



# Your Vehicle Was Unable To Be Tested Due To Unset Readiness Monitors

## What Is A Readiness Monitor?

Your vehicle is equipped with an on-board diagnostic (OBDII) computer system that controls all of your engine components. Many of these components control your vehicle's emissions, either directly or indirectly.

A readiness monitor is a test that your OBDII system runs to ensure that a particular emission control component is working properly. Your OBDII system runs one test (readiness monitor) for each vehicle emission control component. When a test is complete, the relevant component is said to have a "ready" – or "set" – monitor. Until it is complete, the relevant component is said to have a "not ready" – or "unset" – monitor.

Your OBDII system cannot report on a component's emission control status until its monitor is ready.

## How Many Set Readiness Monitors Do I Need For An Inspection?

The more unset monitors you have, the less we know about how well your emission control components are working. If enough monitors are unset, we consider your vehicle unsuitable for an emission inspection at this time and issue a test result of "Reject". Wisconsin follows U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines for accepting or rejecting vehicles for inspection:

If your vehicle model year is:	We will accept it for inspection with:	We will reject if from inspection with:
1996 – 2000	0, 1, or 2 unset monitors	3 or more unset monitors
2001 or newer	0 or 1 unset monitors	2 or more unset monitors

## Why Are My Readiness Monitors Unset?

By design, each component must operate under a unique set of conditions, known as enabling criteria, before its monitor will become "ready". If the component has not "seen" all of the enabling criteria, it won't set. Most commonly, a component hasn't seen all of the enabling criteria because:

- the vehicle has not completed a manufacturer-defined drive cycle; or
- recent vehicle repairs or maintenance have cleared diagnostic trouble codes; or
- the vehicle's battery was recently disconnected or replaced; or
- the vehicle's computer requires a software update, or is subject to a manufacturer recall or technical service bulletin (TSB); or
- the component is still identifying a problem that has not yet illuminated the "check engine" light; or
- the vehicle has been operated with a fuel tank less than ¼ full or more than ¾ full ; or
- the vehicle has been operated with a fuel alcohol content over 11% (for non-flex fuel vehicles only).

## How Can I Set My Readiness Monitors?

The answer depends on which enabling criteria are preventing your monitors from setting. In many cases, simply driving your manufacturer-specified drive cycle will subject your vehicle to all the enabling criteria and set all of its monitors. This is particularly true after a recent repair. You can get information on your vehicle's drive cycle from your dealership or repair shop. In other cases – for instance, if you do not drive the vehicle that often or have received multiple "Rejects", you should seek assistance from a qualified repair technician.

## Need More Time?

You may not legally drive a vehicle with expired license plates, except to travel roundtrip from your home to an inspection station for an emission inspection. If you cannot pass an inspection by your registration renewal date, you must purchase a temporary license plate. The temporary plate allows you to operate your vehicle legally for an additional 30 days.

The temporary license plate costs \$8.00 and is available immediately if purchased at an inspection station or at a DMV office offering registration services. Only cash and check are accepted. The temporary plate costs \$3.00 if purchased by mail from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Temporary plates are not available for vehicles with suspended registrations. The temporary plate application form is available online at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/forms/mv2505.pdf](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/forms/mv2505.pdf) and at offices selling the plates.

## Questions?

**General Information or Repair and Retest Information:** 866-OBD-Test or visit [www.wisconsinvip.org](http://www.wisconsinvip.org)

## Monitor Descriptions

Below are the basic OBDII monitors and the components and subsystems that they monitor. Remember, not all vehicles have all of these monitors. If a vehicle is not equipped with or not designed to have a certain monitor, that monitor is "Unsupported." Unsupported monitors do not affect the results of the emissions inspection.

