

Automotive Services

Collision Repair · General Auto Repair · Tire & Wheel · Auto Glass · Towing & Roadside · Car Wash & Detailing

Six trades, one publication. Every item is something that moves a number on your P&L, changes what you must do by law, or changes what parts and labor cost you.

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SUPPLY

eBay's ban on airbags, inflators and steering-wheel airbag covers took effect September 24, closing the largest marketplace for the parts and giving sellers 30 days to clear listings.

eBay's revised policy took effect September 24, 2026. Standalone airbags, airbag inflators and steering-wheel airbag covers can no longer be listed in the United States. Airbag control units, crash sensors, diagnostic modules and passenger sensors stay listable, but in the U.S. only for sellers eBay has pre-approved. Sellers have 30 days to pull non-compliant listings; after that eBay removes them on the seller's behalf, and relisting can bring selling restrictions.

The trigger is NHTSA's work on counterfeit inflators carrying the designation DTN60DB. As of mid-September the agency tied 11 deaths and three serious injuries to them, the most recent on August 27 in Dallas involving a Chevrolet Equinox; the earlier cases were Chevrolet Malibus and Hyundai Sonatas. NHTSA issued an initial decision in April 2026 finding the imported inflators substandard.

eBay said it acted after a comprehensive review of the risk these products pose to its users, and will police the ban with seller compliance audits, filtering algorithms and AI-supported monitoring. Amazon, Meta, Temu and Alibaba have also barred airbag sales. That closes the cheapest informal channel shops and small sellers used for restraint parts on older and salvage-title work.

Nothing about a counterfeit inflator is illegal until it is installed, as the Automotive Anti-Counterfeiting Council puts it. The liability therefore sits with whoever fits it. Shops that sourced airbag assemblies through marketplaces now need a dealer, an OEM-authorized supplier or a licensed dismantler named on file for every restraint part, and a paper trail that shows which one supplied it.

What to do about it: Pull your parts ledger for the last 12 months and flag every airbag, inflator, module or steering-wheel cover bought through a marketplace; those VINs are your exposure. Name one approved source for restraint parts this week -- dealer, OEM-authorized supplier or licensed dismantler -- and put it in writing for whoever buys parts. If a seller account was part of your salvage income, clear the listings yourself: eBay-initiated removals do not count against compliance history, but relisting can cost you selling privileges. Add a line to every restraint estimate recording the part's source and invoice number. If you suspect a counterfeit inflator in a car on your lot, do not probe the terminals; call the OEM, then NHTSA at 888-327-4236 or Homeland Security Investigations.

eBay seller notice, airbag ban, effective Sept. 24, 2026 · NPR, eBay bans airbag sales, Sept. 24, 2026 · Repairer Driven News, eBay airbag ban, Sept. 14, 2026

COLLISION REPAIR

DEMAND

Franchised dealers operated body shops at 31.9% of stores in the first half, down from 33.4%, the largest midyear decline in at least eight years, NADA reported September 23.

Why it matters: NADA's first-half figures, reported September 23, put dealership body shop sales at \$3.94 billion, up 0.8% from \$3.91 billion a year earlier but still 1.7% below the \$4.01 billion of first-half 2024. Volume held up because sales per repair order rose nearly 10%; the shop count did not. The 1.5-point drop in franchised dealers running an on-site shop, the largest midyear decline in at least eight years, pushes collision volume -- especially warranty-adjacent and OEM-certified work -- toward independents and MSOs. Ask the service directors at the two or three nearest dealers whether their body shop is still open. If it closed, get on their referral list before an MSO does.

[CollisionWeek, dealer body shop sales, Sept. 23, 2026](#)

MONEY

Oklahoma Farm Bureau filed a brief September 1 defending the state's storage-fee cap of \$39 a day for ten days and \$75 after, which twelve body shops are suing to void.

Why it matters: The Oklahoma law, in force since November 2025, caps storage on total-loss vehicles at \$39 a day for the first ten days and \$75 a day after that, and limits billable administrative labor to four hours. Twelve collision shops and a state association sued, arguing it singles out one trade while salvage yards, mechanical shops and dealerships face no such limit. A dismissal motion was denied in June 2026 and both sides have moved for summary judgment. Oklahoma Farm Bureau, the state's seventh-largest personal auto writer at 3.6% share, filed its amicus brief September 1 citing operators charging \$250 a day and one \$3,550 storage bill. No trial date is set. Price the four-hour admin ceiling into your rate sheet now.

