

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 26-6-3: Public Hearing to Consider Proposed Amendments to the California Reformulated Gasoline Regulations

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the California Air Resources Board (CARB or Board) approve the Proposed Amendments the California Reformulated Gasoline Regulations (proposed Resolution 26-12).

Discussion:

The objectives of the Proposed Amendments are to adopt specifications for California Reformulated Gasoline (CaRFG) that would support fuel suppliers' ability to voluntarily offer for sale CaRFG containing 10.1% to 15% ethanol by volume (E15), to include flexibility for the option to sell E15, and to remove obsolete regulatory text.

CARB is responsible for adopting and enforcing motor vehicle fuel specifications, standards, and regulations to protect public health and the environment, to achieve toxic air contaminant emissions and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, and to accomplish the attainment of the State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Under this authority, CARB administers and implements fuel regulations and standards, including the CaRFG regulations, that establish specifications for California gasoline properties, including, but not limited to, allowable ethanol by percent volume, oxygen content, and Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) requirements. Gasoline standards are set and maintained to minimize tailpipe emissions for the benefit of public health and the environment. Meeting federal air quality requirements may also be important for avoiding potential sanctions and loss of federal highway funding. In this rulemaking, CARB is proposing to amend the CaRFG regulations and make other conforming changes (Proposed Amendments) to support the voluntary sale of E15 by transportation fuel suppliers.

On October 2, 2025, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 30 (Alvarez, Statutes of 2025, Chapter 247) as an urgency statute which, upon enactment, immediately allowed E15 to be sold in the State for use as a transportation fuel. Health and Safety Code section 43013.7 added by AB 30 allows the sale of E15 until CARB either adopts a regulation establishing a specification for E15 gasoline or publicly posts an assessment that

it is not possible for such a regulation to avoid or reduce an adverse impact on public health or the environment. After enactment of AB 30, CARB staff held a public workshop and participated in numerous discussions with interested parties, including regulatory partners and industry groups, to inform the regulatory process. As called for by Health and Safety Code section 43830.8, state agencies conducted a multimedia evaluation of E15 on the impact to public health and the environment and sent it for review before the California Environmental Policy Council (CEPC). The multimedia evaluation found the use of E15 does not pose a significant adverse impact on public health or the environment compared to gasoline with up to 10% ethanol (E10).

CaRFG regulations are included in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) in 2010 and are federally enforceable under the Clean Air Act (CAA). A SIP is a collection of regulations and documents used to implement, maintain, and enforce the NAAQS and fulfill other requirements of the federal CAA. Upon adoption of the Proposed Amendments, CARB will submit the amended CaRFG regulations to the U.S. EPA as a revision to the SIP.

Summary and Impacts:

Supported by the CEPC's determination on August 18, 2026, of no adverse impact of E15 from its multimedia evaluation, and in accordance with AB 30, the Proposed Amendments would add a specification for E15 gasoline to the CaRFG regulations to clarify the applicable standards under which fuel suppliers may continue to voluntarily offer E15 for sale. Neither AB 30 nor the Proposed Amendments mandate that all gasoline conforms to the E15 blend. Instead, both AB 30 and the Proposed Amendments allow E15 to be sold alongside E10, thus providing fuel supply market participants with an option to supply E15 should they voluntarily select to do so. As California moves toward a clean economy to meet its climate and air quality goals, AB 30 and the Proposed Amendments assist in ensuring a safe, affordable, and reliable supply of gasoline to meet consumer demand in California.

There are no anticipated impacts from the Proposed Amendments.