Page 5. **Frequently Asked Questions**

**CAN YOU GIVE ME AN ESTIMATE?**

A 2013 Washington state law (RCW 46) exempts automotive restoration, custom, and fabrication shops from the requirement they provide written estimates for services provided on custom work, customized cars, street rods and collector vehicles. According to this law such shops can bill for “time and materials” on a weekly basis rather than a written estimate. This law effectively separates them from collision and auto repair shops that *are* required to provide written estimates.

Why was this law enacted? The answer is simple; no one can accurately predict the time or materials required to restore a vehicle or do custom or fabrication work. While collision shops rely on established software systems or the “published rate” to predict the cost of parts, time or labor required to complete a collision repair, no acceptable systems exist for restoration and custom fabrication work. The reality is over time the environment, collisions, rust, modifications, and variations in use combine to make each vehicle unique making accurate predictions impossible. We do our best to work within our customer’s budgets, however, we will not be providing you with a written estimate for these reasons.

**FLAT RATE VS TIME & MATERIALS**

What’s the difference? With the flat-rate or published rate pay system the estimate and cost of any resulting work is predetermined. Published rates are based upon established time and materials required to perform common services and repairs. However, because of the nature of our business, custom and restoration shops cannot accurately predict the cost of doing custom work simply because there is no reliable published or book rate for completing such tasks.

**HOW CAN I KEEP MY PROJECT ON BUDGET?**

We take keeping your project within your budget very seriously. Your personal involvement, keeping pace with the project, and the billing for time and materials is the best way to keep your project on track and within your budget. Your participation, communication, familiarity with the project, combined with regular visits to view work in progress, careful review of your weekly invoices, and your personal financial planning keeps your project within your budget. We want you to have a good experience with us!

**WHAT IF THE PROJECT GOES OVER BUDGES?**

Its okay to do your project in stages. Many people begin with body and paint, or mechanical work, then take the project home until they are ready to go to the next stage. Let us know what works for you.

**HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?**

We consider it our obligation to do quality work and get it done in a timely manner, in that order. We warranty our work, so we must put quality work ahead of any time schedule. We try to be as realistic as possible about the time required to complete a task. Factors that can slow the pace of work are the availability of personnel, parts, shipping time for them to arrive, undiscovered problems, unexpected difficulties performing the work we provide, and slow payment issues.

**HOW CAN I TRUST YOU TO DO QUALITY WORK?**

We are recognized as a company that has earned its reputation for its high level of expertise. Our technicians are talented and proud to work with us. Clients and vendors recommend Top Secret Customs and competitors in the custom car and restoration community respect us. Top Secret Customs & Restorations was awarded **“2017 Builder of the Year”** on April 8th, 2017, by the Washington State Hot Rod Hall of Fame. We believe our reputation depends on the high quality of work we do here, and we stand behind our work. For these reasons we decline “budget and cut-corner jobs” that do not favorably represent our company.

**HOW CAN WE GET STARTED?**

Come see us! We welcome visitors. Meet us personally, talk to us about your project, your budget, and what you hope to accomplish. Tour the shop, see the quality of workmanship we provide, then make an informed decision. Many people begin by calling or emailing us. Exchanging pictures can be a good way to begin a communication stream.