

ABAC NEWS

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The Official Newsletter of the Auto Body Association of Connecticut

U.S. Senator Blumenthal, ABAC Hold Press Conference at H.C. Wilcox Technical High School



Support of Ct. Technical Schools; Imitation Parts are Hot Topics!



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U.S. Senator Blumenthal, ABAC Hold Press Conference

Support of Ct Technical Schools; Imitation Parts are Hot Topics!

June 3, 2016 – Meriden, CT – On Wednesday June 1st, at 3:30 pm, the Auto Body Association of Connecticut (ABAC) and U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal held a Press Conference at HC Wilcox Technical High School in Meriden. One of the main reasons for this event was to show that the ABAC supports the Technical Schools. ***"Connecticut's technical schools are the foundation of this industry and the source of many of the best and brightest technicians in our industry. It is so important for the students to be trained properly because it gives them the ability to be productive from day one. The complexity of this industry makes it very interesting and challenging. These future technicians will be counted on to repair vehicles properly and safely for the consumers,"*** said ABAC President Tony Ferraiolo.



The ABAC donated a faulty car to the Tech School that had been repaired with imitation parts, along with poor workmanship which added to making the car not safe to operate.

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The faulty car the ABAC donated was a vehicle it had purchased from a woman whose car was improperly repaired through an insurance company's concierge's facility. The woman had her car inspected soon after by an independent repair facility, which ultimately ruled the car a total loss and completely unsafe for the road. The ABAC has utilized the vehicle as an educational tool to demonstrate how a seemingly safe vehicle could be very much unfit for the road and dangerous. Poor and unsafe repairs often involve the use of imitation parts or repair procedures that do not conform to manufacturer specifications. The ABAC encourages the use of OEM factory parts and repair standards. Independent repair shops that do not have contractual agreements with insurance companies do not get pressured to cut corners or use imitation parts. Ferraiolo stated, ***"Remember, in the state of Connecticut, you have right to have your vehicle repaired at the repair facility of your choice."***



Said Ferraiolo, ***"We want the students to learn how to properly repair a vehicle. With this vehicle, the students can dissect the car and see where imitation parts were used, where shoddy workmanship can be found and where corners were cut!"*** He continued, ***"This vehicle behind us is an example of what happens when insurance companies get in the business of fixing cars. This car was repaired and returned to the customer supposedly completed and roadworthy."***

After it was inspected by an independent repair facility, it was deemed a total loss and completely unsafe for the road. Insurance companies should not interfere with our ability to perform a safe repair. Compromising safety just to save an insurance company a few dollars on claims is completely unacceptable. Cheaper is rarely better when you're talking about the safety of an automobile. Cutting corners and using imitation parts may compromise safety when involved in a crash. We applaud Senator Blumenthal for fighting with us on this issue and raising awareness. "Your Car, Your Choice. You cannot rely on an insurance company to take care of your repairs. Your life may depend on it. You need to bring your vehicle to a shop that you can trust."



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Senator Blumenthal then stepped to the podium to address students and attendees. He thanked the ABAC and everyone involved for their very generous and significant donation. ***“There is nobody that is more important than our Vocational Tech schools. I brag about our Connecticut Voch Tech Schools literally everywhere I go, on the floor of the Senate or when I meet with people. They (the schools) provide real skills for real jobs. I’m being told that there are openings for jobs but we don’t have people with the right skills. That’s why the Voch Tech schools are so important to our economy”*** said Blumenthal.

He continued, ***“Consumers, whether purchasing, driving, or repairing their vehicle, deserve to have choice and reliability in every step of vehicle ownership. I commend the Auto Body Association of Connecticut – a group that I have worked with for more than a decade on these issues – for continuing the fight in Connecticut and for their willingness to highlight for consumers the need to be proactive in choosing their repair shop and ensuring that all parts are certified.”***

To further express their commitment to educating trade schools in CT, Ferraiolo also presented a \$10,000 donation to the HC Wilcox Technical High School to help support and enhance the auto program and curriculum already in place. ***“The ABAC has been a devout supporter of the auto program and we hope to continue supporting the development of critical and necessary trade skills in the State of Connecticut,”*** said Ferraiolo.



hosted by the Connecticut Department of Insurance, and has run many marketing campaigns to inform Connecticut drivers of their consumer rights.

Other speakers included Dave Kapitulik, an educational consultant for Transportation Technologies and key coordinator for the Connecticut Technical High School System and, Joyce Mowry, the Principal.

