



# What Does the CAPA Quality Seal Mean?



How Does it Impact  
You, Your Business and  
Your Industry?

[www.CAPAcertified.org](http://www.CAPAcertified.org)

 **CERTIFIED PART**  
**12345678**  
  
MANUFACTURER CERTIFIES COMPLIANCE  
TO CAPA SPECIFICATIONS TO  
CERTIFIED AUTOMOTIVE PARTS ASSOC.,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
[www.capacertified.org](http://www.capacertified.org)

CAPA CERTIFIED PART  
**12345678**  
  
[www.capacertified.org](http://www.capacertified.org)

*Not All Aftermarket Parts Are Created Equal.*

# CERTIFIED AUTOMOTIVE PARTS ASSOCIATION

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The Certified Automotive Parts Association (CAPA) is a program for identifying high quality, competitively priced, alternatives to car company brand parts. If you have any questions about the program or any aspect of CAPA, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address on the back page.

## CAPA's Mission Statement

CAPA is a non-profit, independent, third party, standard setting organization whose goal is to ensure that the market can identify high quality, fairly priced alternatives to expensive car company parts.

## CAPA's Objectives

- Develop quality standards for the manufacture of competitive auto body parts.
- Ensure that parts bearing the CAPA Quality Seal fully comply with CAPA Quality Standards.
- Provide independent laboratory participation to ensure integrity and conformity to accepted guidelines for third party certification programs.
- Publicize the certification program to consumers, collision repairers, insurance companies, government agencies, and part distributors.

# WHO WE ARE

CAPA is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and has an active Board of Directors and Technical Committee comprised of a cross-section of industries, including manufacturers, distributors, insurers, collision repairers, consumer groups, and consultants.

CAPA's Board of Directors sets its policies and oversees the program. CAPA's Technical Committee performs periodic, in-depth reviews of CAPA standards and refines them as required to assure the continued quality of CAPA certified parts.

CAPA is an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited Standards Developer. ANSI's approval of CAPA's standard development process confirms CAPA's long-standing efforts to implement effective and legitimate standards. In becoming an ANSI accredited Standards Developer, CAPA joins such notable organizations as Underwriters Laboratory, National Safety Council and Society of Automotive Engineers.



*CAPA's Technical Committee is comprised of collision repairers, part distributors, manufacturers, insurers, and quality experts. It meets regularly to develop and approve publicly available quality standards.*

[www.CAPAcertified.org](http://www.CAPAcertified.org)

Visit us on the web for:

- a list of CAPA Board and Technical Committee Members
- detailed information on the standards
- the latest news from CAPA

# AFTERMARKET PARTS—WHAT ARE THEY?

The motor vehicle aftermarket industry maintains, repairs, and accessorizes vehicles after they leave the factory. Parts used in the aftermarket include everything from batteries to headlights to body panels and are manufactured by both car companies and independent companies. In the U.S., the motor vehicle aftermarket is a \$250 billion industry employing millions of Americans.

One segment of the aftermarket industry includes the parts typically used to repair cars after an accident. These parts are often called “collision” or “crash” parts, and include hoods, quarter panels, fenders, bumpers, headlights, and grilles.



*Certified lights must pass all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.*



*Each part must pass a rigorous vehicle test fit to ensure it meets the demands of a modern collision repair shop.*

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*In over 2,100 CAPA Vehicle Test Fits, 43% of car company brand service parts did not comply with CAPA standards.*

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# MONOPOLY VS. COMPETITION

Competition not only reduces prices, but improves quality. Consumers benefit greatly from competitive markets. Currently, there is little competition in the collision parts industry, which enables car companies to charge very high prices for their parts. Think about how complex it is to produce a computer or television, compared to stamping a metal body part. Yet car company brand collision parts can cost much more than many complex, high-tech items.

## *Who Supports Competition?*

- Consumer groups such as the Center for Auto Safety, Consumer Federation of America, and Ralph Nader's Public Citizen are all on record in support of CAPA, its goals and/or aftermarket parts.
- Repairers and other parties are now stating that there is a need for part quality certification.
- Recently, the National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) unanimously passed a resolution stating that the use of these parts fosters a competitive environment that leads to lower repair costs and fewer totaled vehicles—to the benefit of consumers, collision repair facilities, and insurers.



