

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

Forensic Science Division



Customer Notice – December 18, 2025

Breath Alcohol – Interferent Detected Message and Expired Operator Certification

The Michigan State Police (MSP) is responsible for the administration of the Breath Alcohol Program for evidential breath alcohol testing in the state of Michigan. The Training Division (TD) conducts and maintains records of initial and ongoing instrument operator certifications. The Forensic Science Division (FSD) oversees the acquisition, validation, deployment, maintenance, and data collection of the State's breath alcohol detection instrumentation.

As part of its ongoing commitment to quality assurance, breath alcohol data is regularly reviewed. Recent data reviews have highlighted two areas of which law enforcement officers, attorneys, and courts should be aware:

1. Test Continuation After “Interferent Detected”

In certain cases, a breath test may terminate with the following printed exception message:

“Test stopped by instrument. An interferent was detected in the subject’s breath sample. Do not attempt to conduct another breath test with this subject. It is recommended that a blood sample be obtained.”

This message confirms that the instrument is functioning properly and that a built-in safeguard was activated due to a variable in the subject's breath sample or the testing environment. When this occurs, the instrument instructs the operator not to conduct another breath test and directs that a blood sample be obtained instead. While this guidance reflects the instrument's programmed safety protocols, it does not physically prevent the operator from initiating an additional breath test on the same subject.

If a subsequent breath test is performed despite the instrument's instructions, it is essential that printed reports from all tests conducted on the subject are retained and provided to the appropriate parties.

2. Expired Operator Certification

Under Administrative Rule R325.2658(1), Class III breath test operators must re-certify every two years. During testing, operators manually enter their certification date into the instrument; however, the instrument is currently unable to verify the accuracy of the entered date or the operator's credentials.

Agencies must confirm that (1) the certification date listed on the subject's printed test report aligns with the operator's most recent Intoxilyzer 9000 training or refresher course and (2) that the operator's certification is valid on the date of testing.

NOTE: Refresher courses completed after a certification has expired are considered invalid and the operator is no longer certified. In such cases, operators must attend the full in-person Intoxilyzer 9000 training to regain certification.

Both scenarios are thoroughly addressed in the MSP Intoxilyzer 9000 Training and Biennial Refresher courses available to all law enforcement personnel statewide. For further information or clarification, please contact the Breath Alcohol Technical Leader, Jordyn Geiger, or Sgt. Scott Tuttle of the Training Division.

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