About ABAC: “The ABAC is dedicated to educating Connecticut motorists, enhancing the abilities and knowledge of its members, and promoting in all ways safe and dependable auto repairs. Through proposing and monitoring legislation, the ABAC endeavors to protect the best interests of consumers, its members and the collision repair industry.” The ABAC has also notably provided clarifications for Connecticut drivers on the “appraiser’s law,” created an easy insurance complaint process



A Message from ABAC President Tony Ferraiolo

I would like to thank everyone for the confidence in electing me to my 5th year as president of the ABAC. I believe in this association, the members and the work we do to help the consumers of the State of Connecticut.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the hard work and dedication of our board of directors and executive assistant. Without the dedicated support of these individuals, I would not be able to complete the tasks associated with running this great association. I try to inspire and lead people to be better business men and women. It's a challenge to sustain the energy to coordinate meeting, sponsorships, and bring meeting content that will educate and be of interest to our members. When it all comes together, it is so rewarding. What I ask in return is for everyone to take advantage of our hard work. I ask you to support this association and all we do. We do it for you. We do it for our industry. We do it because we are the underdogs.

Our ongoing battles for safe repairs, reasonable and necessary charges, proper reimbursement for procedures and materials go way beyond what any other industries must do to survive and prosper. I feel the path this industry is on, with the evolution in the construction of automobiles, the insurance industry influence in the repair process, the cost associated with equipment, and training, make it of the utmost importance to become educated and evolve. When the ABAC sets up seminars to help shops, you need to attend these seminars. All meetings and seminars might not be for your shop, but you need to look at different options to be able to evolve with this industry. Please get more involved with the membership meeting. The Board of Directors are hard at work planning educational meetings for this fall. In the meantime, look for e-mails from the ABAC to inform you on what is happening in the industry.

Enjoy the summer everyone. See you in the fall.

President - Auto Body Association of Connecticut

ABAC Keep the “Drive Alive” with Guest Speakers and Continuing Education!

Do you wonder how the Auto Body Association of Connecticut keeps their attendance so incredibly high? How do you keep members, prospective members and their guests coming back for more? Simple. **You keep giving them more. More information, more education and more ways to help their collision shops to be more profitable.**

Another full house of over 100+ attendees came out for the ABAC Annual Meeting & General Election of Officers this past May at the Chowder Pot Restaurant in Hartford.

ABAC President Tony Ferraiolo began the meeting in the usual manner, thanking the Sponsors, the Supporting Advertisers in the ABAC News, the Corporate Sponsors and of course the ABAC members in attendance who make this association one of the strongest in the nation.

The meeting sponsors for the evening:

Co-Primary Sponsors:

- **Bald Hill Dodge-Chrysler-Jeep & Kia**
 - Don Cushing – Wholesale Manager
 - Anthony Pickett – Sales Account Representative
 - Sid Simoes – Sales Account Representative
- **Collision Diagnostic Services**
 - Jake Rodenroth - Director of Client Services



Co-Sponsors:

- **Enterprise Rent-A-Car**
- **Kent Automotive**
- **Paul Francis & Co.**

Tony then thanked the ABAC News Supporting Vendors as well as the Corporate Supporting Vendors. These vendors can be found in the ABAC News Ad Directory included as a pull out in this newsletter.



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Says Ferraiolo, ***“Please support our vendors. They support this association. Please buy your products from them. All of our vendors. They do a wonderful job of supporting us and we, in turn, should be buying our parts, supplies and anything they have to offer from them.”***

Tony then welcomed 2 new ABAC Members:

- **Fairfield Collision - Fairfield**
- **J&M Montesanto – New Haven**



Tony Lombardozi was first to step up to the podium. He discussed the past seminar that was held a few weeks earlier by Superare Marketing & Consulting which was a tremendous success. Tony is business partners with Peter Abdelmaseh in Superare. Tony then commented on the state of current business: ***“First of all. These are all business (Programs, parts procurement, DRP’s) decisions and as long as you people, us, collision repair people, continue to allow the insurers in our business, you will NEVER own your business. I don’t know how more explicit we can be. Once the insurance companies get a foothold it doesn’t stop and many of you are witnessing what I predicted about 10 years ago. Little by little they’re taking over and allowing you, AL-***

LOWING YOU, to do everything for free. And we allow them to do it. It’s plain and simple. If you want to fix the problem, you have to find the problem. And the problem is the person that you see in the mirror every morning,” says Lombardozi.

Tony Ferraiolo then introduced Dave Kapitulik, Educational Consultant - Transportation Technology Programs at CT Technical High School System. Says Kapitulik, ***“The first thing I’d like to do is thank the ABAC. They have donated a car to one of our Tech School Programs recently and Tony told me tonight that the ABAC Executive Committee has voted to donate in kind supplies to all 9 of our programs which is certainly something that we can really use!”*** He continued, ***“The state supports us pretty well when it comes to equipment and bigger items, but believe it or not, the supplies and the expendables are some of the things we could really use some help with so we want to thank you (the ABAC) for that.”***

Dave then told us that I-Car is now a part of the Education System at the schools. A very valuable commodity for the students and the future shops that these students will be working for.

