



CRB Newsletter

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Registration

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A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As most of you may have already learned, annual registration fees increased to \$225 effective January 1, 2007. This means that your 2007 renewals for 2008 will be at the new rate. Increasing registration fees was not an easy decision for the Board to make, and not a decision that was taken lightly.

Registration fees have remained the same since 2001. Obviously, operating costs have not. In 2006, the Board prosecuted more unregistered shops than in all other years combined. The extra time and resources needed to investigate and prosecute illegal repair facilities continues to increase.

In other news, a new Administrative Assistant and a new Investigator began employment with the Board December 11th. Kim Sherfield will be at the office should you have occasion to call in. Dan Gibson will be out in the field following up on complaints and prosecutions. Both Kim and Dan have extensive knowledge and experience. I trust you will make them welcome.

Three of our long-time dedicated Board members had their terms expire this year. Ben Williams, Barb Lewis and Dave Weber. Each has contributed greatly to our cause and will be sorely missed. We all hope they will continue to be involved with the Board and stay in contact with us.

I would like to thank you all for your support, and as always, please feel free to contact our office should you have any questions.

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote consumer protection through oversight and enforcement of Ohio laws requiring registration of motor vehicle collision repair operators and facilities in the State of Ohio.

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GM APPROVES NEW WATERBORNE PAINT SYSTEM FROM SHERWIN-WILLIAMS

WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, Ohio — General Motors recently approved the AWX waterborne refinish system from Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes for North American collision repair centers. The AWX system has undergone the extensive certification process to meet the GM4901M standard, set by GM to assure that vehicles repaired at their dealerships use automotive refinish products of the highest quality. For compliance without complications, SWAFC recently introduced AWX, an innovative waterborne basecoat/clearcoat system. Utilizing a proprietary resin system that behaves like the solventborne systems of today, AWX is designed to meet the strict VOC-emissions limits recently adopted in California, while adhering to the environmentally-friendly guidelines soon to be implemented in Canada and throughout the Midwest and Northeastern United States.

“Our goal in launching this product was to ease the fears and concerns body shop owners have in changing from a solvent to a waterborne system,” says Jason Crager, OEM Account Executive, Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes Corp. “Because AWX has solventborne-like application properties, it ensures a seamless transition and conversion. Technicians will be familiar and comfortable with the process already, requiring minimal training and start-up costs.”

With conversion eminent in several months, SWAFC is committed to providing a waterborne solution with a conscience. Unlike solventborne basecoats of the past, AWX ensures up to a 50 percent reduction in VOC emissions while reducing hazardous waste generation. For more information visit www.sherwin-automotive.com or call (800) SWULTRA (798-5872).

Courtesy of Automotive Body Repair News

SITE ALLOWS NATIONWIDE CUSTOMERS TO MONITOR VEHICLE REPAIRS

COLUMBUS, Ohio — More than 22,300 automobile owners are monitoring their damaged vehicle repairs online through Nationwide AutoWatch -- a cutting edge, Internet-based software tool offered by Nationwide Insurance. Nationwide says the technology may even lessen the number of times the customer needs to visit the shop.

A recent survey conducted for Nationwide by Taylor Nelson Sofres PLC (TNS), a leading market research and information group, found that more than 50 percent of respondents would be likely to visit a Web site to check on their vehicles' repair progress. Additionally, 72 percent of respondents said if visual updates of the repairs were available online the shop would be more accountable. "Actual customer experience backs up the research," says Terry Fortner, Nationwide associate vice president of claims. "Customers who use the AutoWatch service are more likely to say they are better informed about the repair process and were more likely to have their repaired vehicle returned on time."

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INVESTIGATOR’S REPORT

This year continues to be productive. And I do not expect anything to slow down with a new investigator coming on board. Also, I want to reassure the shops that I intend on staying involved in what is going on around the state. And, as always, feel free to contact me should you have any issues I can assist you with.

The following is a 2006 year-to-date recap of activities:

Complaints Investigated	102
Notices of Violation Issued	312
New Shop Applications Issued	108
Renewal Reminders Issued	53
Prosecution Proceedings Initiated	286
Attorney General Injunctions Req.	97
Shops Located “Out of Business”	161
Total Shop Visits	934

WOMEN FORM NEW GROUP TO SUPPORT FEMALES IN THE COLLISION INDUSTRY

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Women of the auto collision repair industry are uniting in order to strengthen and expand opportunities and to encourage new women into the profession through a newly formed effort, the Women’s Industry Network (WIN), that will serve to enhance the collision repair industry through education, networking and sharing of resources. WIN’s mission is to be a supportive, nurturing and educational network for women in the auto collision repair industry.

For those in the auto collision repair industry, WIN will be a forum to discuss problems and concerns, and implement solutions. It will also be an organization that solicits ideas to create positive change, while serving as a hub of information covering all facets of the auto collision repair business.

Planned activities include a 2007 Women’s Conference, which had its inaugural debut last May in Carefree, Ariz., hosted by Assured Performance Network. Kathy Mello of T.G.I.F. Body Shop in Fremont, Calif., and Geralynn Kottschade of Jerry’s Body Shop in Mankato, Minn., served as co-chairs of the Women’s Conference. The work started at the Women’s Conference will continue with the duo’s leadership of WIN.

“While WIN’s primary focus will be on women, it aims to be as diverse in scope as is the collision repair industry and its customers,” says Mello. “Because of the contacts of the people involved, it will reach out internationally.”