[Autobody News, Oklahoma fee cap brief, Sept. 25, 2026](#)

GENERAL AUTO REPAIR

REGULATION

Ford filed six recalls in mid-September, the largest covering about 223,500 F-150s for an unsecured fuel tank, loose suspension fasteners and bad rear-axle bearings.

Why it matters: Three F-150 campaigns -- NHTSA 26V576, 26V577 and 26V578 -- cover roughly 223,500 trucks for incorrectly manufactured rear-axle tail bearings, improperly tightened suspension fasteners and an unsecured fuel tank. Ford also recalled 2,711 2026 Broncos for a metal burr that can tear a curtain airbag (26V580), 86 Mustang Mach-Es (26V582) and seven Explorers (26V581); Toyota recalled 8,521 C-HR EVs (26V570). Dealers do the remedy work, but customers ask you first. Carfax's tracker, updated September 14, says about one in five vehicles on U.S. roads carries an unfixed recall, including 1.3 million under do-not-drive orders. Run the VIN at write-up and note the result on the order.

[The Autowire, Recall Roundup, Sept. 22, 2026](#) · [Carfax Recall Tracker \(updated Sept. 14, 2026\)](#)

DEMAND

State Farm paid \$1.9 billion on animal-collision claims in the year to June 30 and puts the odds of an animal strike at one in 145, improved from one in 139.

Why it matters: State Farm's September 15 release covers July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026: \$1.9 billion paid by that insurer alone and more than 1.6 million animal-collision claims industry-wide. National odds improved to one in 145 from one in 139, but claims peak in the October-to-December rut. For a general repair shop the work is radiators, condensers, cooling fans, hoods, lamps and front suspension -- usually insurer-paid and drivable. Stock front-end cooling parts for your three highest-volume nameplates before mid-October, and tell service writers to ask about animal strikes rather than logging the job as an unknown impact.

[CollisionWeek, State Farm animal claims, Sept. 24, 2026](#)

TIRE & WHEEL

SUPPLY

The United Steelworkers asked U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer on September 25 to open a Section 201 safeguard case covering passenger, truck, off-road and aircraft tires.

Why it matters: The letter, reported September 25, seeks relief under Section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974 -- a safeguard reaching every import source at once, unlike the country-specific antidumping orders now in force. It proposes no rates and names Thailand as the largest 2025 exporter of passenger, light truck and medium truck tires to the United States. Nothing changes for dealers until USTR acts and the ITC opens a case, and there is no docket yet. A broad safeguard would hit third-tier imports hardest, the tier dealers say sells best. Ask your two largest suppliers what a global safeguard does to landed cost and whether price sheets hold through the first quarter.

[Modern Tire Dealer, union targets imports, Sept. 25, 2026](#)

MONEY

Dunlop says California's replacement-tire efficiency rule could cut the promised consumer benefit from \$153 a set to nearly \$14 once tread depth and mileage are traded away.

Why it matters: The California Energy Commission's replacement-tire efficiency program adds an estimated \$1.50 per tire from 2029 and \$6.50 from 2033, against projected fuel savings of about \$179 over the life of a set on a typical gasoline vehicle. Dunlop Tires North America, in material reported September 18, argues that math ignores what manufacturers will trade to hit rolling-resistance targets -- shallower tread, shorter service life -- and that an economy tire's Phase 2 benefit falls from \$153 to nearly \$14. Dunlop is answering with a California curriculum and dealer comparison tools, not a suit. Assume the 2029 ticket rises, and record tread depth at removal now: mileage-warranty arguments are where this lands.

[Modern Tire Dealer, Dunlop vs. California, Sept. 18, 2026](#)

AUTO GLASS

REGULATION

Governor Newsom has until September 30 to act on SB 988, the Motor Vehicle Glass Act, and his September 18 and September 20 bill lists did not include it.

Why it matters: SB 988 was presented to the governor at 6 p.m. on August 31, after the Assembly passed it 78-0 on August 24 and the Senate concurred 37-0 on August 26. It writes ADAS calibration disclosure into the Civil Code, bars incentivized claim solicitation and carries civil penalties. Newsom's September 18 (92 bills signed, 25 vetoed) and September 20 (76 signed, 24 vetoed) updates do not list it, and the deadline to sign or veto is September 30 -- two days after this issue. California glass shops should draft the disclosure language, calibration record format and consent script now. If it is signed, the duties attach to work written after the operative date, not to the day you change your forms.

[Office of the Governor, legislative update, 9.20.2026](#) · [Office of the Governor, legislative update, 9.18.26](#) · [CalMatters, lawmakers test Newsom veto, Sept. 30 deadline](#)

INSURANCE

A New Jersey bill introduced September 14 would fine insurers up to \$5,000 each time artificial intelligence makes the final decision to deny an auto, homeowners or flood claim.

