its Vehicle Health Index™, and supports its SaaS solutions. The Index is released each April in conjunction with National Car Care Awareness Month to provide vehicle owners and the industry with a comprehensive and independent report on vehicle repair trends. This 2015 Index statistically analyzes more than 98,000 repairs. For information on CarMD's products and third-party software service solutions, visit [www.carmd.com](http://www.carmd.com).

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