

# ABAC NEWS

SEPT - OCT  
2013

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*The Official Newsletter of the Auto Body Association of Connecticut*



## Support Those Who Support You!

Giving back to your industry can be rewarding and we all benefit from educating ourselves and each other. To this end, if something works for you, share it. Your business will prosper for it, and so will the industry. When your Association organizes membership meetings that educate, inform and make your business more profitable, you should take advantage of them. The information and education that we provide to our membership helps all of us repair vehicles properly and safely. And, in doing so, we hope you will also learn how to make your businesses more efficient and more profitable. I can assure you of this: the thing you can learn in just one of our membership meetings will help you realize more profit in your business the very NEXT DAY.

As your President, I have given my time, energy and knowledge with the hopes of helping others. I do this out of respect and gratitude for the people that helped me along the way. Along with the Board of Directors, we have done everything we can to give back to this industry. If you have not been to a meeting recently, I would certainly encourage you to come out. The Board of Directors has done a tremendous job organizing meeting content and bringing in dynamic speakers. All of this is made possible by the generous support this Association receives from our ABAC News Supporting Advertisers. Many of these advertisers do much more than help fund our programs; they share repair information, keep us updated on the latest information and training, and serve to guide us through the latest advancements and changes in the industry.

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It is essential that we support our vendors. Without their support, we would not be able to continue aggressively fighting the insurance industry and educating our members and the public. Every project that we undertake – and there are many – has a price. Help us to keep the fight strong. Stand up with us and support our ABAC News Supporting Advertisers. Likewise, if you are doing business with a vendor that is not advertising in the ABAC News, ask them to sign up as a Supporting Advertiser.

With that, summer is over. I hope everyone had a good one. The time to get back to business and be profitable is now! Our November Membership Meeting, being held on November 12<sup>th</sup> (see flyer included with this issue) will kick off the ABAC Education Series featuring Advanced Estimates. A “must attend” for shop owners and estimators.

I ask of you this: get involved in your industry; support your ABAC News Vendors; and attend as many membership meetings as you can.

***Support Those Who Support You!***

***Tony Ferraiolo***

ABAC President

## ABAC Packs the House Once Again for September Quarterly Meeting

A full house was on hand at the Country House Restaurant this past September 17<sup>th</sup> for the start of the ABAC’s Quarterly Membership & Educational Meetings. ABAC President Tony Ferraiolo opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending another of important events in education and information.

Ferraiolo began by asking members for input as far as content that they would like to see covered in future meetings. You, as members, should contact Tony or any Board members listed on the back page of this newsletter with topics that you want to see.



President Ferraiolo also recognized all of the ABAC News Supporting Advertisers whose financial contributions assist in making these events possible. ***“These vendors support your association financially with their advertising. Please remember them when purchasing your supplies, parts or services. Support those who support you,”*** reminded Ferraiolo. ABAC Supporting Advertisers are recognized at every ABAC Meeting with table frames listing each of them.

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Tony then recognized the ABAC Corporate Sponsors:

- **Platinum Level**
- Buckley & Wynne, Attorneys at Law
- Security First Insurance Group
- **Gold Level**
- Bald Hill Motor Group
- Balise Motor Group
- Enterprise Car Rental
- Richard Chevrolet

Tony then introduced the **newest ABAC Members:**

- Reno's Auto Body and Repair - Hartford
- Standard Auto Body - Windsor Locks
- Don Mallon Chevrolet - Norwich
- Route 1 Auto Body - Fairfield
- Shoreline Collision and Restoration - Madison
- Sorel's Garage - Brooklyn
- Westlund Auto Body - Bridgeport

*"We are enjoying continued growth in our association and shop owners know where they can go for information and education...their ABAC,"* said Ferraiolo.

Tony then recognized the Sponsors for the evening:

- **Primary Sponsor:**
  - Balise Auto Group
    - Gary Danko – Wholesale Parts Representative
    - Ken Zimmerer – Wholesale Parts Director
- **Co-Sponsors:**
  - Enterprise Rental

Tony then touched on I-Car training and announced that a short I-Car presentation would be shown during dinner. *"The OEM's are beginning to require that in order to be a Certified Shop you need to be Gold Certified by I-CAR to qualify for their programs,"* said Ferraiolo. He then gave several other examples of requirements.

Next was an update on the latest up-to-date information on the Hartford Lawsuit.

Up next to the podium was Attorney John Parese from Buckley & Wynne. John gave us all an in depth look at the Department of Insurance Bulletin IC34. Parese then fielded questions from the audience.