Kottschade adds: “Another of the organization’s charges is to help prepare women for advanced positions in every aspect of the collision repair industry.”

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“We are looking forward to another year of working with Sherwin-Williams Automotive.....”

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WIN will also include elements of the Women's Industry Network that was founded in the mid 1990s by Sheila Loftus of Sheila's Information Network in Washington, D.C., and Trish Serratore of the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) in Leesburg, Va., which provided workshops, seminars, and better communication across gender lines.

Loftus will function as the group's executive director and Serratore will join WIN's advisory board.

In addition to Serratore, Gigi Walker of Walker's Auto Body in Concord, Calif., and Diane Rodenhouse of Rodenhouse Body Shop in Grand Rapids, Mich., will serve on the WIN advisory board. Catherine Babiar from Canada and Lyn Shepherd from the U.K., as well as a yet-to-be-named Australian and South African, will also serve.

WIN is accepting corporate sponsors to help develop WIN to become a positive force within the collision repair profession. To become a corporate sponsor, please contact Gigi Walker, WIN's chair of corporate sponsors, at walker-sab@cs.com or (925) 687-8453.

Membership is open to everyone within the auto collision repair industry. For information on membership or the upcoming Women's Conference, contact info@womensindustrynetwork.com or Sheila Loftus directly at (202) 363-1858.

Courtesy of Automotive Body Repair News

Sherwin-Williams continues offering estimator certification program for the University of Toyota

WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS, Ohio — The University of Toyota is continuing its partnership with Sherwin-Williams Automotive Finishes Corp. (SWAFC) to offer the “Estimating Solutions for Profit” class as part of its estimator certification program.

“We are looking forward to another successful year working with Sherwin-Williams Automotive to supply our collision professionals with the skills needed to write better estimates and improve profits,” said Brad Brahe, Toyota Body Shop Development Manager.

“Estimating Solutions for Profit,” a seven-hour, hands-on workshop, provides estimators with the techniques, skills and information necessary to write more profitable estimates. The class comprises real world estimating scenarios and industry-specific issues pertaining to body shop operations and insurance company relations.

The damage estimators participating in Toyota's new estimator certification program will be challenged to move away from the traditional method of estimating and embrace a more comprehensive approach — “blueprinting” the repair plan.

Courtesy of Automotive Body Repair News

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Shop owners must get involved with pending legislation by contacting their local lawmakers. There are numerous issues that arise each year. Issues that have an effect on our industry. If you as shop owners contact your lawmakers, and have your regular patrons do the same, you can make a difference by letting them know where we stand on the issues, and let them know we are tracking the legislation through the process.

Director Greene

House Bill 198, Glass Technicians: (Representative Blessing) No change since the last update. Remains in House Commerce & Labor Committee.

Amended Substitute House Bill 208, Salvage Dealers/Mechanical Shops/ Collision Repair Board: (Representative Raga) No change since the last update. Remains in Senate Insurance, Commerce & Labor Committee.

House Bill 370, Bittering Agent in Antifreeze & Coolant: (Representative Skindell) No change since the last update. Remains in House Economic Development & Environment Committee.

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Nationwide's data shows that customers who used AutoWatch during the past six months had a 12 percent higher rate of satisfaction in the way they were kept informed about their vehicle's progress in the repair shop than those who didn't use AutoWatch. AutoWatch users also had a 23 percent higher rate of satisfaction when it came to the timely delivery of their repairs, than those who didn't use AutoWatch.

The Nationwide AutoWatch site provides simple access and easy to understand captions explaining progress on the repairs with regularly updated digital photos of the vehicle throughout the repair process. In addition, Nationwide AutoWatch provides customers vehicle repair information as well as an e-mail platform through which customers may communicate with the repair facility and their Nationwide/Allied representative.

AutoWatch is free to all customers who select a participating Blue Ribbon Repair Facility, and is integrated with Nationwide's Web site. For more information, visit www.NationwideAutowatch.com.

Courtesy of Automotive Body Repair News

“Our efforts to enforce ORC 4775 will now become even more aggressive than before”

Director's Comments

Why is Registration so Difficult to Understand?

The concept of registration is not a new one. There are State Boards that regulate everything from who cuts your hair, to who does your nails. From who can operate on you, to who can represent you in court.

The Ohio Revised Code Section 4775 clearly states the registration requirements by law. This is **not** a voluntary program. It is Ohio law. In the past, our Board has made good faith efforts to allow shops to voluntarily comply, but many have ignored our patience.

In 2006, we began prosecution on over 400 shops statewide. Our efforts to enforce ORC 4775 will now become even more aggressive than before. The Ohio Attorney General's Office is supporting our efforts and will follow through with prosecution.

There is a huge misconception in our industry. This misconception is that if a shop fails to comply with registration laws for several years, all they have to do is fill out an application and pay the \$225 and get a certificate. Any shop that feels that way is incorrect. Back fees for all those years will not be waived. No registration will be processed without collection of all the fees owed. Fines and penalties will be assessed if your shop is turned over to the Attorney General's Office.

And finally, besides the prosecution fazes that will follow, our website will actually list the shops as "ILLEGAL" if they are not current. This will allow customers and insurance companies to actually view the shops that are legitimate, and those who are not.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office.

Michael R. Greene

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Executive Director

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