



Regulatory Advisory

October 7, 2012



Requirements for Gasoline Reid Vapor Pressure

SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

The Air Resources Board (ARB) is issuing a Regulatory Advisory (Advisory) today, October 7, 2012, effective immediately. Pursuant to this Advisory, the ARB will administratively permit the manufacture, importation, distribution, and sale of gasoline that meets a Reid Vapor Pressure limit of 9.0 psi, which will remain in effect only to midnight, Pacific Daylight Time, October 31, 2012, unless otherwise superseded by a subsequent ARB regulatory action or advisory. This Advisory applies to any person who sells, offers for sale, supplies, offers for supply, or transports California gasoline.

CONTROL OF REID VAPOR PRESSURE AND CURRENT LIMITS

The California Reformulated Gasoline (CaRFG) regulations limit, among other properties, the Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) of gasoline sold, offered for sale, supplied, offered for supply, or transported within the State (title 13, California Code of Regulations, section 2262). In order to control evaporative emissions of hydrocarbons, the RVP of summertime gasoline is generally restricted to a production or importation limit of about 7.0 pounds per square inch (psi). These summertime RVP limits apply through October 31 for most of California, depending on the air basin. These RVP limits are lifted in the wintertime when ozone formation is less of a problem.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION TAKEN UNDER THIS ADVISORY

Due to the convergence of a number of recent events (e.g., refinery fire, electricity interruption, pipeline contamination) and planned shutdowns of several refineries and pipelines, the gasoline market in California is currently experiencing tight supplies. While gasoline generally remains available for purchase by consumers, the tight supplies have resulted in an extreme and unusual fuel supply circumstance. This has led to a sharp increase over the last few weeks in wholesale and retail prices for gasoline around the State, particularly in the Southern California region, and the reported shutdown of a number of retail gasoline stations.

In response to direction by the Governor to help address the above fuel-related issues, the ARB will administratively permit gasoline in the State to meet a single RVP limit of 9.0 psi (the federal summertime RVP limit) from the effective date of this Advisory through the end of October 31, 2012. This action is necessary to address the extreme and unusual fuel supply circumstance caused by the multiple events described above and is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety or general welfare. Any impacts on air quality caused by this action are expected to be negligible and outweighed by the public interest in temporarily relaxing the RVP limits.

All other requirements of the California Reformulated Gasoline regulations, including other fuel properties, specifications, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements, shall remain in effect. In addition, nothing in this Advisory modifies, replaces, supersedes, or otherwise changes any other requirements applicable to gasoline under local, State, or federal law or regulation. Persons regulated by the California Reformulated Gasoline regulations should continue to sell or distribute gasoline meeting the current California RVP limits where such supplies are available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For any questions regarding this Advisory, please contact Mr. Mike Waugh, Chief, Transportation Fuels Branch at (916) 322-6020 or via email at mwaugh@arb.ca.gov.

If you need this document in an alternate format or language, please contact Mr. Adrian Cayabyab at (916) 327-1515 or acayabya@arb.ca.gov. TTY/TDD/Speech to Speech users may dial 711 for the California Relay Service.