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November 4, 2009

NEWS

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CAPA CERTIFICATION STANDARDS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Beware of Marketing Programs Being Substituted for Legitimate Independent, Validated Quality Standards

Washington, DC – In response to various market claims being made regarding the quality of independently produced aftermarket parts, Jack Gillis, Executive Director of the Certified Automotive Parts Association offers the following advice: “If you are representing to your policy holders or repair customers that you are using quality alternative parts, be sure the part meets CAPA’s quality standards for true comparability.”

“It is impossible for insurers, or repairers, who choose to use alternative parts, to know the quality, fit, and safety compliance aspects of those parts based on marketing terminology,” said Gillis. “Galvanization, fastener and weld integrity, material composition, latch strength, or even safety compliance, are impossible to determine by simply looking at the part or depending on a marketing claim.”

Even if a part has “FMVSS 108” printed on the box, you can’t be sure if it actually meets those important lighting safety requirements,” said Gillis. In developing its lighting certification program (CAPA 301), we discovered that a significant number of aftermarket lights did not fully comply with the requirements of FMVSS 108. That’s why CAPA Certification is crucial to the users of aftermarket parts. If you see the CAPA Seal on a part, you know that the part meets the comprehensive requirements of CAPA’s Quality Standards. And looking for the CAPA seal is critical because the vast majority of aftermarket parts have not been tested to CAPA standards.

While CAPA requires that participating manufacturers meet comprehensive quality and process related requirements, the most important aspect of CAPA certification is the actual testing and comparison of the AM part to the car company brand part. Some programs merely require their participants to meet general process requirements and when they do all of their parts automatically qualify. “We’ve even heard of programs where only the part distributor and possibly the insurer know the supposed quality status of the parts,” said Gillis. “With CAPA, the quality status is easily and publicly available.”

Shop Perspective

“As with most shops, it’s critically important to me that suppliers deliver the right product,” said Bob Anderson, CAPA’s Board Chairman. “When I use alternative parts, I insist on a part that has actually met CAPA’s Standards. Part marketing and promotion claims don’t help me or my customers. Using actual CAPA certified parts is important because I know what the requirements entail. And the only way I can be sure its CAPA certified is to look for the CAPA Seal.” Anderson’s advice to repairers is to look for the CAPA Quality Seal. “If it’s not on the part, don’t even start.”

Why the CAPA Seal is Important to Those Seeking Quality Alternatives

Currently CAPA has 41 manufacturers participating in its program but the majority of the parts made by these manufacturers have not been tested by CAPA. Furthermore, for those parts that do meet CAPA’s comprehensive standards, most manufacturers make both CAPA Certified and noncertified, untested versions of the parts. “So even if the part was listed on the estimate as CAPA certified, or a CAPA certified part was ordered, it is critical that the part be checked on arrival to insure it has the distinct yellow and blue CAPA Quality Seal. Only then can you know that the correct material was used and that important testing, such as latch retention, has been completed.” said Gillis.

As more and more shops become concerned about reducing repair costs and preventing totals, using genuine CAPA certified parts gives today’s forward looking repairer the opportunity to prevent totals and save their customers money without compromising quality.

Repair Shop Tip

When using a genuine CAPA certified part, be sure to remove the special tab on the tamper proof label and put it with your repair order. It’s an easy way to prove you actually used a CAPA part and by registering the unique seal number with the CAPA TRACKER you’ll be notified if there’s ever a problem with that part!

To learn the details behind the CAPA certification standards and more about CAPA TRACKER, visit www.CAPAcertified.org.

The Certified Automotive Parts Association, founded in 1987, is the nation’s only independent, non-profit, third party crash parts quality certification organization. CAPA certification identifies, for both consumers and the industry, those parts that meet our high quality standards for fit, form, finish, material content and corrosion resistance. For more information see www.CAPAcertified.org.