After a brief break for dinner, Tony welcomed Mike Parker owner of Parker’s Classic Auto Works in Vermont. “I’m here to talk about the harness tester that we bought. We had an insurance company write an aftermarket/imitation upper tie bar and since we don’t put those parts on the car we called the owner to tell her she had to pay the extra \$10.00 for the OEM part.



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She was upset over it and called the appraiser which led to the supervisor and told me that if I had called the supervisor it wouldn't had been a problem. He, the supervisor told the customer that we (the shop) had to prove to them that it was not of like, kind and quality and then they would write the OEM part," recounts Parker. Read the complete story of Mike Parker's odyssey on Page 16 of this issue titled, "**CAPA says it decertified part questioned by repairer in May, urges shops to submit complaints.**"



Tony then introduced Jake Rodenroth, Director of Client Services for Collision Diagnostic Services. Jake began, **"I'm not a sales guy. I'm not here to sell you anything. I look at it that if I have to convince you to scan cars you won't use our product. Our approach is unique. It's really an interview process. We have to understand if the shop is really process focused. Do they have access to OEM data because if you don't have access to OEM data this is a tough sell whether you're selling it to an insurer or you're selling to a consumer or a combination of the two."** Jake then gave us a brief bio on his background.

What Is "asTech"?

The asTech device is a remote diagnostic tool that allows collision shops and repair technicians to have a vehicle scanned before or after repair work is done. This will ensure that all of the vehicle's issues have been fully addressed and all systems are working properly.

How Does It Work?

1. The technician connects the asTech unit to the vehicle, puts the key in the car, turns the ignition to ON, and connects a battery support- this will keep the car battery from dying during a scan
2. The technician goes to the asTech website to submit a service request
3. An OEM master technician will send a message to the asTech unit informing the shop that the scan is about to begin
4. Once the scan is completed, the asTech master technician transmits a full report to the shop
 - A. Find out what issue is causing the dashboard warning lights to stay lit
 - B. Ensure all sensor systems are functioning properly
 - C. Identify any hidden damage due to collision
 - D. Information about hidden problems that do not cause a warning light

Jake covered many different scenarios involving a host of different manufacturers/OEM's educating members how complex the diagnostic programs are within each manufacturer and how the asTech Tool can and will become an absolute necessity in your shop for daily use.

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Obviously Jake discussed many different procedures and there were plenty of questions from attendees. When you join the ABAC you get ALL the information by attending the meetings. For more information on the asTech Scan Tool please contact Collision Diagnostic Services at 1-888-486-1166.

The last order of business for the night was the ABAC Election of Officers. Mike Wilkowski ran the Slate of Officers and nominated, votes cast and elected into Office were:

- President Tony Ferraiolo
- VP Eddie Lupinek
- Secretary Mark Wilkowski
- Treasurer Mike Wilkowski

Tony then conducted the 50/50 Raffle for the evening and everyone left once again armed with information and education not only to benefit their businesses but also their customers!

Join the ABAC. Get more education. More information. More guest speakers that can help you help your business! Call any of the Board Members or Executive Officers on the back page of the ABAC News for more information on joining. Make a difference in YOUR industry.

Watch for our next meeting in September. Information to follow.
Follow us on line at <http://abaconn.org>

**Information, education, dedication.....
that is what the Auto Body Association of Connecticut is all about!**



Consensual & Non-Consensual Storage



I recently had a Small Claims trial involving the issue of storage fees. My client, a repair shop, charged \$100 per day in storage for a consensually stored and subsequently totaled vehicle. Allstate Insurance refused to pay the full storage bill, insisting on only paying state rates for nonconsensual storage. Does this story sound familiar to anyone?

As the parties could not come to a meeting of the minds, the case went to trial before a magistrate judge. At trial, Allstate maintained that “nonconsensual rates” must apply because the vehicle was towed from the scene. My client’s shop, however, does not tow, nor is it in the business of receiving vehicles absent specific instructions from the owner – which is precisely what happened in this case. The vehicle owner in this case, a long-time customer, directed the police at the scene to have the vehicle brought to my client’s shop. Once there, the customer

signed a repair authorization as well as a consent to charge storage form. This information was not enough to convince Allstate the job was “consensual”. Allstate argued that any time a vehicle is towed from the scene by police, state rates must apply.

Fortunately, the court disagreed and adopted our view. We presented sufficient evidence to show that the storage was, indeed, consensual. Under such circumstances, state rates do not apply. A judgment was ultimately entered in our favor, and my client was paid in full.

