



inroads

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Wethersfield Repair Facility

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Wethersfield, CT 06109
860-529-0500

Norwich Repair Facility

171 Salem Turnpike
Norwich, CT 06360
860-885-2153

New Haven Repair Facility

140 Pond Lily Avenue
New Haven, CT 06515
203-397-4590

After Hours Emergencies

Call **1-877-454-4204** (toll-free)
Your call will be answered through the Department of Environmental Protection Dispatch Office, which will assist you.

Online

Go to www.das.state.ct.us and click on **FLEET OPERATIONS** for additional information on fueling locations, accident forms and mileage reports.

About a year ago we applied the “*Am I driving safely?*” bumper stickers to the entire DAS fleet, except on vehicles with unmarked plates, or assigned to law enforcement or undercover operations. As spring turned to summer and then into the fall, we kept hearing anecdotal reports from our maintenance facilities that some stickers were disappearing, or to be more specific, that they were intentionally being removed.

To get a handle on just how big, or small, a situation this is, in November, with the help of our shops, we began tracking all bumper sticker reinstalls. Since that time we are averaging

Bumper Stickers

Agriculture	5	Gateway	1
BESB	1	Judicial	2
DDS	5	Mental Health	1
DEP	7	OCME	5
DCF	9	SEMHA	1
DMV	1	Special Revenue	1
DOC	5	SWMHC	2
DOL	1	UCONN Health	1
DOT	4	Veterans Affairs	1
DSS	3	WCMHA	2

about one vehicle per day that comes in for service without the bumper sticker. In all cases a new sticker is applied before the car is returned to service. The good news is that since November, there haven’t been any repeats.

On the left is a list of vehicles, by agency, that have received new bumper stickers since November because the initial one was removed. If you would like specific details about the date and plate number of the vehicle(s) that needed a replacement sticker, feel free to contact our office.

We ask for your continued support with the bumper sticker program, as it provides an easy way for motorists to report any concerns that they may have about a vehicles operation, or location. Should you have a business/safety reason to not affix a bumper sticker to your vehicle, please contact us at 860-713-5160. Going forward, we will continue to update you on this matter, however, feel free to call anytime if you would like to know what’s going on with bumper stickers at your agency.

Had an Accident??

Then your car needs an inspection!

When accidents occur, lots of work is created for a number of people, starting with the employee who was driving the car, their supervisor, risk management personnel, shop staff and ultimately the body shop that was the low bidder to perform the repairs.

Once the reports are all filled out, one critical step that we need your help with is getting the damaged vehicle to one of our maintenance locations for inspection. This will allow us to determine the extent of damage, and evaluate whether it is safe to continue driving the vehicle, or if it is necessary to pull it out of service until repairs are made. In most all situations, if a vehicle is out of service for scheduled repairs, including accident damage, a loaner is provided at no additional cost.

Driving Complaints

So, speaking of “*Am I Driving Safely*”, do you know what is the most common complaint that we receive? Along with speeding, cell phone use is at the top of the list. Despite the law and factual evidence on the dangers of distracted driving, too many people continue to engage in personal or business calls while driving. Upon forwarding a complaint to an agency, we frequently hear back that “the person reporting the infraction must have gotten the plate numbers wrong as it couldn’t have been them,” etc. Just so you know, recently one person was very prepared to support his complaint. When we contacted him to verify date, time, etc., of the alleged offense, he offered a picture that was taken from his cell phone of an employee clearly using a phone while driving a state vehicle.

While we can’t always depend on having a picture to support the claim, we certainly can and should encourage safety by promoting a no handheld cellphone policy while driving. After all it is against the law. Besides communicating your agencies’ expectations to employees that drive, a second step is to ask employees to minimize initiating calls to field staff while they are on the road.



The State of Connecticut has fulfilled its obligation to purchase a contracted amount of E-85 gasoline, and for now is not initiating another contract. There are several reasons why we will not continue to offer E-85 at this time:

- **The cost of fuel** – E-85 costs approximately \$1.50 per gal-

lon more than regular unleaded gasoline. Our state’s fiscal situation forces us to save where we can, and because the fleet uses approximately 10,000 gallons of fuel per day, paying the lowest possible per gallon cost is especially important at this time.

- **Efficiency** – over the past couple of years using E-85 fuel, we have learned firsthand that it is not nearly as efficient as regular unleaded gasoline. Our experience has been consistent with reports from around the country which indicate that MPG declines by 10-20% with E-85 when compared to regular unleaded.

- **Performance issues** with some models. A number of cars experienced cold weather issues when using E-85 (primarily failure to keep running until fully warmed up). The same cars with regular unleaded ran fine.

Unlike regular fuel, E-85 is a blend of 85% ethanol and 15% unleaded gasoline. Ethanol is a corrosive alcohol that will degrade steel and rubber fuel system parts on conventional vehicles. Flex fuel vehicles are manufactured with synthetic and/or composite fuel system parts that can tolerate high levels of alcohol.

The fuel pumps that offered E-85 have been switched back to regular unleaded fuel. Having additional pumps available to fuel your car should make the fueling process quicker and easier, especially at our Hartford location which has increased from two to four pumps that offer regular unleaded.

We will continue to monitor E-85 related updates so that we can stay abreast of any changes.

Revised Insurance Form

We will soon be introducing a revised accident form, which we hope you will find to be a big improvement over what we have used for the past 40 years. By March 1 the new form will be posted on our website and ready to go. Unlike our current system of putting pen to paper and then making multiple copies, the updated version will take advantage of technology and eliminate paper (unless needed for reporting requirements within your agency). The new form is designed as a writable PDF - which means that it can be completed electronically by the driver who had the accident, saved to computer and then emailed to Fleet as an attachment. No more making copies then faxing and sending

them all over. All that Fleet will need is the electronic submission of this new accident report, along with copies of any police reports or other information relating to the accident. As in the past, each agency’s internal policies will dictate if any copies of accident reports are to be forwarded to supervisors or other personnel.