

REMOVING BARRIERS TO CONSUMER FUEL CHOICE

Fuel retailers want to offer American drivers another choice at the pump that can save motorists money, increase a vehicle's performance, help improve their business and improve the environment. But an unnecessary EPA regulation is preventing them from doing that.

WANTED. The choice fuel retailers want to offer is E15 – a federally approved fuel with 15 percent ethanol and 85 percent gasoline – that is approved for almost 90 percent of American vehicles.

- Fuel with more ethanol saves drivers money because retailers offer E15 for 3 to 5 cents less per gallon than E10.
- Higher octane fuels perform better in cars. Ethanol is a 113 octane fuel, while most gasoline is below 90 octane.

RESTRICTED. Despite solid economic and performance reasons to provide American drivers this option, an unnecessary EPA regulation is blocking drivers from having this choice during the summer driving season.

- In 1990, Congress limited the amount of evaporative emissions from vehicle fuel at 9 pounds per square inch (psi) Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP). Despite pure ethanol having a 3 psi RVP, when low levels of ethanol are combined with gasoline, the RVP of fuel exceeds 9 psi.
- Congress specified that fuel with 10 percent ethanol would receive a 1 psi RVP waiver. EPA extended that relief to blends below 10 percent as well, despite the statute only specifying 10 percent ethanol blends.

BLOCKED. Because of this restriction, fuel sales of E15 plummet during the summer driving months (June 1 to September 15).

EQUITY. EPA has shown no willingness to extend this waiver to any ethanol blends above 10 percent, despite extending it to blends below 10 percent.

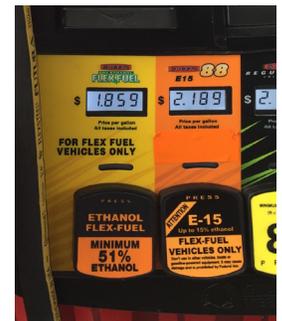
- This means that during the summer driving months (June 1 to September 15), fuel retailers cannot offer this fuel to all drivers because it violates statutory RVP limits.
- E15 actually has a lower RVP profile than E10, and because E10 is the standard motor fuel in the U.S., the RVP waiver is applied broadly across the country.

ACTION:

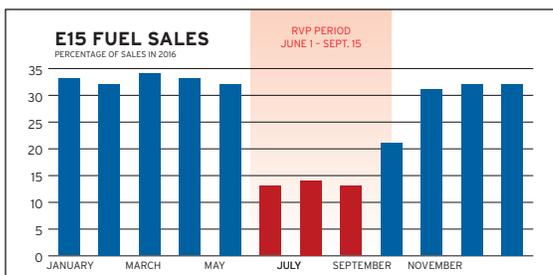
We need Congress to remove this consumer barrier. S. 517 and H.R. 1311 would extend the RVP waiver to ethanol blends above 10 percent.



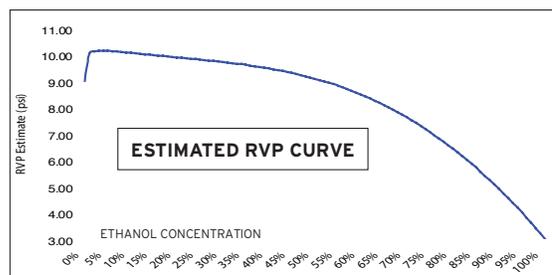
E15 labeling most of the year.



E15 labeling during summer months.



Source: Minnoco Sales Data



A Model for Estimating Vapor Pressures of Commingled Ethanol Fuels, October 29-November 1, 2007, General Motors Research and Development Center – Dr. Sam R. Reddy.