Here are a few takeaways:

- (1) Know that there is a difference in what you can charge for “consensual” and “nonconsensual” storage.
- (2) Be sure to post your consensual rates. This is required by law.
- (3) When a vehicle is brought to your shop consensually, get your customer to memorialize that in writing with a consent to charge storage form that includes your posted rate on the form.
- (4) If your paperwork is good and you are confident about your claim, don’t be afraid to take the case to court.

Allowing bullies like Allstate to strong-arm shops on these kinds of issues only serves to further debase the industry. If we don’t fight back, the problems only get worse. So while something like taking an insurer to court over a short pay storage bill may seem insignificant, it’s not. Court forces insurers to endure at least some level of accountability and if enough suits are filed, it can help to tilt the balance of power. It’s not a perfect system by any means, but it’s something, and it’s better than rolling over and playing dead. Keep up the good fight!

John M. Parese, Esq. is a Partner with the law firm of Buckley & Wynne and serves as General Counsel to the ABAC. Buckley & Wynne maintains offices in New Haven, Hartford and Stamford, and services clients throughout all of Connecticut. The opinions set forth in Attorney Parese’s articles are for education and entertainment purposes only, and should not be construed as legal advice or legally binding. If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this or any of Attorney Parese’s articles, you are encouraged to contact Attorney Parese directly.

CCC reassures Conn. Auto Body Group as TRUE Parts system grows nationwide

Responding to privacy and price erosion concerns by a state auto body trade group, CCC stressed Monday that its rapidly expanding TRUE Parts program doesn't disclose margins or other key elements of parts shopping.

The Auto Body Association of Connecticut on Friday formally came out against the program, writing that the parts procurement option — at full strength in 20 of the nation's 50-odd markets — could be "another wolf in sheep's clothing" and "more likely harmful than helpful." "As we see it, the real purpose of the program is to reduce the cost of parts by pitting dealers and vendors against one another in an exchange similar to that proposed by State Farm's PartsTrader," ABAC wrote. "A race to the bottom, however, will only serve to enrich insurers at our expense."

However, David Boden of CCC on Monday said there's no bidding going on — nor is there a chance to do so. The software simply pulls in pricing and availability information automatically from a supplier's system, just like buying a pair of sunglasses on Amazon, according to Boden. "We enable them to transact more efficiently," Boden said. Essentially, the shop's computer asks the dealer or vendor's computer if it has the part and at what price and discount, and the seller's software responds in kind. "Our system calls their system," Boden said. Vendors don't see each other's price, which could fuel price erosion. "No one knows," Boden said.

Electronic parts procurement in general still can facilitate price erosion even if nobody's seeing each other's quotes if vendors, particularly OEM dealerships, are willing to deviate from list price to attract business. Selling at \$95 instead of a \$100 list price, for example, to differentiate oneself from the other vendors displayed on a procurement system. But just because a supplier's in the network doesn't mean they can designate a price for the part. A shop selects which vendors' prices they'll receive, according to Boden.

An eroder (or vendor with bad quality control or delivery times) could thereby be ignored — assuming the shop isn't on a direct repair agreement preventing such exclusions. An insurer can't see the different prices, nor can they see the discount given the shop, Boden said.

Both supplier and insurer confidentiality are important, as body shops and vendors have an interest in protecting business models, relationships and strategies from competitors — or insurers seeking to cut parts costs as much as possible.

"Finally, the ABAC has genuine concerns about a company collecting this much data, all of which can, and likely will, be used against us down the road," ABAC wrote. President Tony Ferraiolo on Friday indicated privacy was ABAC's largest concern, acknowledging that some of ABAC's worries would apply to any electronic parts procurement system. "I think that's a big part of it, the information," said Ferraiolo, owner of A&R Body Speciality and Collision Works. He called CCC "notorious" for sharing information with insurers.

Boden on Monday also pointed to CCC's data policy, which specifically prohibits CCC from transmitting details like discounts or margins from an insurer — "even if you ask us to."

Regardless of whether a repair facility consents, certain types of data related to business cost and profitability will not be shared with third parties that are consumers of repair facility services, including but not limited to insurance carriers, third party administrators and fleet operators. These types of data consist of:

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**Projected or actual gross margin of repair;*

**Labor cost including employee wages, hours assigned, actual hours worked and projected or actual labor gross margin;*

**Actual material cost including paint/shop material units, paint/shop material cost and paint/shop material gross margin;*

**Repair facility internal notes;*

**Repair facility internal events (file history); and*

**Images and attachments that are tagged for internal use only.*

Additionally, except as it appears in the printed estimate, parts or sublet invoice information, including quantity purchased, unit cost, invoice amount, vendor discount percentage and projected or actual parts gross margin, will not be shared with consumers of repair facility services.

