



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

NOV 30 2007

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

Dear Colleague,

Achieving the large emission reductions promised by EPA's clean diesel program depends on the widespread availability of 15 ppm ultra low sulfur diesel fuel (ULSD). Reports of refinery production indicate that more than 85% of the nation's motor vehicle diesel fuel is ULSD. Recent industry surveys of diesel fuel at retail outlets confirm that a vast majority of fuel is meeting the 15 ppm sulfur level. Since the widespread introduction of this fuel beginning in October 2006, we have been very pleased with the efforts of the fuel industry in ensuring that ULSD is getting into the marketplace. EPA continues to work with the Clean Diesel Fuel Alliance, a public-private group that has been active throughout the past year in educating businesses and consumers about this clean fuel as well as serving as a resource to address technical questions.

As we enter into the winter season, the maintenance of diesel fuel cold operability becomes an important concern. This concern is one that has always existed, however, and is not specifically related to the sulfur content of the diesel fuel. Fuel marketers have a choice on how to address this issue and have traditionally done so by blending kerosene into diesel fuel during the winter. Chemical cold operability additives were also sometimes used for this purpose. Kerosene may continue to be used for blending with ULSD; however, such kerosene must also comply with a 15 ppm sulfur standard. Chemical cold operability additives may also be used in ULSD. We understand that in some instances a mix of these two options may be appropriate.

Reports from the previous winter of 2006 to 2007 indicate that implementation across the nation was largely successful. There were reports of a limited number of localized instances where customers and suppliers were unable to coordinate acquisition of appropriately winterized ULSD. We continue to encourage customers and suppliers of diesel fuel to discuss the winterization strategies being employed and any information about associated product performance tests.

EPA continues to work with the industry during this implementation period. The diesel sulfur regulations provide some flexibility for 500 ppm kerosene to be blended with highway diesel provided that the resulting fuel is labeled as 500 ppm diesel fuel. Any party that is contemplating this option should review the relevant regulations (40 CFR 80.527) and consider consulting with EPA to ensure proper compliance. Model year 2007 and newer vehicles equipped with model year 2007 or newer engines must use motor vehicle diesel fuel labeled ULSD (with a sulfur content of less than 15 ppm).

As 2007 is also the first year during which most refiners must produce nonroad, locomotive and marine (NRLM) diesel fuel containing 500 ppm sulfur or less, it is important to realize the requirements associated with winterizing NRLM diesel fuel. The 500 ppm sulfur standard also became effective for NRLM diesel fuel at retail and fleet facilities inside the Northeast/mid-Atlantic (NEMA) October 1, 2007 and will become effective at all downstream locations beginning December 1, 2007. Blends of kerosene and NRLM diesel fuel produced inside the NEMA, other than those produced by adding kerosene to the vehicle fuel tank, must meet the 500 ppm sulfur standard as of October 1, 2007. All kerosene blends in the NEMA area must meet the 500 ppm sulfur standard beginning December 1, 2007.

The NEMA area includes: North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Washington D.C., New York (except for the counties of Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany), Pennsylvania (except for the counties of Erie, Warren, Mc Kean, Potter, Cameron, Elk, Jefferson, Clarion, Forest, Venango, Mercer, Crawford, Lawrence, Beaver, Washington, and Greene), and the eight eastern-most counties of West Virginia (Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, Mineral, Hardy, Grant, and Pendleton)

If you have additional questions please see: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/highway-diesel/index.htm>.

The Clean Diesel Fuel Alliance can be contacted through <http://www.clean-diesel.org>.

Sincerely,



Karl J. Simon, Director
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