



The Clean Car Standards: Impacts on Ethanol and Trucks

Clean car standards will not impact the availability of passenger trucks or flex fuel vehicles

The clean car standards will not prevent consumers from purchasing the types of pickups and work vehicles they need. Vehicles over 10,000 pounds, such as heavy-duty pickups like the Ford F-350, Dodge Ram 3500, and Excursion SUV are not covered by the greenhouse gas portion of the clean car standards, and the air quality portion of the standards is almost identical to the federal regulations already in effect. Flex fuel vehicles, manufactured to run on fuel composed of up to 85% ethanol, or E85, are also readily available in states that have adopted the clean car standards. Of the 39 flex fuel vehicle models sold in the US in 2008, 37 of these models met the Standards and were available for sale in California¹.

The greenhouse gas standards - two categories

The greenhouse gas portion of the clean car standards are broken into two separate categories: one for cars and smaller trucks (e.g., a Toyota RAV4 or Ford Ranger), and a second set for larger light-duty trucks, such as the Dodge Ram and the GMC Sierra. Cars and small trucks are held to a stricter standard than the larger trucks. Many pick-ups will be relatively unaffected by the adoption of the clean car standards because of their similarity to the federal rules.

Flex fuel vehicles benefit from the clean car standards

Under the clean car standards, automakers are required to achieve fleet-wide average reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Each flex fuel vehicle (FFV) they produce is credited a 26% reduction in its tailpipe greenhouse gas emissions if the manufacturer can demonstrate that it will actually run on ethanol.

Implementing the clean car standards will support the use of E85

Under the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, automakers are granted a credit for every flex fuel vehicle they produce *without having to demonstrate that the vehicle will actually use E85 as a fuel*. However, as stated above, the clean car standards require that manufacturers demonstrate that E85 will *actually* be used in the vehicle for it to receive the credit. This will help ensure the use of ethanol as a transportation fuel in flex fuel vehicles, and may increase demand for E85.

E85-use can be easily monitored

Technology is already in production that could be used to track the use of E85 in flex fuel vehicles. The advanced engines in these vehicles already detect the percentage of ethanol in the fuel being used. This information could be stored and downloaded wirelessly during servicing, or transmitted through existing equipment, such as OnStar.

¹ Green Vehicle Guide. 2008. *Complete Report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.. Available online at <http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicle/>



fact sheet

Ethanol consumption in the US

The vast majority of the ethanol produced in the U.S. is used as an “oxygenate” and mixed with gasoline. Only a very small percentage, approximately 1%², is used to produce E85, the fuel used in flex fuel vehicles. Because the clean car standards will require that E85 is *actually* used in flex fuel vehicles to receive the lower emissions-credit, these standards may help direct an increasing percentage of U.S. ethanol towards E85 production. However, even if the standards fail to affect E85-use through flex fuel vehicles, the large share of U.S. ethanol (more than 99%) that is NOT used for this purpose will remain unaffected.

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² Energy Information Administration. 2008. *Alternatives to Traditional Transportation Fuels 2006 (Part II – User and Fuel Data)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Energy.