*Vehicles used in vehicle test fits must meet original equipment manufacturer specifications.*

## *CAPA's Benefits*

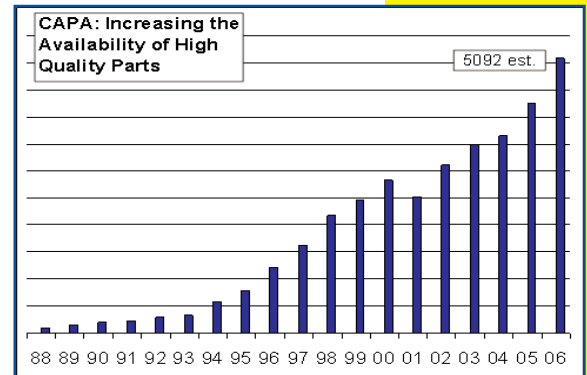
- Replaces current car company monopoly with competition
- Provides consumers, collision repairers, and insurance companies with a choice
- Reduces the cost of vehicle repair
- Reduces the number of "totaled" vehicles
- Ensures equal or better quality than car company brand parts

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CAR COMPANIES HAVE A MONOPOLY ON PARTS?

Here's how some typical car company parts compare in price to some very complex consumer products:

Consumers Know Something is Wrong When...

- ... a 1994 Ford Taurus hood costs over \$400 plus an additional \$400 to install but an Insignia™ TV/DVD costs less than \$150 and plugs in for immediate use
- ... at \$875, a rear sheet metal quarter panel from Ford (not including cost to install) costs almost twice as much as a Dell computer with a Pentium processor, 1 GB Ram, CD-RW, and 17" flat panel monitor at \$449
- ... \$620 buys a Whirlpool refrigerator or a Chrysler hood (uninstalled)
- ... \$110 buys an AT&T long range, cordless phone with digital answering machine that is ready to use or a plastic GM bumper cover still in the box
- ... \$260 buys a complete Sony home theater system or a Toyota headlight



*The number of CAPA certified parts has increased by an average of 380 vehicle applications each year since 1998.*

## How Does the Current Parts Monopoly Affect You?

- The car companies, rather than market demand, control how much is charged for replacement parts.
- The lack of competition provides no incentive for quality improvements.
- Allowing the parts monopoly to continue sets the stage for service, labor and repair facility monopolies.

# 4 STEPS TO CAPA CERTIFICATION

## 1 Manufacturer Must Pass Rigid Quality and Process Requirements

- Must meet CAPA's unique 60+ requirements governing the quality control, facility and manufacturing processes.
- CAPA requirements exceed typical ISO 9000 and QS-9000 requirements as CAPA also focuses on part certification.

## 2 Part Must Pass Extensive Testing for Quality

- Manufacturer submits each individual part for certification. CAPA does not “grandfather” parts into the program. All parts must be tested regardless of how long they have been in the marketplace.
- Extensive material and performance tests are conducted on part samples and compared to the same test results on car company parts.
- Parts must pass a Vehicle Test Fit (VTF) performed on an undamaged vehicle.
- Only parts that fully comply with all CAPA requirements are allowed to display the CAPA Quality Seal.

## 3 Parts and Factories are Regularly Re-Inspected

- CAPA conducts regular and random inspections of checking fixtures, assembly fixtures, parts and factory processes.
- CAPA carefully reviews all manufacturer lot inspection documentation to ensure that it conforms to CAPA requirements.

## 4 Marketplace Monitored for Continuous Quality

- CAPA performs random material, fit and appearance tests.
- CAPA encourages complaints in order to ensure that problems can be quickly identified and corrected.
- Parts that do not meet CAPA standards are decertified and will not appear on electronic collision repair estimates.
- Decertified parts qualify for CAPA's recall program which is readily available to all distributors.

