



CarMD Finds Check Engine Repair Costs Down Slightly Urges Drivers to Address Maintenance as Average Vehicle Age Rises, Tariffs Loom

IRVINE, Calif. (Apr. 23, 2025) – CarMD, a leading provider of information that helps drivers make better-educated decisions about their vehicle’s health, today published its 2025 CarMD® Vehicle Health Index, an annual study of check engine light-related car repair trends.

The report finds that U.S. car repair costs were down 3% in calendar year 2024 with a slight increase in average labor costs and flattening in parts costs. The most common check engine repair was “replace catalytic converter, ” a pricey repair most often seen on aging or not well-maintained vehicles. With consumers holding onto their cars longer than ever before and tariffs looming, CarMD urges drivers to stay on top of regularly scheduled maintenance to reduce the likelihood of needing expensive parts and repairs.

“The check engine light is designed to come on when a vehicle’s on-board diagnostic system sees a problem that impacts emissions or drivetrain issues,” said David Rich, CarMD technical vice president. “With uncertainty about how tariffs will impact replacement part prices, it’s particularly important for drivers to address their car’s dashboard warning lights. Catching problems early can reduce the likelihood of a snowball effect from additional repairs.”

Rich adds that there are many resources to help drivers monitor their car’s health and diagnose check engine lights, including free vehicle health scans at your local auto parts store. CarMD is also working to develop new products and solutions to help consumers keep their families safe and their car healthy.

The following is a breakdown of the 10 most common check engine light-related repairs in 2024 and the average cost (including parts and labor) to make that repair:

1. **Replace catalytic converter(s)**, \$1,348
2. **Replace oxygen sensor(s)**, \$254
3. **Replace ignition coil(s) and spark plug(s)**, \$400
4. **Replace mass air flow sensor**, \$323
5. **Replace EVAP canister purge control valve**, \$144
6. **Replace ignition coil(s)**, \$218
7. **Tighten or replace fuel cap**, free to tighten; \$28 on average to replace
8. **Replace fuel injector(s)**, \$464
9. **Replace thermostat**, \$254
10. **Reprogram powertrain control module**, \$108

Other findings from year’s CarMD Vehicle Health Index Check Engine Report:

- **Aging vehicles contribute to more expensive repairs.** The most common check engine-related car repair in 2024 was “replace catalytic converter(s),” which is back atop the list after a year hiatus. Catalytic converters usually don’t fail on newer vehicles unless a related root cause – like a faulty spark plug or O2 sensor – is ignored. As consumers keep their cars longer, vehicles will outlast parts like catalytic converters. It’s not surprising to see this repair more frequently as drivers hold onto their vehicles longer than ever before with the average vehicle age at an all-time high of 12.6 years.

- **Parts costs down. Labor costs up.** In 2024 check engine light-related car repair costs dropped nearly 3% to \$415.31 from their all-time high of \$427.56 the previous year. Labor rose slightly – up 1.4%. But parts costs were down 5% in 2024 – likely a flattening after an 8% rise in parts costs the previous year. It will be interesting to monitor whether tariffs impact parts costs in the coming year. It's important to note that while an increase in labor costs could be partially due to wage increases across the U.S., it's most likely that labor costs are up because of more difficult, time consuming repairs.

The 2025 CarMD Vehicle Health Index analyzes more than 31 million failures and recommended repairs for dashboard warning lights on vehicles in the U.S., over the past calendar year. The data comes directly from each vehicle's OBD2 system, reported by millions of vehicle owners and the professionals who service them. The failure and fix data are validated by CarMD's network of Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)-certified technicians.

About the CarMD Vehicle Health Index

Published annually since 2011, the [CarMD Vehicle Health Index](#) is the first and most comprehensive industry report to provide consumers and the automotive aftermarket with year-over-year check engine light repair insight. CarMD is uniquely qualified to provide unbiased data on repair costs and trends having built the most dynamic database of failures and repairs related to vehicle on-board diagnostic systems.

About CarMD

Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., CarMD empowers vehicle owners with information and technologies to help drivers feel connected, informed and secure. For more information about CarMD, including soon-to-launch products and services, and current and archived Vehicle Health Index reports, visit www.carmd.com.

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