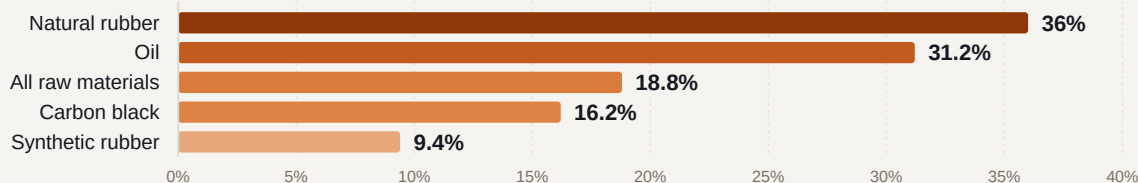
Why it matters: Assembly Bill 5494, introduced September 14 and referred the same day to the Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee, is narrow: it bars AI from making the final denial, not from touching the file. Penalties reach \$5,000 per violation across automobile, homeowners and flood lines. It has one sponsor, Assemblyman Chris Tully of Bergen, and no hearing scheduled, so treat it as a signal rather than a deadline. For glass and calibration work, where a denial often arrives as a flat schedule cut with no named adjuster, ask for the adjuster's name in writing on every declined calibration line, and keep the reply with the file.

[CollisionWeek, NJ bill on insurer AI, Sept. 16, 2026](#)

INFOGRAPHIC 1 / TIRE INPUT COSTS

Tire raw materials cost 18.8% more in August than a year earlier, led by a 36% jump in natural rubber.

Percent change, August 2026 against August 2025, Northcoast Research raw-material cost index, published by Modern Tire Dealer, September 22, 2026.



Every input rose by double digits except synthetic rubber. The same survey has dealer retail sellout down 1.3% in August after gains of 0.9% in July and 0.6% in June, so the cost is not being recovered at the counter yet. Expect manufacturer price letters before winter fitment; keep fill-in orders short until they land. [Healy: Third Tier Tops Survey \(Modern Tire Dealer, Sept. 22, 2026\)](#)

TOWING & ROADSIDE

TWO ITEMS

INSURANCE

The National Insurance Crime Bureau and roadside platform Honk agreed September 24 to pool data on towing, impound, storage and salvage fraud across NICB's 1,200-plus insurer members.

Why it matters: NICB announced the arrangement on September 24. Honk contributes real-time data from the towing and roadside lifecycle, and the two will circulate fraud intelligence on predatory towing, impound, storage and salvage across more than 1,200 property and casualty insurers and self-insured organizations. No fraud-loss figure was published and no state program was named. For legitimate operators the practical change is that invoice patterns, not just consumer complaints, trigger an insurer referral. Tighten the file: photograph the vehicle in place before hookup, log the dispatching authority by name, itemize every line. An unexplained gate or storage fee is what gets pulled.

[CollisionWeek, NICB-Honk towing fraud, Sept. 25, 2026](#) · [Repairer Driven News, NICB partnership, Sept. 28, 2026](#)

REGULATION

Pennsylvania's attorney general filed a contempt petition September 3 seeking more than \$220,000 from Philadelphia towing companies accused of breaking a 2022 order on unmarked-lot tows and excessive fees.

Why it matters: The petition, filed September 3, alleges the companies kept towing from areas not clearly marked and kept charging excessive fees, breaching a 2022 court order that settled for \$9,000 in restitution and costs plus a \$14,500 suspended civil penalty. The office is now asking for more than \$220,000, roughly fifteen times that suspended amount. A consent order is not a one-time cost; signage and fee-posting get re-litigated. Photograph every tow-away sign you rely on with a date stamp and file the photo with the invoice. Pennsylvania's Act 46 posting, itemized-billing and payment-acceptance duties take effect December 17, with penalties to \$5,000 on a repeat.

[CollisionWeek, PA AG contempt petition, Sept. 3, 2026](#) · [PA Towing Law Changes: Act 46 of 2026](#)

CAR WASH & DETAILING

TWO ITEMS

DEMAND

Ninety-one percent of unlimited-wash subscribers say they will renew, but member price satisfaction fell to 46%, its lowest in more than a year, the ICA's second-quarter Pulse found.

Why it matters: The International Carwash Association's CAR WASH Pulse for the second quarter of 2026 has 64% of retailers calling conditions positive and nearly two-thirds reporting rising membership sales -- the first uptick since early 2025, ending a year-long slide. The soft spot is price: member price satisfaction fell to 46%, its lowest in more than a year, and value satisfaction slipped for members and non-members alike; retailers and suppliers both named the economy their top challenge. The survey also found operators believe 53% of dissatisfied customers come back for a rewash while only 17% of consumers say they do. Do not take the next step on membership pricing without a rewash your staff can grant on the spot.

