



# AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR GARAGE STARTER GUIDE

A guide to opening your auto repair shop in Nova Scotia

Let us navigate you toward success! For personalized help to start your business contact a **Business Navigator at 1-844-628-7347**



## CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

- **Create a business plan** that includes items such as: Market research, your organizational structure, a description of your facilities, revenue forecast and budgetary requirements.

There are various government agencies and other organizations that offer free help for planning, and start-up financial assistance (at various interest rates). Call a Business Navigator to find out more at 1-844-628-7347

- **Request and secure a Business Name through the Registry of Joint Stocks** at [www.risc.ca](http://www.risc.ca) or contact 1-800-225-8227
- **Register your Business** within 90 days to ensure your business name is secured and to receive your unique Business Number.

Types of Businesses include sole proprietorships, partnerships and corporations. If choosing to incorporate, legal advice is recommended for preparation of documents.

- **Activate your Business Number** with CRA at 1-800-959-5525. Activation is mandatory if you have employees, you import or export, and/or your gross revenue exceeds \$30,000.
- **Workers Compensation Insurance** may be mandatory for your staff or an option you may want to consider. Contact WCB at 1-800-870-3331 or [www.wcb.ns.ca](http://www.wcb.ns.ca) to discuss your specific requirements. **Research any additional insurance** requirements such as liability and disability.



## YOUR LOCATION

- **Next contact your municipality or town** to confirm your preferred location is zoned for your automotive garage type. For Halifax, contact 902-490-5650
- Now that your location is approved, you must create a site plan.



## CREATE YOUR SITE PLAN

Creating the layout of your garage is not only important for building and renovating, but for workplace safety. **Create a diagram or layout** of all rooms and doors, showing their sizes and use, include storage areas, and fire safety plan.

**Source of water-** if a well water supply is to be used, show the location of the well on your plan; if connected to a municipal or community supply, please indicate.

**Sewage-** if an on-site sewage disposal system is to be used, show the location of the system on your plan; if connected to a municipal or private collection system, please indicate.

### Waste storage-

- Contact **Divert NS 1-877-313-7732** if you intend to sell or change tires. Registration, along with proper disposal is required.
- Guidelines on how to dispose of oil are specific, find them here <http://www.novascotia.ca/nse/dept/nse.policies.asp>. Contact your local Nova Scotia Environment office <https://novascotia.ca/nse/dept/regional-office-locations.asp> for more information and to schedule an inspection.
- Contact your municipality regarding water/oil separation units. For Halifax, contact 902-490-5650

**Parking** - show parking areas and driveways.



## APPLY FOR PERMITS

**Begin the permit process 3-6 months before opening.**

Any garage, service station or car dealer in Nova Scotia who wants to conduct **Motor Vehicle Inspections** and participate in the program must be licensed to do so. Please contact Service Nova Scotia at 1-800-898-7668.

**Contact Labour and Advanced Education – Technical Safety** 902-424-3200 regarding air compressor regulations and certification.

**Contact Occupational Health and Safety 1-800-952-2687** to determine your specific requirements around first aid, WHMIS, non-smoking areas, personal protective equipment, ventilation, and Workplace Safety Regulations.

If you are servicing in-vehicle **air conditioners**, please contact the Business Navigators or Nova Scotia Environment for a list of o-zone requirements.

**For 'pre-opening' permits** related to zoning, building, renovating and land development contact your municipality or town. In Halifax, contact 902-490-5650.

**For 'opening' permits** such as occupancy, as well as fire prevention inspections and signage for your business, contact your municipality or town. In Halifax, contact 311.

It is important to note that your occupancy permit is required before fire prevention.

## Need more help?

Contact a **Business Navigator** at **1-844-628-7347** or email [busnavigation@novascotia.ca](mailto:busnavigation@novascotia.ca)  
Business Navigation offers personalized and timely help with regulation and requirements, including registration, permits and licenses to save you valuable time.



### TRADE REQUIREMENTS

It is important to review the **Automotive Service Technician Trade Regulations** (<https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/atqauto.htm>) to understand what services you can provide as a journeyman, apprentice or an uncertified worker. The regulations also provide information on wage requirements.

#### Things to know -

- The automotive service technician trade is specified as a compulsory certified trade.
- For every 2 apprentices you must have 1 journeyman.
- An apprentice or journeyman is required to keep their identity card in their possession when on site and produce it on request.
- An automotive service technician journeyman must display their certificate of qualification in a easily visible location at their place of employment.
- The employer of an automotive service technician journeyman must provide suitable space for the display of the journeyman's certificate of qualification.

Contact Business Navigation or Apprenticeship Nova Scotia for more information.



### PREPARE FOR EXCELLENCE

Post all required signs, licences and permits as outlined.

Mark your calendar. Schedule equipment maintenance and set reminders to renew your permits and licences.

Be ready for inspections. Some happen quarterly, twice a year or once a year. You may not be notified of your inspection date.

**For payroll and tax assistance** contact CRA at 1-800-959-5525.

**For road access** (new or upgrades to roads and driveways) **and highway signage** for your business contact Transportation, Infrastructure and Renewal at 1-844-696-7737.

For Occupational Health and Safety requirements such as **WHMIS Training, First Aid and Workplace Health and Safety** contact OHS at 1-800-952-2687. Access the Small Business Safety Toolkit at [www.Workplace-Safety-Toolkit.ca](http://www.Workplace-Safety-Toolkit.ca)

For Employer/Employee obligations and rights including minimum wage, hours of work, terminations, vacation/holiday pay (etc.), contact the **Nova Scotia Labour Standards Division** at 1-888-315-0110.

**Workers Compensation** Insurance is mandatory for most of the automotive industry. Contact WCB at 1-800-870-3331 or [www.wcb.ns.ca](http://www.wcb.ns.ca)

Contact **Nova Scotia Power** regarding electricity connection at 1-800-428-6230

Automotive repair garages may be required to hire private companies for **garbage and recycling collection**.

Contact your municipality or town to determine who in your area is an authorized collector. In Halifax, contact 311.