Even the ancient, overly transparent EMS data standard doesn't transmit TRUE Parts information, according to Boden. EMS transmits the estimate, but it doesn't send parts pricing and availability or vendor discounts/shop markups, Boden said. Essentially, the insurer (and basically anyone else with a data pump, according to CIECA), sees only the price the shop charges for the part on the estimate — nothing about the process before, according to Boden. "It just says what the estimate says," Boden said. Boden last year described the system as more efficient, as there was no need to leave the estimating system to order parts, and invoices were sent through CCC — which meant no more reconciling supplier prices with an estimate. CCC also noticed a surprising number of parts being ordered after normal business hours, something less efficient or in some cases impossible with "call and fax."

"From our vantage point, however, any potential efficiency created by the TRUE Parts Network is easily outweighed by the longer term costs on the industry," ABAC wrote.

The system is ramping up dramatically, and Boden agreed that an expansion into Connecticut probably prompted the concern. He said he wished ABAC had reached out to CCC first for more information.

Last fall, the procurement system expanded to desktops, which most repairers use. While an aftermarket network had been developed over the few years of the program's existence, CCC at that point only had four out of the nation's 50-odd markets represented by dealers, according to Boden.

Today, the vast majority of aftermarket vendors are on the True Parts system — "The last couple big ones will be on very soon," Boden said — and while recyclers haven't been available as long, there's "pretty much national coverage."

But OEM parts still make up the bulk of components used in repair, and without dealers to sell them to CCC users, the system would demand a user leave the IP and use a different means of securing those parts.

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ABAC had challenged the program on that point too, calling True Parts “redundant” given services like Collision Link, Auto Parts Bridge and Opstrax V2, “all of which not only do the same thing, but need to be used with specific O.E.M. Auto manufacturers.” However, CCC has expanded its dealer presence to 20 of the 50 markets since October. “We’re going hard to the rest of the dealers now,” Boden said. “... Then we start filling in holes.”

Vendors pay CCC under a complex pricing system that includes factors like sales percentages and one-time setup fees but is tempered with caps.

“Dealers are saying it’s well worth it,” Boden said.

Mandate

Unlike systems like PartsTrader (State Farm) and Solera’s APU (American Family), no insurers are mandating direct repair program shops use CCC TRUE Parts, Boden and Ferraiolo agreed. Some insurers do require DRP shops use CCC as an estimating service, but the actual parts shopping element is up to the shop. They can use the feature or ignore it, Boden said. Of course, there’s nothing stopping an insurer and its DRP shops entering into a contract agreeing to the use of TRUE Parts, but the same could be said of any electronic parts procurement system — or even some hypothetical “call and fax” methodology. “I think our program’s good for the industry,” said Boden, who said he wished ABAC had contacted CCC for more information. “... We don’t want to get lumped in with everybody as one big thing.”

Source: www.repairerdrivennews.com

By John Huetter on May 10, 2016



Shop of the Month: Roy & Sons Auto Body Inc.

Celebrating 50 Years of Family Tradition



This issue's ABAC Shop of the Month is Roy & Sons Auto body in Groton. We were lucky enough to have all three generations on hand to give us input into the history of a great family run operation.

Founder Roy Robinson, sons Wayne and Mark and grandchildren Nathan (Wayne's son) and Matt (Mark's son) make up most of the team at the shop. They are also joined by Roy's wife Gloria, who runs the office taking care of the bookkeeping as well as two body technicians, Mike and Dana.

I met Roy Robinson in the parking lot when I arrived and was able to chat for a bit while Wayne and Mark were attending to customers before they were able to break away for a few minutes.

Roy went to trade school at Norwich Tech to be a mechanic and continued learning his craft in the Navy as an airplane mechanic. Upon leaving the Navy he was offered a job at a local dealership where he was trained to perform body repairs. After honing his craft and moving up to manager of the body shop for a few years, Roy decided it was time to open up his own business.

Roy opened his shop January 1, 1966. Originally it was just one small building (which has since been converted and remodeled and custom fit to facilitate a paint booth.) After running his shop from that one building, it was time for expansion.