[Prof. Carwashing & Detailing, ICA Pulse, Q2 2026](#) · [International Carwash Association, CAR WASH Pulse series](#)

SUPPLY

WashTec set its 2026 EBIT margin target at 8% to 9% on September 15 and said consumables sales are running below plan, with more restructuring cost to come.

Why it matters: WashTec, a large listed wash-equipment maker, said on September 15 that it now expects a 2026 EBIT margin of 8% to 9%, having previously guided to profit growing faster than revenue, and that return on capital employed will fall below last year's. Revenue guidance stayed at mid-single-digit growth. It blamed consumables running below expectations and delays in relocating production, and booked a further single-digit-million-euro restructuring charge; its board is temporarily the chief executive and finance chief only. It still targets 12% to 14% by 2028/29. A consumables business under margin pressure reprices contracts. Get your 2027 chemical and parts quote in writing before December.

[CarwashPro, WashTec cuts outlook, Sept. 15, 2026](#)

INFOGRAPHIC 2 / PA TOW PENALTIES

Pennsylvania's new towing law sets two penalty tiers, and the conduct violations cost more than the paperwork ones.

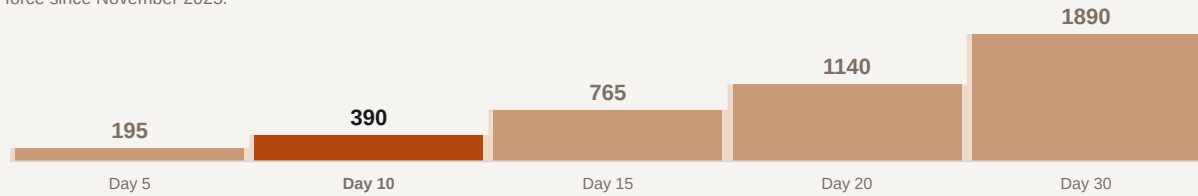
Maximum civil penalty per violation, first offense to repeat offense, Act 46 of 2026 (Section 7332 of the Crimes Code), effective December 17, 2026.



The first three are office paperwork and run to \$750, then \$1,500 on a repeat. The last three are dispatch and release conduct and run to \$2,500, then \$5,000 -- and a court can impound the tow truck until penalties are paid and compliance is shown. The cheap three are fixable before December 17 for the price of signage and a printer. [PA Towing Law Changes: Act 46 of 2026, requirements and penalty schedule](#)

Oklahoma's cap lets a total-loss storage bill reach \$1,890 by day 30, with the daily rate nearly doubling after day ten.

Force since November 2025.



THE BACKGROUND SIGNAL

The fraud that reads your invoices before it sends one

Business email compromise, not ransomware, is the one that should concern a shop owner. Someone gets into a mailbox, reads until they understand how you invoice and who pays you, then sends a real-looking progress billing with different bank details. No malware, no warning — just a payment that never arrives and an argument about who eats it. A shop that emails estimates, repair orders and parts invoices all day is the shape this is built for. The quieter number is adoption: under 20% of firms with fewer than 20 staff use AI at all.

FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, 2025 Internet Crime Report — reported cases only, rounded from \$2,946,830,270, \$2,770,151,146 and \$3,046,598,558. U.S. Census Bureau, Business Trends and Outlook Survey, May 3, 2026.

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1 THE REVENUE ENGINE

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- Qualifies & captures the job
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- Books onto your calendar
- Instant text-back to callers
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- Spam & robocall screening
- Call recordings + transcripts
- Booking reminders
- Review requests
- Pushes every lead to your other tools, in real time
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- Outbound campaigns
- Monthly ROI report

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Turns the call into a priced quote that books itself

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- Accept → book a time window
- Automatic follow-up until booked
- Tech photo line (techs text photos in)
- Financing & maintenance-plan display
- Shared job room (AI, tech, owner, customer)
- Works with your stack or standalone

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Booked, paid job

The lead becomes revenue

SEEN IN YOUR DASHBOARD

2 SEE EVERYTHING — YOUR DASHBOARDS

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example view - this month

ANSWERED	BOOKED	CAPTURED	MISSED
312	88	124	0

47 calls caught after hours — a 9-to-5 desk would have missed them

CERNO DEAL DESK • OWNER DASHBOARD

example view - this month

OPEN	AWAITING	SENT	WON
12	4	18	71

6 min average from request to quote sent • 71% estimate → won

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