

# E15

## YEAR-ROUND

- On Mar. 12, 2019, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler signed a rule proposing Reid vapor pressure (RVP) relief for E15. EPA intends to finish the rulemaking before June 1<sup>st</sup> so retailers nationwide can offer E15 as an option to their customers year-round.
- EPA's E15 rulemaking includes controversial and unwarranted proposals to reform the way Renewable Identification Number (RIN) credits are handled under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).
- ACE wants a legally-defensible rule providing RVP relief to E15 (preferably for all ethanol blends above E10) to be in place by the June 1<sup>st</sup> summer driving season but opposes many of EPA's RIN proposals because they would undermine ethanol use.
- E15 is a clean, safe, and low-cost fuel which can be used in more than 90 percent of the cars on the road today (EPA has approved the use of E15 in all vehicles made in model year 2001 and after).
- Record growth and investment in retail infrastructure continues to increase E15 availability at over 1,500 retail locations in 30 states and counting.
- Allowing the sale of E15 year-round will enable retailers to sell the fuel if they wish, give consumers the option to buy the low-cost fuel, reduce refiner RIN costs, and open market access for surplus corn.
- Congress can help by pressing EPA to complete the E15 rule by June 1<sup>st</sup> free of unnecessary RIN reforms which would undermine ethanol demand (and negate the upside benefit of E15 year-round).

### **Background**

EPA measures the evaporative emissions of fuel using RVP expressed in pounds per square inch (psi).

The Clean Air Act prohibits the sale of gasoline with an RVP in excess of 9 psi during the high ozone “summer” season (June 1 – Sept. 15). To help allow the use of E10 year-round, Congress amended the Clean Air Act in 1990 to provide a 1-psi RVP waiver for fuel blends “containing gasoline and 10 percent ethanol” (the highest ethanol content in gasoline at the time).

In 2011 EPA approved the use of E15, a fuel with slightly lower evaporative emissions than E10, for use in all light-duty vehicles made in model year 2001 and after. EPA did not allow an RVP waiver for E15 at the time. Because EPA only has volatility limits on gasoline during the “summer” season, E15 can be sold outside the June 1 – Sept. 15 time frame. E15 has slightly lower evaporative emissions than E10.

At the direction of President Trump, due to the growing presence of E15 in the marketplace and changed circumstances since it was approved in 2011, EPA is now proposing to allow E15 to be sold during the “summer” season.

When finalized, EPA's rule will deem E15 as “substantially similar” to fuel (E10) used to certify Tier 3 light-duty vehicles and offer a new interpretation of the Clean Air Act to apply the 1-psi RVP waiver to gasoline “containing at least 10 percent” ethanol. “Therefore, E15, which has within it 10 percent ethanol, meets this definition and should receive the 1-psi waiver specified in the Clean Air Act.”<sup>1</sup>

Nine of every 10 cars on the road are E15 approved, and most vehicles under warranty today were built to run on E15. Travelers Motor Club and Association Motor Club Marketing, with more than 20 million members in all 50 states, report no engine damage from ethanol and endorse E15 as safe and affordable.

E15 typically costs 2 to 10 cents per gallon less than E10 and gasoline and has a higher octane rating, so allowing the sale of this fuel would give consumers the option to buy a higher quality product and save money at the pump.