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Legislative Director Bill Romaniello gave us information and clarification concerning storage and issues than can arise.

Our featured guest for the evening was General Motors Wholesale Specialist Jeffery Shaw. Shaw was here thanks to the Balise Auto Group who again was the main sponsor for the evening. Mr. Shaw gave us all an informational and educational presentation on repairing vehicles back to the GM specifications.



Subjects covered for the evening:

- **Genuine GM Parts Website**
- **GM Collision Conquest Program**
- **GM Collision Rebates Programs**
- **CollisionLink Usage**
- **Collision Parts Core Strategy**

Mr. Shaw told us that [www.genuinegmparts.com](http://www.genuinegmparts.com) is a business to business (GM to Independent Shops) website. Here at this website you can find:

- **Collision Repair Information**
- **Body/Frame Dimensions**
- **Paint Codes**
- **GM Sheet Metal Lifetime Warranty Documents**
- **Position Statements**
- **Powertrain**
- **And much, much more!**

Shaw then went over the GM Fascia/Lighting Core Program.

- **Lighting – Don’t throw the box away!**
- **Fascias – You need the sticker from the fascia!**

Shaw then fielded questions from attendees.

**The Balise Auto Group is comprised of the following car lines:**

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| *Chevrolet | *Ford       |
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| *Toyota    | *Volkswagen |

***For more information see their listings in the ABAC News Supporting Advertiser’s Directory or contact Gary Danko direct at the Balise Auto Group, 413-237-1840***

So came to end another “packed house” ABAC meeting and an opportunity for all shops to learn and be more profitable, brought to you by the Auto Body Association of Connecticut!

***Join us at our next membership and educational meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013***

# New York Bills Seek to Make Insurance Co. Parts and Materials Mandates Illegal

**Proposals seek ban for insurance company requirements for collision repair parts and materials procurement programs.**

A pair of companion bills before the New York legislature seeks to make insurance company requirements to use specific vendors or process for parts or materials procurement illegal. The bills, Assembly Bill 7234 (A7234) and Senate Bill 5786 (S5786) propose to amend Section 1, Subsection (a) of Section 2610 of the New York insurance law that today makes it illegal for an insurer to require a specific repair shop.

The proposed language below for the subsection adds a prohibition against specifying vendors or processes. The text in all capital letters includes the proposed amendment.

(a) Whenever a motor vehicle collision or comprehensive loss shall have been suffered by an insured, no insurer providing collision or comprehensive coverage therefore shall require that repairs be made to such vehicle in a particular place or shop or by a particular concern, **NOR REQUIRE A REPAIR FACILITY TO USE A SPECIFIC VENDOR OR PROCESS FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF PARTS OR OTHER MATERIALS NECESSARY FOR THE REPAIR OF A MOTOR VEHICLE.**

“These bills seek to clearly address within the insurance laws of New York State that insurance company requirements to use specific-vendors should be illegal,” stated Ed Kizenberger, executive director of the New York State Automotive Collision Technicians (NYSACT). “Requiring repair facilities to use an online marketplace to purchase parts or materials based upon the lowest price could force millions of dollars of business to move outside New York State. Repairers should continue to source parts and materials from vendors they know and trust to best serve the interest of the consumers.”

Kizenberger explained that his association supports efforts around the country to eliminate insurer mandates. However, while insurers should understand the potential impact mandating specific vendors or processes would have on a collision repairer’s efficiency when faced with multiple mandates, crafting legislation that would seek to make the mandates illegal is the only way to assure an efficient market.

“Historically, when it comes to mandated products and processes, insurance companies don’t see the impact these requirements have on the industry as a whole,” stated Kizenberger. “When multiple insurers implement multiple requirements, everyone loses, and ultimately the consumer is left footing the added cost created by the insurance companies that engage in this practice.”

The bills add a prohibition against specifying materials purchased, going beyond making the specification of parts procurement processes illegal.

“We wanted to make sure that the bill would address future concerns for the industry,” Kizenberger added. “There are already examples of insurance companies requiring repair facilities to use specific brands of paint in other parts of the world.”

The bills have been referred to the Assembly and Senate’s respective insurance committees.

**Source: [www.collisionweek.com](http://www.collisionweek.com)**



## Helping Your Customers with Insights on what to do After an Accident is Good for Business and Customer Retention

I hope you are enjoying the beginning of fall. Unless you are one of the three people that regularly read my bi-monthly commentary, then you probably were unaware that I changed the format of my articles to focus on addressing frequently asked questions from ABAC members. If you would like anything addressed, or feel a particular topic is worthy of a discussion, please let me know. This week, I was asked to discuss two questions. Well, more like a question and a topic/question. They both speak to the type of information a customer might solicit beyond the nuts and bolts of a repair job. My philosophy is this: the more information and help you can provide, the better it will ultimately prove for your business and repeat business.