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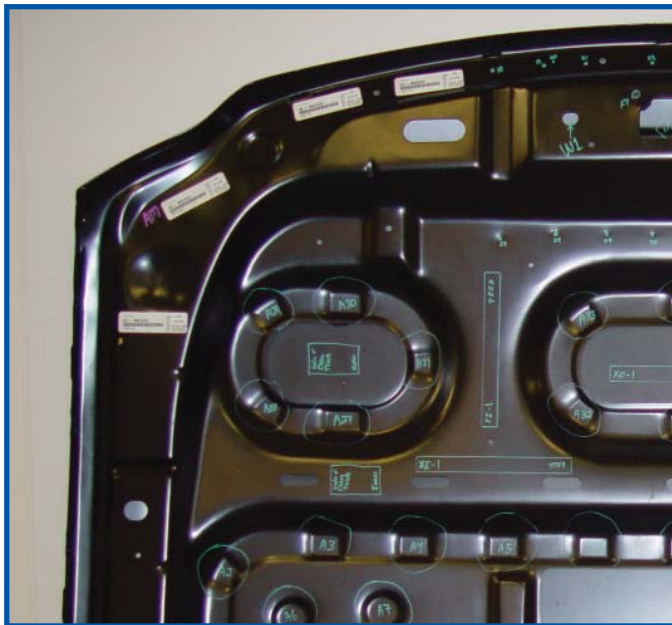
*The CAPA Quality Standards Manual is over 260 pages and details hundreds of requirements. It is reviewed and updated on a regular basis and is available to the public.*

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# What Tests are Performed on CAPA Certified Parts?

- ☑ Adhesive integrity
- ☑ Coating performance
- ☑ Material composition
- ☑ Mechanical properties
- ☑ Thickness
- ☑ Appearance
- ☑ Corrosion protection
- ☑ Form and fit
- ☑ Weld integrity
- ☑ Fasteners
- ☑ Hardware
- ☑ FMVSS 108, including Photometric, Dust, Moisture, Humidity

Each part is also subjected to a rigorous vehicle test fit prior to certification.



*Part prepped for testing.*



*Chemical composition is analyzed on each part.*



*Parts are vehicle test fit under repair shop-like conditions, but with detailed measurements and photos taken of each part.*



*Materials are tested for strength.*

## CAPA STANDARDS COVER...

Bumper covers  
Door shells  
Fenders  
Grilles  
Header panels  
Headlight bezels  
Headlights  
Hoods  
Lamp covers  
Quarter panels  
Radiator supports  
Side lights  
Side moldings  
Tailgates  
Taillights  
Truck beds  
Truck box sides  
Trunk lids

*CAPA Certification Means Quality: Of over 1,800 unique parts submitted for CAPA certification, 40% failed to meet requirements and were not certified on the first attempt.*

# CAPA's VEHICLE TEST FIT PROGRAM



## What Happens in a Vehicle Test Fit?

- Each applicable part must pass a vehicle test fit (VTF) to be certified.
- The VTF puts the parts through the same procedures that a shop does when installing a part.
- Parts are checked for gap, flush, holes, bracketry, ease of installation, surface conditions and other factors.

*ASE Certified Master Collision Repair technicians use precision calibrated tools to measure fit.*

## Passing the Test

- If a part does not pass the VTF, it will not be certified.
- Parts that do not pass must be re-submitted for additional testing prior to certification.
- The VTF program is also used for random fit tests and complaint investigations.



*Points important to proper fit are checked during the vehicle test fit.*

# LOOK FOR THE CAPA SEAL!

Only parts bearing this distinctive blue and yellow seal should be considered CAPA certified. Each CAPA certified part will have a seal and a number unique to that part. If there is no CAPA Quality Seal, the part has NOT been tested for fit, material content, corrosion resistance, or weld strength. Parts without seals should not be considered CAPA certified. You can go to [www.CAPAcertified.org](http://www.CAPAcertified.org) and type in the seal number to identify the part or to get a complete history of that part in the CAPA program.

*Since CAPA's inception, collision repairers have installed more than 25 million CAPA certified parts on vehicles they repaired.*



This section is tamper-proof and designed to permanently stay on the part. Each seal has a unique number and bar code that can be used to further verify that the part is CAPA certified.



This section can be removed and placed on the repair order, or in the files, to verify the use of a quality replacement part.

**CAPA Seal for Lighting Parts**  
While smaller than the seal used for metal and plastics parts, the CAPA seal for lighting parts is designed to be used just like the larger seal.



*Many times the seal is visible through the box. Always check for a CAPA seal before accepting a part.*



# HOW REPAIRERS CAN BEST USE THE CAPA SEAL

1. Leave the permanent section on the part in order to enable future identification.
2. Use it to identify the:
  - Part Manufacturer
  - Lot Number
  - Part Status (certified or decertified)
  - Part Description
3. Place the detachable section on the repair order to assure your insurance partner and customer that your use of competitive parts does not compromise quality.



