

New Aftermarket Catalytic Converters Questions and Answers

Question: What types of catalytic converters are currently legal for use on California vehicles, and what changes will occur once the new rules take effect?

Answer: The table below summarizes the types of catalysts that can currently be used, and what options will be available once the regulatory changes take effect.

Catalytic Converter Type	Currently Legal for Use in California?	Legal for Use Once New Rules Take Effect?
new original equipment (OE) converters	Yes	Yes
new aftermarket converters	Yes, if the converter model has been exempted by ARB	Yes. Converter models sold or installed on or after January 1, 2009 must be exempted under ARB's new procedures
Certified used OE converters	Yes, if the converter has been tested and approved for resale by an ARB authorized business	No, used converters may not be sold for use or installed on a California vehicle after July 10, 2008
used aftermarket converters or uncertified used OE converters	No	No

Question: How can I tell if a California-legal new aftermarket catalytic converter is available for a customer's vehicle?

Answer: You can access a listing of approved aftermarket catalytic converters at the ARB's website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/aftermkt/devices/amquery.php>. ARB exemptions are issued through Executive Orders. Executive Orders for pre-OBD II and OBD II converters can be sorted by Executive Order number, or by converter manufacturer. Aftermarket catalytic converters sold after January 1, 2009, will also have the ARB Executive Order number permanently labeled on the converter shell.

Before installation, you should consult the converter manufacturer's application catalog to verify the converter model is designed to fit your specific vehicle application and that it is specifically approved for use in California. Statements such as "approved for use on OBD II vehicles" don't necessarily mean that the approval is valid for California. If you still have questions, you may contact the ARB at (800) 242-4450.

Question: Are certified used OE converters rebuilt with new or refurbished parts?

Answer: No, used OE converters are simply tested for their remaining level of performance. Those that pass testing conducted by an ARB authorized business may be currently offered for resale in California. Cosmetic refurbishing, such as polishing of the converter's shell, or replacement of end pipes or flanges is legal. As discussed above, the legal sale or installation of used catalytic converters will end July 10, 2008.