

News Release



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See photos: <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/newsimages/fleetmgt.htm>

Another “First in State”: Charleston County’s Fleet Operations Drives to Top Billing

County Government Fleet Operations becomes first government fleet in the state to score ASE Blue Seal of Excellence Recognition Program

The [National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence \(ASE\)](#) certified [Charleston County’s Fleet Operations](#) as an “ASE Blue Seal of Excellence Certified Shop”. Under the supervision of Director Robert J. Gannon, many of the Fleet Operations technicians have tested and received individual ASE certifications for work related specialties including HVAC, braking systems, electrical components, engine performance and other areas in automotive/light truck and medium/heavy truck repair.

“Becoming an ASE Blue Seal Certified Shop shows that our technicians know what they’re doing and that they’re also a step above the rest,” said M.L. Garrett, Assistant Fleet Operations Manager for Charleston County. “That’s good for our customer’s peace of mind, and great for our fleet operations. Helping our employees become certified is also an excellent way to allow them to develop their careers, and that can also increase employee loyalty.”

Mark Kostos, Charleston County Shop Supervisor and ASE Master Technician, spearheaded the effort to encourage Fleet Operations staff to dedicate their efforts in learning all they can about all aspects of their job and seek certification as part of their skills.

“To be recognized as an ASE Blue Seal of Excellence Shop we had to meet certain specialized criteria,” said Kostos. “Each area of service we perform in the Fleet must be covered by an ASE certified technician.”

At least 75% of the technicians performing diagnosis and repairs must also be ASE certified.

“We currently exceed the minimum requirements,” said Kostos. “We have more than 80% of our Technicians ASE Certified covering a total of 25 Designated Certification areas with all 16 required Certification areas covered. Some of our technicians have multiple certifications in each area.”

The 16 required certification areas are:

Medium/Heavy Truck:

Automotive/Light Truck:

- Gasoline Engines
- Diesel Engines
- Drive Train & Axle
- Brakes
- Suspension & Steering
- Electrical/ Electronic Systems
- Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning
- Preventive Maintenance Inspection

- Engine Repair
- Automatic Transmission
- Manual Drive Train & Axles
- Suspension & Steering
- Brakes Systems
- Electrical/Electronic Systems
- Heating & Air Conditioning
- Engine Performance

Technicians must recertify every five years to keep their ASE certifications current, and Fleet Operations must certify every year to retain the “Blue Seal of Excellence” Certification status.

“The Blue Seal Certification will be an ongoing challenge keeping current with continuing education, training in the use of specialized testing equipment, and the ever changing technology of today’s vehicles, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations, alternative fuel sources and tighter fuel economy regulations. We are very proud of our ASE Blues Seal Team,” said Kostos.

Charleston County’s Fleet Operations is tasked with keeping the agency’s vehicles up and running. During the last 12-month period, county vehicles have covered more than 10 million miles. In total, Charleston County operates 1,019 vehicles, from everyday 4-door sedans to bulldozers and ambulances. It’s the responsibility of Fleet Operations to maintain each and every vehicle to help service the citizens of Charleston County.

The “Blue Seal of Excellence Recognition Program Plaque” was awarded to Charleston County Fleet Operations in front of [Charleston County Council](#) during their Dec. 10 meeting. The presentation was made by ASE’s, Vice President of Communications, Tony Molla.

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