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Ethanol Industry Applauds UL Decision to Stand Behind E15 Certification for Gasoline Pumps

Sioux Falls, SD (February 19, 2009) – The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE), the nation’s largest ethanol advocacy organization, was pleased today by the announcement made by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) that its data shows existing gasoline dispensers can in fact safely use ethanol blends up to 15 percent.

In a press release issued today, UL announced that it supports Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) who decide to permit legacy system dispensers, listed to standard UL 87 and currently installed in the market, to be used with ethanol blends of up to 15 percent. AHJs are local regulatory and approval entities, such as fire marshals, that make the final determination of the acceptance of fuel dispensing devices.

Though standard UL 87 had been understood for years by the fuel marketing community to cover the use of up to 15 percent ethanol in standard gasoline pumps, in a January 7 statement UL said that those pumps were actually only certified for up to 10 percent ethanol. ACE wrote to UL on February 5 asking for an explanation of why UL had arbitrarily changed its position.

Read ACE’s letter here: http://www.ethanol.org/pdf/contentmgmt/ACE_e15_letter_to_UL_2409-1.pdf

“We’re pleased with UL’s decision to stand behind the use of E15 under its UL 87 standard. This eliminates one hurdle in the path to widespread use of blends beyond E10 at the pump, which will mean more choices for consumers,” said Ron Lamberty, Vice President / Market Development for ACE. “We’d like to thank UL for looking at the data and issuing this clarification.”

Today’s UL press release states: “The data the company has gathered as part of the organization’s ongoing research to investigate the impact of using higher ethanol blends in fuel dispensing systems supports that existing dispensers can be used with ethanol blends up to 15 percent.... UL researchers found that using equipment certified to UL 87 to dispense ethanol blends with a maximum ethanol content of 15 percent should not result in critical safety concerns.”

John Drengenberg, Consumer Affairs Manager for UL, stated in the release: “UL determined that there is no significant incremental risk of damage between E10 and fuels with a maximum of 15 percent ethanol.”

Read UL’s press release here: <http://www.ul.com/newsroom/newsrel/nr021909.html>.

UL advises the AHJs to consult with the dispenser manufacturer to confirm that the dispenser is compatible with the fuel to be dispensed, and it recommends that dispensers pumping this higher percentage of ethanol should be subject to regular inspection and preventative maintenance as specified by the manufacturer.

Today more than 70 percent of America’s gasoline contains some percentage of ethanol, most as the E10 blend. But the ethanol content per gallon of gasoline is set to increase in the future, as directed by the Energy Independence & Security Act of 2007 which calls for a minimum of 36 billion gallons of renewable fuels to be used nationwide by 2022. This level of renewable fuel use surpasses the 10 percent mark of the nation’s overall gasoline consumption, meaning blends of ethanol beyond E10 will need to be used.

For more information about ethanol and the use of blends beyond 10 percent, visit www.ethanol.org.

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The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) is the grassroots voice of the U.S. ethanol industry, a national trade association for the ethanol industry with 1500 members nationwide, including farmers, ethanol producers, commodity organizations, businesses supplying goods and services to the ethanol industry, rural electric cooperatives, and individuals supportive of increased production and use of ethanol. For more information about ethanol or ACE, visit www.ethanol.org or call (605) 334-3381.