

High-Tech Cars are Creating Big Challenges for Drivers and Mechanics Alike, Writes Expert Auto Technician Janet Bigelow

Gone are the days when a knowledgeable mechanic or driver could open the hood of just about any car and know exactly what they were looking at, Advanced Tire & Auto's Bigelow notes in new blog post.

Aberdeen, NJ ([PRWEB](#)) February 27, 2017 -- Cars are getting more complex by the day as manufacturers add collision-avoidance systems, "autopilot" modes and other high-tech features—and these changes are creating big challenges for drivers who want their cars fixed correctly the first time, writes Janet Bigelow of Aberdeen-based [Advanced Tire & Auto Center](#), in a new blog post.

Gone are the days when a knowledgeable mechanic or driver could open the hood of just about any car and know exactly what they were looking at, notes Bigelow, who has ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) and Hybrid Electric Vehicle and Diesel Technologies certifications, and is a State of New Jersey Certified Emission Repair Technician and Licensed Emission Inspector.

"When I was growing up, most women would ask their fathers or husbands to take the car to the mechanic. The idea was that men knew how to fix cars, while women would get hoodwinked," Bigelow writes. "But after working as an automotive repair technician for the past 16 years, I'd like to share a secret with you—today's cars are a mystery to nearly everybody, including many auto mechanics."

The reason is simple enough: The typical car today is a Wi-Fi-enabled, rolling gizmo with USB ports, Bluetooth, satellite navigation, and an average of 38 onboard computers, writes the Holmdel native. Successfully servicing and repairing these vehicles increasingly hinges on access to sophisticated, manufacturer-specific diagnostic technology—expensive factory equipment that few independent garages or national franchise operators are willing to invest in, Bigelow explains in the post.

To save money and offer broad-based capability, many garages rely on generic scanners that spit out limited information. "Much like an x-ray, a generic scan tool offers a limited view, while in comparison, a factory scan tool is like an MRI of your vehicle," Bigelow says. "It takes months, even years, to master the function and operation of each individual factory tool. Factory scan tools, paired with certified technicians, allow access into the vehicle's operating systems. This yields a clearer picture of what's happening with your vehicle, and it can save you a lot of money."

By way of illustration, Bigelow cites the example of a customer who takes a vehicle to the garage after her car's "check engine" light comes on. While a generic scan might yield a single code—"oxygen sensor"—this does not necessarily mean that the oxygen sensor is the problem. "The mechanic changes your oxygen sensor based on the limited view of your vehicle and information provided by this generic scan," Bigelow notes. "Like a blindfolded dart-thrower, the mechanic just took a guess, but it didn't work. The real problem, it turns out, was a simple vacuum leak."

Unfortunately, many shops see the return visits that come from such incorrect diagnoses as an "opportunity" to charge customers for an additional attempted repair, Bigelow explains.

The blog post also includes several tips for savvy drivers, including why it's smart to avoid garages that offer

“free diagnostics;” the need to verify that the garage has exactly the right factory diagnostic equipment for you specific vehicle; and why it’s a good idea to make sure the mechanics are fully certified rather than merely “trained.”

Bigelow also advises that it’s a good idea to vet prospective auto repair shops via outside sources. “Car repairs merit some research,” she writes. “Be skeptical of review sites that allow friends and family to praise the business. It’s smarter to read reviews from actual customers on sites like SureCritic.”

The full post is available at:

<http://advancedtireauto.blogspot.com/2017/02/clueless-about-car-repair-when-i-was.html?spref=bl>

About Advanced Tire & Auto Center.

[Advanced Tire & Auto Center](#), located on Route 35 in Aberdeen, Twp., N.J., was established by veteran mechanic Jason Bigelow in 1995, who now runs the business with his wife Janet, also a mechanic. Known for its focus on diagnosing and repairing state-of-the-art, 21st-century vehicles, Advanced Tire & Auto Center utilizes 21 factory O.E. diagnostic tools paired with well-trained technicians to perform the same level of service offered by dealerships, but at lower costs. Its comprehensive offering also includes tire sales and service, wheel alignments, “check engine light” diagnostics, as well as services to corporate and municipal vehicle fleets, body shops and insurance companies.

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