In 1973 the Robinsons began working on the new building. At that time working within his budget was a factor so Roy and his boys embarked on a project that would be built with all the family members helping in the construction. Wayne tells us that he would ***"dig the trenches to place I-beams with square tubing and chains to be able to place the pots in the floors and cementing them in which, when finished, 2 bays had 6 pots each which were parts of the original frame machine."*** He continued, ***"My father had a camper and he would park it inside the garage as the garage was being built. So, as kids, we would live in the camper while my dad worked. That's what you did back then because we were a family! We had to break rocks, lay bricks, insert the reinforcement rods, which makes our shop 'state of the art'-HANDMADE!"***

Wayne Robinson has been working at his dad's shop all his life. He never worked anywhere else. He worked part time and weekends at the shop until he graduated from high school in 1976. He has seen all the changes in the collision industry from working with lacquer paint, to writing estimates from books and many of the old ways of doing business. Unfortunately, Wayne's transition from the shop to the office was due to his dad falling from a ladder and being hospitalized for a bit. ***"Everyone stepped up. We didn't know the extent of my dad's injuries and once we knew where we stood I would bring some of the paperwork to my dad in the hospital so he could show me what I needed to know. My dad was under great care and as they say, the show must go on! We had customers to take care of and I knew that's exactly what my dad would do."*** said Wayne. All this happening during construction of the upper office. Great family values!!!

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Mark Robinson took almost the same path as his brother except, according to Roy, Mark and his wife moved out to Seattle for a brief period before returning back to Groton to rejoin the family business. Mark is the shop manager overseeing all of the work performed.

Matt Robinson, who is 30, started working with the family operation when he was 20. He has been trained in writing estimates, the frame measuring system, office back-up and he is a really good body technician according to Wayne.

Nathan Robinson is 21 and has worked at previous jobs before working with the family. He's been at the shop for about 2 years now and he is a refinish technician, and a very good painter.

Roy & Sons A/B is an I-Car Gold Certified Collision Center. They have 6 bays, including 2 frame machines and 2 spray booths. Wayne tells us, ***"We are very community oriented and we tried to be as involved with the community as much as we can. About 70% of our business is from repeat loyal customers. Our customers are awesome. I look at every customer as I am helping them and I don't think about how much money I can make from them. I've never looked at customers in any other manner. The money will come if I help my customer and keep them satisfied. People will remember how you make them feel."***

Involvement with the Auto Body Association of Connecticut goes back to when Roy was attending meetings with the New London County Chapter. Throughout all of the changes with the association, the Robinson's have continued as loyal members of the ABAC.

While I was getting ready to leave I watched a customer pull up in a damaged vehicle, get out of her car, put her hands on her head and say to Wayne, ***"Oh my goodness. Look at my car. It looks terrible. But I know you will make it safe for me to drive and make it look good again!"*** No lie. According to Wayne, she was a repeat customer!

If you stop by Roy & Sons shop you will see everyone busy doing their job. And you will ALWAYS be able to talk with a family member. And Roy? Oh yeah. He's there working too. He takes care of the maintenance making sure everything is in working order. **Just like he has done since the very beginning!**

Thank you Robinson family for your hospitality and sharing your story with us. The ABAC wishes you continued success in your business as the 3rd Generation of your family moves forward in the operation!



(L-R) Mike, Dana, Wayne, Roy, Mark, Matt & Nathan

CAPA Says it Decertified Part Questioned by Repairer in May, Urges Shops to Submit Complaints

After a Vermont repairer's Rockwell hardness test of CAPA radiator supports revealed the parts to be stronger than the Subaru and Toyota originals, CAPA defended its testing and said it had decertified at least one of the components.

In an email Monday to CAPA operations director Deborah Klouser, and numerous collision industry leaders, Parker's Classic Auto Works owner Mike Parker said he vetted the "like kind and quality" nature of CAPA-certified aftermarket radiator components by buying and using a \$2,200 Ames Rockwell hardness tester.

Such equipment's findings can be converted to tensile strength, and Parker said he found a CAPA-certified upper tie bar of a Subaru and Toyota Tundra lower radiator support to be roughly 16,000 psi (110 megapascals) stronger between the two parts and their OEM counterparts.

Too strong can be just as problematic as too weak in vehicle design. For example, OEMs use "crush zones" built into the front of a vehicle or "soft zones" in an otherwise ultra-high-strength steel part like a B-pillar or rear rail to manage crash energy and protect occupants. Also, differences in strength can affect airbag timing if the parts are used by airbag sensors.

Replaying to Parker (and basically the rest of the industry, given the folks on the email chain), Klouser wrote Wednesday that she'd urged Parker back in September 2015 to submit a quality complaint.

"In my response I indicated that if you believed that the two CAPA Certified radiator supports that you referenced (or any other CAPA Certified part) were not comparable to their car company service counterparts, that you should submit a CAPA Quality Complaint so we could evaluate the parts in question," she wrote.

The issue of the Subaru upper radiator tie bar's quality was actually raised by an insurer in May 2015, according to Klouser. She said CAPA asked for the part, but didn't get it and so bought their own from the market.

"At that time, we were able to verify the concerns raised. The part, which originally met our tensile and yield strength comparative tests, no longer did so. We immediately decertified the part lots tested and prohibited the manufacturer from making any more CAPA Certified versions of the parts until they could demonstrate proper material properties based on yield and tensile strength testing."

