

Drive clean

SMALL EDITORIAL

Since 1999, and up until last year, too many of us had to fork out \$30 for a Drive Clean test because we dared to drive a car that was seven years old or more.

At the beginning, perhaps there was a reason because seven-year-old cars then were not the seven-year-old cars of today, what with fuel injection rather than carburetors and better efficiencies for gasoline consumption.

When the government of former Tory Premier Mike Harris introduced it, it was supposedly destined to have a short shelf life, and then the McGuinty Liberals got elected and saw it as a cash cow for much-needed revenues.

After a few years, however, the program was pure rip-off.

One of new Premier Doug Ford's campaign promises was to shut down the Drive Clean program altogether, which his Progressive Conservative government has now done.

Even though the previous Liberal government used their last year in power to eliminate the direct fee to consumers, it still cost Ontario taxpayers \$40 million a year to pay to have the tests done when less than 5% of cars put through the system needed whatever was required to pass the test?like a new muffler or tail pipe, for example.

But, at the end of the day, it was a waste of our time, and a waste of our tax dollars.

Many of us who don't live full time in a big city used to shake our collective heads in wonderment when learning those who lived only few clicks away somehow didn't require the emission test every two years as if the air they breathed was somehow cleaner than ours?even when the only thing separating us was predominately woodlands.

It never made sense.

The Drive Clean program will not be officially kicked to the curb until April 1 of next year.

Do not read anything into the fact that April 1 is April Fool's Day, because this is no joke.

The rip-off will finally be over.