## Complaint Program

CAPA is committed to fully investigating problem parts. Here's what happens when you file a complaint:

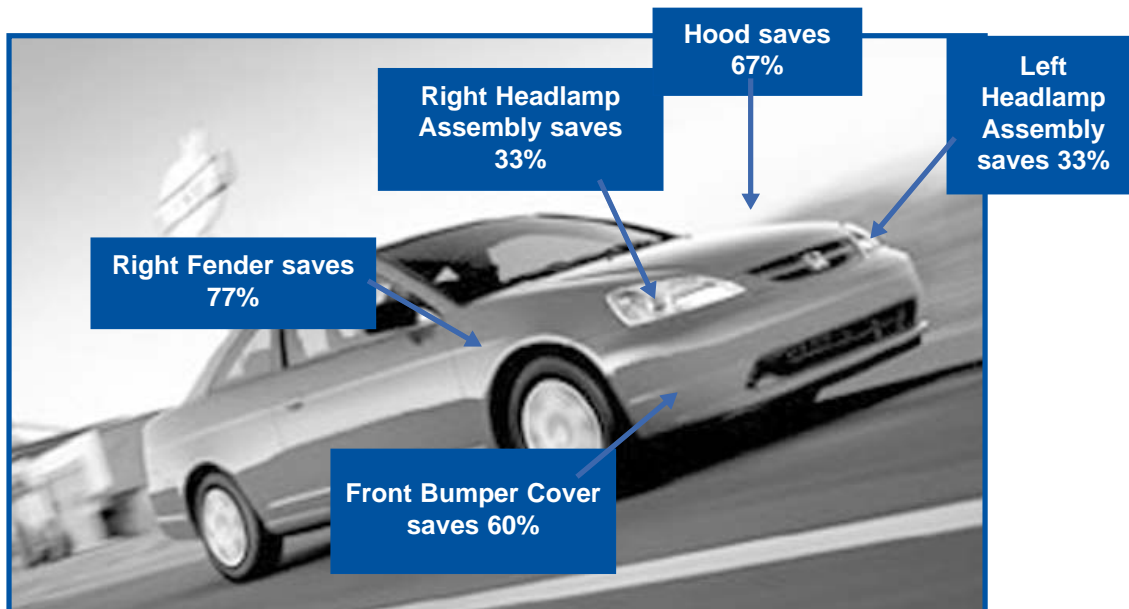
1. CAPA will arrange for shipment to the Validator's laboratory at no charge.
2. CAPA reimburses you for the price of the part.
3. The part receives a thorough analysis at the lab, a VTF is performed, test results are sent to the manufacturer, and if necessary, corrections are made to the part (and verified).
4. Throughout the process, the shop is informed of the status of the investigation and provided a final report on results.

Taking a moment to file a complaint with CAPA makes a real difference in the quality of CAPA certified parts! You can get a copy of the complaint form by going to [www.CAPAcertified.org](http://www.CAPAcertified.org).

*Insurance companies who want to protect their policy holders from poor quality parts will request CAPA certified parts on their estimates and develop systems to ensure they are used.*

# CAPA vs. CAR COMPANY PARTS: A COST COMPARISON

*Estimated Savings Using CAPA Certified Parts vs.  
Car Company Service Parts  
(estimate based on a 1995-99 Honda Civic front passenger side collision)*



Using CAPA certifiable parts could reduce repair costs by at least \$400,000,000 per year.

## Benefits:

- ✓ More repairs means fewer totaled vehicles.
- ✓ Consumers save money and get better quality parts.
- ✓ Provides an effective means of claims cost containment.

## What if CAPA Didn't Exist?

The car companies win in two ways:

- They can charge whatever they want for parts.
- As repair costs escalate and more cars are totaled, consumers are forced back to the showroom to buy another car.

## In addition:

- There is no incentive for improved quality.
- The lack of choice negatively affects all parties.

*One insurance company estimated that not using competitive parts increased the number of cars they "totaled" by 300%—using quality replacement parts increases repair shop volume.*

## Letter from Jack Gillis, Executive Director of CAPA

### **Certified Automotive Parts Association Washington, D.C.**

TO: Members of the Collision Repair Industry

The Certified Automotive Parts Association (CAPA) is a non-profit, third party, ANSI-accredited standards setting organization whose goal is to ensure that the market has a high quality, fairly priced alternative to expensive car company parts.

