

Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems

As of September 1, 2007 most new vehicles weighing 10,000 lbs or less will have a Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems (TPMS).

Vehicles with TPMS will impact the operations of all businesses that conduct tire related work. Any work done that disconnects the power supply or removes the wheels of a vehicle will require the recalibration of the TPMS. The removal of the tire from the rim equipped with TPMS will require additional time, care and training.

Several issues will require the attention of the business:

- **TPMS functioning prior to any repair work**

Prior to working on a vehicle with TPMS, it is necessary to verify that the TPMS is in fact functioning properly; otherwise the assumption will be that you damaged the system and you may possibly be responsible for the repair. If the TPMS is not functioning, you must document it and contact the owner prior to beginning any repairs to avoid the assumption that you damaged the TPMS. The best documentation would be to have the information on the work order with the customer's signature.

- **TPMS damaged during the repair work**

To avoid damages to the TPMS, extreme care needs to be taken with all tire related work. The TPMS modules can cost anywhere from \$60 to \$200 a piece and can be easily broken. This extra care results in extra time your technicians need to complete the work. Extra time means less productivity. Your procedures will need to take into account the cost of damage versus less productivity.

The module's availability is an important issue. If you damage a module, can you get a replacement quickly?

Many business decisions, such as free tire rotations need to be re-evaluated to include these new costs. Policies on accepting certain

jobs need re-evaluation to include liability issues – mismatched tires or new rims that don't accept TPMS could expose you to liability.

- **Has the TPMS been recalibrated before the vehicle has been returned to the customer?**

The last step after the work has been done is to recalibrate the TPMS. A documented process must be implemented and the vehicle owner must be notified that the system was recalibrated, because you are held to a higher standard of care and if you cannot prove that the system was reset, then you could be held wholly or partially liable for an accident caused by improperly inflated tires. In rare instances where the vehicle owner must recalibrate the system, it should be documented that you have informed the owner of the need to reset his system.

The implementation of the TPMS is good for the auto industry and the public in general, but it can and will create issues for the repair and tire industry.

Resources:

- www.tireindustry.org
- www.mitchell.com
- www.alldata.com



Knowing your business matters.

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