**The Question: My customer was the victim. The at-fault insurance company has accepted liability and is paying for repairs. Does my customer have any obligation to notify her own insurance company of the accident?**

**Answer:** Yes. Most insurance policies require that an insured notify the insurer of an accident, even if the insured does not wish to put in a claim for payment of damages. What is more, if there are injuries, there may be access to medical payments coverage under the auto policy, which is a primary coverage before health insurance. Additionally, if coverage is later denied or there are claims that arise at a later date, it is important to preserve access to coverage. A prevalent exclusion to coverage is late notice of a claim, which could result in the claim being denied.

**The Topic/Question: What should someone do immediately after an accident?**

**Answer:** The best resource for you and your customers is set forth in a pamphlet I authored called: "Auto Accident Rights & Responsibilities". You can access the information on my firm's website: [www.buckleywynne.com](http://www.buckleywynne.com) under: "What to do after an accident". You can also access the physical pamphlets free of charge from my office. Just let me know how many you want, and I will send them to you. Many shops give these to customers as a courtesy. They are free and full of useful information.

As to what should be done immediately following an accident: here are some helpful pointers from the brochure:

- First - At once, stop and render such assistance as may be needed. When in doubt, call for an ambulance. Failure to stop after an accident is a crime.
- Second - Prevent further accidents: Turn on hazard lights, use cones, warning triangles or flares, as appropriate. If there are no serious injuries, and it would be safer to do so, move vehicles to a safe place.
- Third - Call the police, even if it was a minor accident.
- Fourth - Write down the names, addresses, and telephone and driver's license numbers of all of the other drivers and the insurance information for each of the other vehicles.
- Fifth - Get witness information if possible.
- Sixth - Take photos of the accident scene and the vehicles.

I hope these articles prove somewhat informative and useful. Again, if you have any questions that you would like me to address, please e-mail them to me at: [jparese@buckleywynne.com](mailto:jparese@buckleywynne.com).

***John Parese***

**Buckley & Wynne - Attorneys at Law**



# In The Headlights

## The ABAC wishes to express their condolences to the following families for their recent losses:

**Paul David Stowe**, 43, of North Haven, passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Monday, October 1, 2013 at Yale-New Haven Hospital from injuries received in a motorcycle accident in September. He was the husband of Gina Virginelli Stowe. Paul was born in Hartford on October 15, 1969; son of Clifford P. and Bridget P. Buonocore Stowe; had worked for the Town & County Auto Body division of Mauro Motors and was a member of the James Gang Motorcycle Club of New Haven. Father of Nicholas Vincent Stowe, Anna Marie Stowe and Angelina Libby Stowe.

**Edward Lewis Lupinek**, longtime resident of East Haddam and most recently of Port Charlotte, Florida, passed away September 14, 2013 at the age of 80, after long battle with Parkinson's disease. He was born July 2, 1933 in Middletown, the son of Lewis Lupinek and Eloise Greco. In 1956, after serving his country in the US Army, Edward founded Eddie's Auto Body in East Haddam, where his son continues his legacy. He enjoyed being a member of the East Haddam Rotary Club, where he received an award for 25 years perfect attendance.

Edward was also a 50 year member of the American Legion and he served as Captain of the East Haddam Fire Department where he volunteered for 25 years. Edward was an avid boater and fisherman. He commercially fished for shad on the Connecticut River and as a Sea Captain, he chartered many slat water fishing expeditions. His favorite pastime was fishing and crabbing with his family and friends and he loved taking extended vacations on the boat.

Edward leaves behind his wife Audrey (formerly Downing); his daughter Gwen with her two sons Robert and Steven; his son Edward (Pepe) and grandson Josh. He also leaves his stepson Christopher Downing and step-daughter Cindy Short; grandchildren Brian, Steven, Richard and Christine. He also leaves his dear sister, Helene Ferrari, along with half-brothers and sisters: Robert, Lorraine, Thomas, Daniel, Peter, James and Lewis Lupinek.

