

Abstract

- Our degreaser reimbursement program has helped more than 100 auto repair shops in Washington state switch to safer alternatives.
- We reimburse the most money for products certified as safer, and less money for products not containing chemicals of concern.
- More than 80 auto shops switched to our preferred, EPA Safer Choice alternatives.

Introduction

- Every community has an auto shop, and our Pollution Prevention Assistance local partners have experience visiting them.
- Past work has shown that there are viable alternative products on the market.
- We received funding to remove the “worst of the worst” chemicals in use.

Program Development

Rewarding the best: Third-party certifications that review all ingredients for safety.

Ruling out the worst: No halogens, hazardous air pollutants, or carcinogens, mutagens, or reproductive toxins.

Reimbursement options:

- \$10,000 for water-based products that are certified by a third party.
- \$5,000 for water-based products free from chemicals of highest concern.
- \$2,500 for solvent-based products that are certified (none exist yet).
- \$1,000 for solvent-based products free from chemicals of highest concern.

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Five steps to switching auto shops to safer cleaners:

1. We provide free technical assistance visit and reimbursement voucher to the auto shop.
2. The shop decides which alternative product they want, and we confirm the reimbursement amount.
3. The shop purchases new product and disposes of the old.
4. We follow-up in person to confirm the switch and complete the voucher.
5. We reimburse the shop.

Results So Far

- 343 auto shops in the program.
- 108 auto shops were reimbursed.
- \$571,116.49 in total reimbursements.
- \$5,288.12 average reimbursement.

Ongoing applications:

- Product suppliers are the main drive behind shops applying.
- 200+ shops heard about the program from their degreaser supplier.

Ongoing evaluations:

- We've evaluated 54 products for eligibility.
- Some manufacturers are pursuing certification to qualify their products for \$10,000.

Conclusions

- It's important to make connections with both the end users and the suppliers.
- If there are a few certified products available, rewarding them incentivizes other manufacturers to get certified.
- Safer products need to exist, work almost as well, and be price-competitive to be a contender.
- What other chemicals or products could see similar success?
 - Health and beauty products?

Resources

ecology.wa.gov/productreplacement
ecology.wa.gov/ppa
hazwastehelp.org/BHW/eqt.aspx
epa.gov/saferchoice
c2ccertified.org/the-standard/

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