**Misfire:** This monitor looks for any engine misfires. A misfire is when the air/fuel mixture in the engine's cylinder does not ignite. This condition can cause damage to the vehicle's engine and/or catalytic converter. In the case of a severe misfire condition, the OBDII system will cause the check engine light to flash indicating a serious threat of damage to the catalytic converter. In the case of a flashing Check engine light, the operator should reduce speed and seek diagnostic and repair services as soon as possible.

**Fuel System:** This monitor constantly checks the amount of fuel that is used by the engine. Through the use of an oxygen sensor(s), the OBDII system can determine if more or less fuel is needed. This fuel adjustment is performed many times a second and helps to maximize fuel economy and minimizes harmful emissions.

**Comprehensive Component:** This monitor is looking at all of the various switches and sensors that are involved with engine management. It looks for voltage readings, resistance readings, and other conditions. The monitor records readings from the vehicle's components and compares them with programmed values that reflect what the readings should be. If they differ by a certain amount, then that component is determined to be suspect.

**Catalyst** (also known as catalytic converter): This monitor uses the readings from oxygen sensors located before and after the catalyst(s) to determine the efficiency of the catalyst.

**Heated Catalyst:** Some vehicles may have an electrically heated catalyst. This heater helps warm up a cold catalyst faster so that it can start working sooner which leads to earlier reduction of harmful emissions. This monitor will check to make sure that the catalyst heater is working.

**Evaporative System:** This monitor works to ensure that the Evaporative System is kept in a condition to minimize the release of gasoline vapors.

**Secondary Air System:** Some vehicles are equipped with a secondary air system, or air injection system. The air injection system is designed to place extra oxygen into the exhaust stream to reduce exhaust pollutants. This monitor checks the components, switches, and solenoids that are part of the air injection system.

**A/C (Air Conditioning) System:** In some older vehicles, this monitor was intended to monitor the vehicle's air conditioning system if it had the older "R-12" style of refrigerant. Since R-12 is harmful to the ozone layer of the earth's atmosphere, a leaking air conditioning system needed to be repaired as soon as possible. Several years ago, R-12 was banned from use; therefore, this monitor will show up as "Not Supported" on most newer vehicles.

**O2 (Oxygen) Sensor:** The O2 Sensor Monitor watches for the performance of the vehicle's oxygen sensors. Oxygen sensors are used to fine tune the amount of fuel that is used by the engine. These adjustments are made several times a second and have a direct impact on fuel economy and emissions reductions. When an oxygen sensor goes bad, the vehicle will usually begin to use more fuel than it needs to, thereby increasing the amount of harmful emissions.

**Heated O2 (Oxygen) Sensor:** Some oxygen sensors include an electric heater to help them warm up quicker and to begin operating faster. This monitor ensures that the heater circuit of the oxygen sensor is working properly. Since not all vehicles have a heated oxygen sensor, some vehicles will show this monitor as "Not Supported."

**EGR (Exhaust Gas Recirculation) System:** Many vehicles are equipped with an EGR system. This emissions control system is designed to reduce nitric oxide tailpipe emissions by reducing the temperature inside the engine's combustion chamber. This monitor checks the components of the EGR system to ensure that it is working properly and that there is sufficient flow of exhaust gas through the system.

## Emission-Related Recall and Voluntary Service Campaigns

To find out if your vehicle is on the EPA's Annual Summary of Emission-Related Recall and Voluntary Service Campaigns Performed on Light-Duty Vehicles and Light-Duty Trucks, please visit [www.wisconsinvip.org](http://www.wisconsinvip.org), [www.epa.gov/otag/recall.htm](http://www.epa.gov/otag/recall.htm), or call 866-OBD-TEST (866-623-8978). The Annual Summary of Emission-Related Recall and Voluntary Service Campaigns Performed on Light-Duty Vehicles and Light-Duty Trucks can also be printed from the analyzer in the Print/View documents area in the Utilities menu by a certified emissions inspector.

## Questions?

**General Program, Repair/Retest and Technical Assistance Information**

866-OBD-TEST or [www.wisconsinvip.org](http://www.wisconsinvip.org)