**Emilio "Gootch" Parese**, 93, of North Haven, passed away peacefully at his home with his family by his side on Friday, September 20, 2013. He was the husband of the late Celia Mary Cizek Parese. Gootch was born in North Haven on May 15, 1920; son of the late Giovanni and Providenza Lombardo Parese; served his country faithfully in the U.S. Army Air Corp during WW II as a Captain and Navigator and was decorated for flying thirty combat missions in the Pacific. Gootch was the owner and operator of Parese Motors for 74 years until his retirement in 2011; was a faithful parishioner and trustee of St. Barnabas Church and was a member of the Disabled American Veterans. Father of Attorney John A. Parese and his wife Maggie Jensen, Mary Parese Emerson and her husband Edward Emerson, Attorney Stanley E. Parese and his wife Judy Fraser. Grandfather of Marla Dankin and her husband Kevin, Laura Parese, Attorney John M. Parse and his wife Dr. Lyn Balsamo, Paul Parese and his wife Donna, Matthew Parese, Nicholas Emerson, Christopher Emerson and Jackson Parese. Great-grandfather of Michael, Ava, Salvatore and Emilio. Predeceased by his sisters, Mildred DiMartino, Josephine Porto, Rose Parese, Angelina Camarota and brothers Frank, Ernest and George Parese.

# Mississippi Collision Repair Association, Collision Repair Facilities and Parts Suppliers File Suit Against State Farm and PartsTrader

*Association and nearly three dozen collision repair centers and parts suppliers seek injunction against State Farm and PartsTrader*

The Mississippi Collision Repair Association (MSCRA) and dozens of collision repair facility operators, OEM dealers and other parts suppliers have filed suit to block State Farm from implementing the PartsTrader system. The suit, filed Wednesday in the Hinds County, MS Chancery Court against State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company and PartsTrader LLC seeks an injunction to prohibit the insurer from mandating the parts quotation and ordering system. The suit alleges that State Farm's implementation of the PartsTrader system tortuously interferes with existing business relationships that repair facilities have with their suppliers.

"Nobody likes to be forced into filing a lawsuit but this is the largest automobile insurer in the country and we have a lot of mutual customers that will be impacted by this," said John Mosely, president of MSCRA from Clinton Body Shop and a plaintiff in the suit. "We have invested tons of money in our business and State Farm telling us we have to buy through PartsTrader system, is not the best thing for the repair or the customer."

Mosely currently participates in the Select Service program with State Farm.

In addition to seeking an injunction against implementation of the PartsTrader system, the suit seeks a declaratory judgment that State Farm is operating against the 1963 Consent Decree, entered into by several insurance company associations and the Federal Government, limiting insurer's activities in collision repair to influence customers. Because of this conflict, the suit seeks to void the Select Service agreements between repair facilities and State Farm.

Finally, the suit seeks to keep State Farm from interfering in the contract between the customer and body shops by "causing or implying delay in service payments, appraisal or limitation on the usage of rental automobiles."

According to State Farm spokesperson Roszell Gadson, "State Farm recently received notice of a lawsuit in Hinds County Mississippi related to our electronic parts ordering initiative and our Select Service program. We believe the suit is without merit. We intend to vigorously defend the suit."

Source: [www.collisionweek.com](http://www.collisionweek.com)





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*You keep them going. We keep you going.*

September 11, 2013

Mr. Ed Rust Jr.  
 State Farm Insurance  
 One State Farm Plaza  
 Bloomington, IL 61710

Dear Mr. Rust,

The Automotive Service Association (ASA) is the largest and oldest not-for-profit national trade Association in the United States comprised of independent collision and mechanical automotive repair professionals. When ASA was founded in 1951, it committed itself to advancing professionalism in the industry through education, representation and member services. One of its cornerstones was to be an advocate for our members, which remains true today.

ASA would like to acknowledge State Farm as one of the first companies in the country to not mandate that a collision repair facility utilize a specific estimating platform. For many years, several top 10 insurance carriers required a specific estimating platform to participate in their direct repair program. In addition, State Farm was one of the first to implement a scoring system that allows Select Service repair facilities to compete against each other in a transparent and real-time environment. These decisions clearly elevated State Farm's position in the industry as a thought leader and facilitated positive change.

In light of the recent announcement of the national rollout of Parts Trader, ASA is taking a firm stance against insurance company mandates that limit a repairer's right to choose their vendors, distributors and suppliers. Listed are some of the reasons a repair facility would consider when selecting a supplier: service, financial terms, discount, delivery, part quality, return process & policy, e-commerce. Price is not always the most important factor. Anything that negatively impacts a collision repairer's cycle time and efficiency should be avoided for several reasons. As cycle time decreases, customer service scores improve for both the collision repair facility and insurance company. Increasing cycle time results in increased rental costs. In fact, State Farm has often been quoted as stating that one additional day of rental costs State Farm in excess of \$43 million. Restrictions placed on shops that preclude them from using their preferred parts vendors creates a layer of unpredictability and inefficiency that will negatively impact cycle time and their profitability.