CAPA's May 4, 2015, weekly update does list the Auto Power part as decertified. We contacted Parker about the timing of when he bought the part and the tie bar for the Tundra and he said he was researching it and would respond to the list.

Obviously, if the insurer demanded the part or a vendor sold it after the decertification date, that's bad news. CAPA in this case only decertified particular lots of the bar — 07/13A and 06/14A — not the entire production run. It's unclear if the lot numbers are references to specific months and years — which would perhaps give a sense of how long decertified parts had been installed on vehicles — and we've asked CAPA for more details.

Klouser urged Parker and everyone else with a faulty part to contact CAPA and submit a complaint; the organization said it'd like to buy the parts.

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“You mentioned, generically, a number of other parts which you believe may have material differences from the car company brand service parts. We would very much appreciate the opportunity to purchase the parts from you and put them through the CAPA testing process,” Klouser wrote. “If that is not possible, if you could identify the parts, we will purchase them from the market for testing. A key element of the CAPA program is our complaint process – we strongly encourage and appreciate shops telling us when they uncover a perceived issue.”

“We test parts to identify which ones meet our comprehensive standards, which as you indicated in your email, is impossible to do in the field,” Klouser also wrote. “In fact, we have tested a number of parts that look and fit just fine, only to find they are made of the wrong materials or improper construction. So as we did when we were first notified of the problems with the Subaru, we will take any actions necessary when a part surfaces that does not meet our standards for functional equivalency to the car company brand service part. As such, we look forward to getting more information from you on the parts that you have studied.”

Klouser also questioned the accuracy of using a Rockwell hardness reading converted to yield strength, even though it appears from the decertification that Parker was correct.

“Regarding your specific concern, we agree that the critical performance, appearance, and material characteristics of a CAPA Certified part should mimic those of the car company brand part,” Klouser wrote. “To that end, we use tensile and yield tests to compare strength, which the material engineering community has determined are much more accurate, accepted, and useful than hardness tests for comparing material strength. Hardness tests are performed on metal components only when the design or shape of the part precludes tensile and yield strength testing. Theoretically, hardness correlates to strength, but it is not as accurate as tensile and yield tests in determining the actual strength of a part.”

One repairer responded to the email chain, questioning the use of the word “mimic” and why the impetus should be on the shop to file complaints.

“I don’t mean to step into this email but I don’t see any reference to how you take all the defective parts off the road and off the cars that have been installed once a REPAIRER tells you they found a defect?” Mark Cobb of Windham, Maine-based Cobb’s Collision Center wrote Wednesday to the email chain. “Also how come I am constantly still getting CAPA certified parts that even physically look different then their OEM counter parts? Why does the shop have to perform all this parts testing and complaint filing for free? How is that our issue again? Who made the legal definition at CAPA as to what is and what is not a ‘cosmetic’ part of the car? When you say, ‘Regarding your specific concern, we agree that the critical performance, appearance, and material characteristics of a CAPA Certified part should mimic those of the car company brand part.’ What is meant by ‘Mimic’ shouldn’t it be LKQ Exactly like the same kind and the same quality.?”

We asked Klouser to see if CAPA is planning to improve its random inspection program besides simply responding to complaints. She responded by reiterating the details of the CAPA program.

“After a part has been certified, in addition to its Complaint program, CAPA continuously monitors part quality via in-factory inspections and testing randomly selected parts from the market for VTF and material testing,” Klouser wrote in an email. “We regularly audit the manufacturer’s quality systems and controls. We understand that no manufacturing process or quality system is perfect- every process has variability.

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Therefore, while we have a rigorous in-factory inspection process as well as a market monitoring system in place, we will still rely on market feedback to identify issues as well.”

Klouser hasn't responded to Cobb, but her earlier email pointed to the CAPA Technical Committee's role in determining LKQ. “Because the CAPA program is one that tests every significant aspect of a part to see that it performs the same as the car company brand service part, we work hard to ensure that the standards and tolerances are legitimate, fully transparent and, most importantly, effective,” Klouser wrote. “One of the ways we do that is to ensure that the standards and tolerances are fully vetted and approved by CAPA's Technical Committee which includes key members of the collision repair industry.”

Four of the 18 members of CAPA's Technical Committee are collision repairers — Don Feeley of City Body & Frame, Jared Humphrey of Service King, Bob Keith of CARSTAR and Mark Sanders of Caliber. Four are insurers, four are manufacturers, three are distributors, and three are at-large members.

The at-large members include Dan Risley, head of the Automotive Service Association; Rod Enlow, head of RENlow Auto Technical Consulting and a former CCAR and USAA employee; and LNS & Associates President Nicholas Scheid, who has worked for Cornerstone Auto Parts and AutoTech Plastics.

