

# TPMS Points of Service – Know when to check em’

Scot Holloway, CEO & General Manager – Bartec USA  
7/31/2018

Servicing Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems is on the mind nearly every automotive repair and service provider. If it’s not? It should be! By the time model year 2019 gets here, the greatest population of vehicles, that is the average aged vehicle, will have TPMS sensors fitted to them. By then, sensor batteries will be failing with regularity, vehicles will fitted with multiple sensor types, and there will be a TPMS diagnostic tool for every tire machine in the shop. Even now, shops are seeing cars and trucks fitted with direct TPMS more than two thirds of the time. While we’re waiting to get to that 100% point, let’s make sure we know the points of service and intervals.

There are six points of service for TPMS, ranging from Pre-Inspection to the Relearn. Each are a very important step, and should be the basis for your business’ service plan.

| Service                                    | Interval   |
|--|--|
| Test Before Touch [TPMS Pre-inspection]    | Before every wheel and tire service event                                  |
| Sensor Service Kit [wear item] Replacement | Each time tire is removed from wheel                                       |
| Sensor Replacement                         | When battery fails or sensor is damaged                                    |
| Sensor Install                             | Any time new or alternate wheels are installed where no sensor is in place |
| Inflation Pressure Adjustment [placard]    | When up-fitting or plus sizing changes the recommended inflation pressure  |
| TPMS Relearn                               | Every time sensor is replaced, or when tires are rotated                   |

## Test Before You Touch

Before any wheel and tire service begins, check the sensors and check the system. TPMS sensors with dead batteries can take days to show up as a TPMS MIL [flashing light] so do yourself and your business a favor and make sure you and your customers know the status of their sensors. This also means the physical condition of the sensors. Let your customer know when their sensors are damaged or heavily corroded.



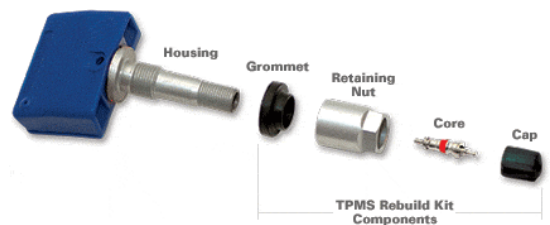
Heavily corroded sensor



Sensor with cracked nut

## Sensor Service Kit Replacement

Always replace the wear items found on most TPMS sensors. For the same reason the rubber valve stem is replaced, so should you replaced the seals, grommets and other items found on TPMS sensors. The RMA, TIA and many OE’s all say that every time a tire is taken off the wheel, these items should be replaced.

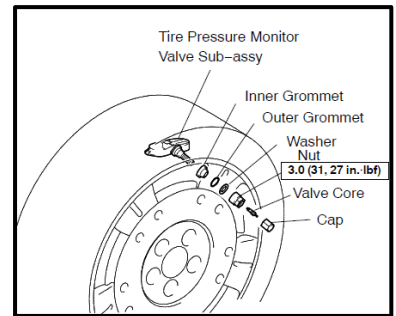


## Sensor Replacement

Sensor batteries fail. The sensors themselves get damaged either while driving or during service. The fundamental component the vehicle safety system otherwise known as TPMS, is the sensor! If it's broke, fix it! Keep the TPMS operating and keep your customer's safe, and of course limit liability.

## Sensor Install

Not really different from replacement, other than this is the scenario where your customer wants a different set of wheels and tires for their ride. We know that keeping a TPMS operating is a must, so in this scenario we install new sensors into the alternate wheel/tire package.



## Adjusting Recommended Inflation Pressure

Many know this as "placard." Prior to TPMS, we could shall we say, "get away with" a bit more in terms of how we selected wheels and tires for our cars. If you need any evidence of that, I urge you to visit the Global Tire Expo at SEMA, where the creativity of wheel design and fitment seemingly has no bounds! That said however, serious wheel and tire professionals have always known that maintaining proper load carrying capacity of a car or truck is critical; and THAT is directly tied to recommended inflation pressure and the proper wheel and tire fitment. Recommended inflation pressure is what drives the TPMS. A low pressure [solid] TPMS light means one or more of your tires is below 75% of recommended inflation pressure. There are situations that whether it be plus sizing or up-fitting tires that the recommended inflation pressure and placard label need to be adjusted.

| TIRE AND LOADING INFORMATION  |               |                    |  |
|---|---------------|--------------------|--|
| SEATING CAPACITY  | TOTAL         | 88                 | FRONT 8 REAR 88  |
| The combined weight of occupants and cargo should never exceed XXX kg or XXX lbs. |               |                    |  |
| TIRE  | ORIGINAL SIZE | COLD TIRE PRESSURE | SEE OWNER'S MANUAL FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION<br>1G6YV34AX45601310 |
| FRONT   | P235/60R17XL  | 200 kPa, 29 PSI    |  |
| REAR  | P235/60R17XL  | 200 kPa, 29 PSI    |  |
| SPARE   | P235/60R17XL  | 200 kPa, 29 PSI    |  |

## TPMS Relearn

The process of programming new sensor ID's or repositioning existing ID's in the vehicle control module. This should always be done after sensor replacement and when necessary after a rotation. This is the "finishing step" once wheel, tire and sensor service is complete. Not only does the relearn get new ID's programmed to the vehicle, it creates a baseline for the next service visit.

In you are in the auto repair and service business, particularly wheel and tire, these are the services that need to be listed on your menu of services. Performing these services at the proper interval takes commitment and investment in tools, training and inventory. Providing these services will add value to your customer, add to your bottom line and increase business.

