



Regulatory Announcement

Modifications to the Standards and Requirements for Reformulated and Conventional Gasoline

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is amending the regulations establishing standards and requirements for reformulated gasoline (RFG) and conventional gasoline. This final rule will reduce the compliance burden on regulated parties and associated costs to the public, yet keep the environmental benefits of the RFG and conventional gasoline programs.

The RFG Program

In the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, Congress mandated EPA to promulgate regulations requiring that gasoline sold in certain areas be reformulated to reduce vehicle emissions of toxic and ozone-forming compounds. EPA published rules for the certification and enforcement of RFG and provisions for conventional gasoline on February 16, 1994 (59 FR 7716).

Based on experience gained since these regulations went into effect, EPA proposed numerous changes to the regulations on July 11, 1997, relating to emission standards, emission models, compliance related requirements and enforcement provisions. The proposed changes involve both the RFG and conventional gasoline programs.

Amendments to RFG Program

This rule:

- finalizes certain changes to the RFG and conventional gasoline regulations relating to use of the Complex Model, which is required for demonstrating compliance with the regulations beginning on January 1, 1998;
- eliminates the NOx per-gallon minimum standards for Complex Model averaged RFG;
- increases the required number of gasoline quality surveys as a more cost-effective way to ensure that each area covered by the program receives the full environmental benefits of the NOx average standards for RFG; and
- modifies the affirmative defenses against a violation of the fuels regulations for tank truck carriers.

This rule does not finalize all the revisions that were proposed on July 11, 1997. The remaining changes will be addressed at a later date.

Public Health and Environmental Benefits

RFG protects public health and the environment by reducing harmful vehicle emissions of ozone-forming compounds and air toxics. The requirements for conventional gasoline prohibit refiners and importers from producing or importing conventional gasoline that has greater emissions than the refiner's or importer's 1990 gasoline production. Many of the modifications in this rule are technical in nature, or provide industry with greater flexibility to comply with the regulations. The changes to the regulations will not

compromise the environmental benefits of the RFG and conventional gasoline programs.

Effect on Industry

For refiners and importers of gasoline, the final rule will reduce burdens and costs associated with demonstrating compliance under the reformulated and conventional gasoline regulations. In addition, it will streamline and clarify certain regulatory requirements and correct certain typographical and other technical errors in the regulations. This regulation provides a more appropriate method for tank truck carriers of motor vehicle fuel to establish a defense against a violation of the fuels regulations.

For More Information

For further information on this final rule, please contact Marilyn Bennett at:

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Additional documents on the RFG program are available electronically from the EPA Internet server at:

<http://www.epa.gov/OMSWWW/rfg.htm>

or by contacting Russ Banush at:

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