

inroads

November 2010



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Wethersfield Repair Facility

60 State Street (rear)
 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

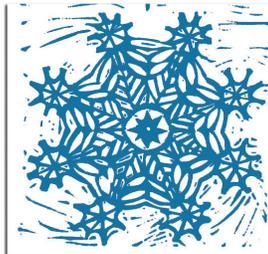
Call **1-877-454-4204** (toll-free)
 Your call will be answered through the Department of Environmental Protection Dispatch Office, which will assist you.

Online

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

Is there anyone in your agency who could benefit from a refresher course on how to drive in winter conditions? How about everyone who had an accident last year? Or maybe any staff member that is new to driving a state vehicle this year, or, you get the picture. A refresher on how to safely and successfully handle all of the hazards that winter offers can be a good idea for just about anyone who has to drive in inclement weather. To help ensure safety and to promote bad weather awareness, we will be holding three “Winter Driving” training sessions at the State Office Building in Hartford. The dates are;

Driver Training- Winter is Coming



- **Tuesday, December 7**
- **Monday, December 13**
- **Wednesday, December 15**

All sessions will begin at 10 a.m. and last approximately one hour.

If you have a group of employees you would like to be trained, but work conflicts will not allow them to attend one of these sessions, we can make a visit to your agency. Just give us a call with the details.

For more information, to sign-up, or to arrange for us to come to your office, please call our Fleet Operations Safety Coordinator, Lawrence Gore at 860-713-5151.

Electronic Billing for Fleet

Last month we informed you of the upcoming change regarding how agencies will be billed for their rental and lease charges. Well, there’s only two months to go! Beginning with the early January bill, the paper version will be permanently replaced by our new electronic format.

As of November 1, 32 of 121 agencies (including regions) have had one or more staff members sign up for the billing review role that is needed in order to check and approve the charges each month. This review period is an excellent time to inspect the electronic version and compare it to the paper bill which you’ve received each month for years. Any concerns or discrepancies should be reported to our office so that we can review and correct as necessary.

This is a major undertaking and we are counting on your input to help ensure that we have all of the I’s dotted and T’s crossed. So sign up and check it out today. There are only two months to go before the paper version ends.

Should you have any questions on how to sign up just give us a call.

Is Your Plow Truck Ready to Go?

It's not too early to think about the cold and snow that winter will surely bring. For agencies that rely on a DAS-owned plow truck to clear snow, now is the perfect time to schedule an appointment for a pre-season check up. Just call your closest garage today to set a time. Besides any potential mechanical issues on the truck, a thorough inspection of plow related hoses and electrical components will be looked at and repaired as necessary. We all want to achieve the same end result – a trouble-free winter for all plow-related equipment.

Make an appointment today to avoid the frustration that comes with a lot filled with snow with no way to remove it.

Got Dents?

Besides keeping our fleet in excellent operating condition, we also want to make sure that our vehicles look as good as they run. As a general guideline, we are interested in repairing any accident damage shortly after it occurs (which is one reason to file accident reports within 48 hours). Yes, there are sometimes exceptions - like the nine year-old car with non-safety related dent that is going to be replaced in a couple of months anyways, or a typical parking lot ding. Our shop supervisors will be working with drivers to determine if damage should be repaired, and to coordinate the approximate repair timeframe. During the period that repairs are being made we supply a loaner vehicle at no extra charge. If you become aware of a damaged vehicle in your agency's fleet feel free to ask that it be brought to one of our shops so that the repair process can begin.

Chrysler Brakes

We have experienced very poor lifespan performance on the original equipment front brakes for both passenger and cargo model 2008 Grand Caravans. To our garages this means that while doing the safety check at the time of second service (around 12,000 miles) we would notice excessive wear and have to change the brake pads – and sometimes brake rotors as well. Considering that normal brake life can be in the 40,000-50,000 mile range, this was extremely disappointing. To make matters worse, agencies and drivers have been inconvenienced by having to wait while new parts are installed, when they thought they were coming in for a simple basic service on a relatively new vehicle.

According to Chrysler, there never was a safety issue, or a recall, and they stated, “brake performance is not impacted in any way by this issue.”

We can only assume that Chrysler was inundated with complaints from dealers and customers alike, as we have recently received a letter reporting that the initial 12 month/12,000 mile warranty has been extended for front brake components to 36 months or 36,000 miles. This extension also covers any repairs that have already been made. With over 80 of these models in our fleet you can bet that the costs have added up. So far we've documented over \$14,000 in parts and labor expenses that Chrysler has agreed to reimburse to us! And the best news is we have found that the replacement pads we are now installing are lasting as long as they are supposed to last.