

Catalyst And Exhaust Systems

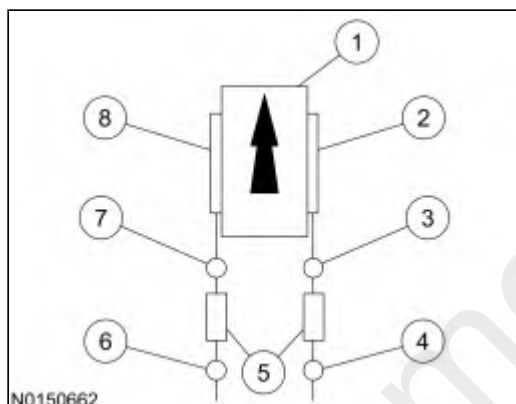
Overview

The catalytic converter and exhaust systems work together to control the release of harmful engine exhaust emissions into the atmosphere. The engine exhaust gas consists mainly of nitrogen (N), carbon dioxide (CO₂) and water (H₂O). However, it also contains carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), hydrogen (H), and various unburned hydrocarbons (HCs). The major air pollutants of CO, NO_x, and HCs, and their emission into the atmosphere must be controlled.

The exhaust system generally consists of an exhaust manifold, a front exhaust pipe, a universal heated oxygen sensor (HO2S), a rear exhaust pipe, a catalyst HO2S, a muffler, and an exhaust tailpipe. The catalytic converter is typically installed between the front and rear exhaust pipes. On some vehicle applications, more than one catalyst is used between the front and rear exhaust pipes. Catalytic converter efficiency is monitored by the on board diagnostic (OBD) system strategy in the PCM. For additional information on the OBD catalyst monitor, refer to the description for the [Catalyst Efficiency Monitor](#) in this section.

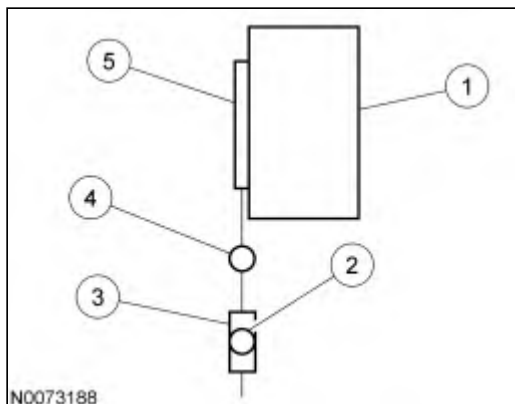
Only 2 heated oxygen sensors are used in an exhaust stream. The universal HO2S is before the catalyst (universal HO2S11 or universal HO2S21) and used for primary fuel control while the rear HO2S is after the catalyst (HO2S12 or HO2S22) and used to monitor catalyst efficiency.

Typical V Engine



Item	Number	Description
1	—	Engine
2	—	Bank 1 Exhaust Manifold
3	—	Universal HO2S11
4	—	HO2S12
5	—	Catalytic Converter
6	—	HO2S22
7	—	Universal HO2S21
8	—	Bank 2 Exhaust Manifold

Typical Inline Engine



Item	Number	Description
1	—	Engine
2	—	HO2S12
3	—	Catalytic Converter
4	—	Universal HO2S11
5	—	Exhaust Manifold

Catalytic Converter

A catalyst is a material that remains unchanged when it initiates and increases the speed of a chemical reaction. A catalyst also enables a chemical reaction to occur at a lower temperature. The catalytic converter assists in controlling the concentration of exhaust gas products released to the atmosphere. It contains a catalyst in the form of a specially treated ceramic honeycomb structure saturated with catalytically active precious metals. As the exhaust gases come in contact with the catalyst, they are changed into mostly harmless products. The catalyst initiates and speeds up heat producing chemical reactions of the exhaust gas components so they are used up as much as possible.

Light Off Catalyst

As the catalyst heats up, converter efficiency rises rapidly. The point at which conversion efficiency exceeds 50% is called catalyst light off. For most catalysts this point occurs between 246°C to 302°C (475°F to 575°F). A light off catalyst is a three way catalytic (TWC) converter that is located as close to the exhaust manifold as possible. Because the light off catalyst is located close to the exhaust manifold it achieves the required temperature faster and reduces emissions more quickly than the catalyst located under the body. Once the catalyst lights off, it quickly reaches the maximum conversion efficiency for that catalyst.

Three Way Catalytic (TWC) Converter Conversion Efficiency

A TWC converter requires a stoichiometric air fuel ratio of 14.7 pounds of air to 1 pound of gasoline, or 14.7 to 1, for high conversion efficiency. To achieve these high efficiencies, the air to fuel ratio must be tightly controlled with a narrow window of stoichiometry. Deviations outside of this window greatly decrease the conversion efficiency. For example a rich mixture decreases the HC and CO conversion efficiency while a lean mixture decreases the NO_x conversion efficiency.

For vehicles using E85 the required air to fuel ratio is 9.8 to 1. For vehicles using E100 the required air to fuel ratio is 9 to 1. Other gasoline/ethanol mixtures require a variable air to fuel ratio between 14.7 to 1 to 9.8 to 1 dependent on the percentage of ethanol content.