CAPA began in 1987 as a coalition of consumer advocates, insurance companies, repairers, and distributors who wanted to encourage competition in the collision parts industry in order to assure quality and control consumers' costs.

Competition from non-car company manufacturers pushes down costs, but some people worry about the quality of these parts. The CAPA certification program identifies which non-car company parts are as good as or better than the car company parts they replace.

Since the CAPA program began, we've continually strived to improve and expand the standards. The result has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of parts bearing the CAPA seal. CAPA utilizes an independent, third party validator to ensure integrity and conformance to the CAPA standards. The validator performs all mandatory testing on parts and also audits manufacturing facilities before a manufacturer can submit parts for certification. Only those parts which fully comply with CAPA's rigid standards are allowed to bear the CAPA Quality Seal.

The existence of CAPA depends on the support of a variety of groups including insurance companies, distributors, manufacturers, consumers, and collision repairers. This support can come in the form of funding, specifying or using CAPA parts, and promoting CAPA throughout your organization. If you're interested in learning more, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

*Jack Gillis*

Executive Director



# QUALITY COMPLAINT REPORT

FAX to 202-737-2214

or use electronic form at [www.CAPACertified.org](http://www.CAPACertified.org)

FOR CAPA USE ONLY

Complaint # \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Can we release your name to the manufacturer?  yes  no

Vehicle Make \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

- Part:  bracket  fender (R or L)  headlight bezel  radiator support  taillamp  
 bumper cover (F or R)  grille  hood  side marker  truck bed  
 box side  header panel  lamp cover  side moulding  truck lid  
 door shell (R or L)  headlamp  quarter panel  tailgate  wheel house

CAPA Seal Number \_\_\_\_\_ You are a:  Collision Repairer  
 CAPA Manufacturer \_\_\_\_\_  Distributor  
 CAPA Part No. \_\_\_\_\_  Insurance Adjuster  
 Lot Number (stamped on part) \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 OEM # \_\_\_\_\_

Please PRINT your name & address:

Please PRINT name & address of Distributor:

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

What was wrong with the part? (Give detail below.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adhesive - too little or too much (circle)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Installation significantly exceeded "book time"      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appearance - ripples, dings, mold overflow (circle)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Length - too long or too short (circle)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attachments - needed, but not included               | <input type="checkbox"/> Latch problems                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attachments - included, but did not work             | <input type="checkbox"/> Packing inadequate                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Body line - poor                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Paint - inconsistent or doesn't adhere well (circle) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contour - poor, corners & edges poorly formed        | <input type="checkbox"/> Seal missing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cut- poor, light or grill cut out location           | <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping damage evident                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gap - inconsistent or too wide (circle)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Studs - inappropriate location                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fit - poor   | <input type="checkbox"/> Surface - wavy                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not flush with adjacent parts                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Width - too wide or not wide enough (circle)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grind marks evident                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Welds - missing or weak (circle)                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holes/brackets, poorly placed or wrong size (circle) | <input type="checkbox"/> Welded fastener - inappropriate location             |

Location of Problem/Comments/Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Is the part available for inspection, if necessary?  Yes  No

Did you return the part to the distributor?  Yes  No

Are photos available?  Yes  No

Please email photos to [complaints@capacertified.org](mailto:complaints@capacertified.org) use CAPA seal number for subject line.

What part was used for replacement?  OEM  OEM Recycled  CAPA  Non-CAPA AM

Complete all information and send by facsimile to: CAPA Quality Complaint Program, 202-737-2214  
 or mail to: Suite 306, 1518 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Complaint Forms may also be submitted at CAPA's website at [www.CAPACertified.org](http://www.CAPACertified.org)

For CAPA Certified Parts ONLY - Parts Must Have Yellow CAPA Seal

CAPA Complaint Form  
 online at [www.CAPACertified.org](http://www.CAPACertified.org)

# Look for the CAPA Seal!

## Help Increase Competition

- Fund CAPA's Quality Certification Efforts
- Use CAPA Quality Parts
- Educate Staff on Choosing CAPA

## To Learn More You Can

- Tour the CAPA Validator's Laboratories
- Attend a Free Seminar
- Obtain Video and Printed Materials
- Visit the CAPA Website



**CONTACT US TODAY!**

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website: [www.CAPAcertified.org](http://www.CAPAcertified.org)