Even if the at-large members and repairers voted as a bloc, it'd be 11-7 in favor of parties interested in seeing the most parts possible certified.

Klouser also invited him and anyone else to tour CAPA's facility in Grand Rapids, Mich.

“In fact, our executive director, Jack Gillis would be happy to host you and some of your colleagues in Vermont for such a visit. We've had many (if not most) of America's collision repair leaders visit our facility, including some of the most outspoken critics of aftermarket parts. Not only does this afford CAPA with a great learning experience, but nearly 100% of those visits have resulted in the knowledge that there is little difference in the goals of CAPA and of today's collision repairers. For our part we assure a candid, honest, fully transparent look at the program with no questions, concerns or issues brushed aside. We hope you and some of your colleagues will take us up on this offer. There's certainly a great deal of angst, anger and concern about the issue of aftermarket parts, so we believe anything we can do, together, to improve the situation would be an investment well worth the time. We hope you agree.”

In CAPA's defense, part of why we can even raise some of these questions is because of such transparency and the fact that they're doing any sort of check and balance (however controversial) on manufacturers.

About 75 percent of aftermarket parts aren't certified, CAPA Executive Director Jack Gillis told a Morning Call columnist in 2015. Given the problems reported with certified parts, insurers, customers and shops should really think hard about what else is being sold, ordered, and driving around out there.

Correction: An earlier version of this report incorrectly identified a part lot number. CAPA decertified lots 07/13A and 06/14A of a generic Subaru radiator tie bar from Auto Power, and the article has since been updated to reflect this.

Source: www.repairerdrivennews.com

FCA: Scan to ensure multistage airbag squibs have blown or risk chemicals, explosive



Fiat Chrysler Automobiles warned auto body shops and insurers that all squibs in multistage airbags must be checked during a replacement to avoid disposing a hazardous chemical or a live explosive.

Usually, all of the squibs blow, according to the manufacturer of Chrysler, Fiat, Dodge, Jeep and Alfa Romeo. But sometimes, that's not always the case, FCA said in the Mopar position statement disseminated by email Thursday. And if you don't want a body technician or a garbage man encountering an unfortunate situation, you're going to have to scan the airbags.

FCA also stresses that only a Mopar wiTECH diagnostic scanner or a company remotely using one, such as **Collision Diagnostic Services and its asTech**, should be used to determine the initiator status. "Multistage air bags with multiple initiators (squibs) MUST be checked to determine that all squibs were used during the deployment event. The Driver Air Bag (DAB) and Passenger Air Bag (PAB) are deployed by electrical signals generated by the Occupant Restraint Controller (ORC) through the driver or passenger squib circuits (up to 3) to the initiators in the air bag inflators," FCA wrote. "Typically, all initiators are exhausted and all potentially hazardous chemicals are burned during an air bag deployment event."

"However, it is possible for only one initiator to be exhausted; therefore, you MUST always confirm that all initiators have been cycled to minimize the risk of improper handling or disposal of potentially live pyrotechnic or hazardous materials. This procedure must be performed using the Mopar wiTECH diagnostic scan tool or at a company such as Collision Diagnostic Services that diagnostically remotely scans the vehicle using FCA US scan tools in conjunction with their patented asTech device, to verify the status of all air bag squibs, prior to removing deployed air bags from the vehicle for disposal."

Speaking of airbags and Mopar's awesomely accessible body repair information, here's a guide to supplemental restraint systems from 2007-13. www.moparrepairconnection.com If the service bulletin or anything else you've encountered on those model year's safety systems surprised you, it might be worth a refresher.

Chrysler didn't say how frequently the multistage airbags, which are one potential form of the advanced airbags required standard since the 2006 model year, can be found on the current and past FCA fleet. However, you ought to encounter them in virtually all newer-model cars, according to Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Communications Senior Vice President Russ Rader. "All new vehicles have multi-stage airbags," Rader wrote in an email. "The common term for this now is variable inflator output. The force of the airbag can vary depending on the severity of the crash as well as what the airbag "knows" about occupant position. For example, if the passenger seat is positioned forward in its track, the airbag may deploy with less force because of the position of the occupant. Sensors can be in the seat track, but also in the seat cushion itself depending on the automaker."

But you're scanning the car anyway to see what's happening, right? If you're not scanning FCA vehicles after **every** collision — even a minor one that doesn't trigger an airbag — you're doing it wrong, the company warned auto body shops and car insurers in the same position statement. For a scanner and body and service/maintenance data, FCA referred users to mopar.snapon.com and www.oem1stop.com, respectively.

Source: www.repairerdrivenews.com

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