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- ASA-Northwest
- ASA-Ohio
- ASA-Rhode Island
- ASA-Texas

## **I-CAR to Offer Glimpse of 'Repairability Technical Support' Initiative at NACE**

I-CAR is offering three technical presentations of its "Repairability Technical Support" initiative during this week's NACE event at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas.

The repairability initiative was created to help bridge the informational gap between the repair industry and vehicle manufacturers. I-CAR hopes to improve industry access to technical repair knowledge, address gaps in repair procedures, and enhance industry technical communication with OEMs.

This week's presentations at NACE are geared toward all industry segments, I-CAR said in a statement.

The first free session, "Vehicle Maker Repair Information and I-CAR Technical Support," will be held during the I-CAR Technology Showcase on Thursday from 10–11 a.m. This presentation focuses on the importance of OEM repair procedures, how to access information online and various resources available when accessing them.

The second session, "Today's Advanced Vehicle Construction Materials & Safety Systems," is the only one that requires registration. It is scheduled for Thursday from 3–4:30 p.m. in the Islander E Room and will focus on the advanced materials used by car makers and how those materials affect the repair process now and in the future.

"Advanced Joining Methods—Understanding OEM Procedures and Repair Processes" is set for Friday from 2–3 p.m. in the I-CAR Technology Showcase and is free of charge. This final session will cover important repair information on advanced joining technologies, which ones to use in different situations, and how to replace parts following OEM recommendations.

All presentations will be led by Jason Bartanen, I-CAR director of industry technical relations, and Jamie Boetcher, instructional designer and trainer.

*Source: [www.fenderbender.com](http://www.fenderbender.com)*

## **SCRS to Offer Damage Analysis, Cost Assessment Training at SEMA**

The Society of Collision Repair Specialists (SCRS) will offer educational sessions during the SEMA Show focused on damage analysis and cost assessment. SEMA takes place Nov. 5–8 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

"Good estimates can't be formulated without in-depth knowledge of required operations and the technology that drives them," said SCRS vice chairman and shop owner Andy Dingman. "Understanding the physical requirements of the repair process and what the manufacturers expect that process to look like is probably the most critical foundation for success in writing accurate repair plans."

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[SCRS has also added](#) four free education sessions taking place each morning of the SEMA show.

The sessions on Nov. 5—such as “Accessing OEM Repair Information,” “Damage Report Writing Case Study,” and “Modern Bonding and Riveting, Today and Tomorrow”—each seek to address how repair necessities impact the creation of a thoroughly constructed repair plan.

A Nov. 6 session, entitled “X-Ray Estimating, An Ace up Your Sleeve for Performance Improvement,” focuses on decreasing the margin for error in the damage analysis and the potential for cycle time. Nov. 7 session, “Maximizing Efforts Through Blueprinting and Shop Layout,” looks at trends of facility layouts and how they can reduce waste.

A session titled “Want Higher Rates? Obtain Payment for Necessary Repair Procedures” on Nov. 8 is designed to help owners and managers identify areas of weakness in their strategies.

For a full listing of education sessions and to register, visit [www.semashow.com/scrs](http://www.semashow.com/scrs). Registration will also be available on site.

**Source: [www.fenderbender.com](http://www.fenderbender.com)**

## Japanese Auto Parts Companies Plead Guilty to Price Fixing

The U.S. Justice Department announced recently that nine Japanese automotive suppliers—and two former executives—will plead guilty and pay more than \$740 million in criminal fines for their roles in separate price-fixing conspiracies.

The pleas were the latest in the Justice Department’s on-going investigation, which has led to a total of 20 companies and 21 executives being charged.

According to a statement issued by Attorney General Eric H. Holder, the conspiracy affected more than 30 different products sold to U.S. and foreign auto manufacturers, including seatbelts, radiators, windshield wipers, air conditioning systems, power window motors, and power steering parts, among others.

In total, more than \$5 billion worth of parts and 25 million vehicles purchased by American consumers were affected by it.

All of Detroit’s Big Three automakers—GM, Ford and Chrysler—were affected, as were American subsidiaries of Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Subaru and Toyota.

As a result of the conspiracies, Americans paid more for their cars.

**Source: [www.collisionweek.com](http://www.collisionweek.com)**

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*We encourage all shops and business owners to continue to support those who support you!*

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