



Regulatory Announcement

Use of Alternative Analytical Test Methods in the Reformulated Gasoline, Anti-Dumping, and Tier 2 Gasoline Sulfur Control Program

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a direct final rule to allow the use of alternative analytical test methods for measuring sulfur in reformulated and conventional gasoline, and butane. The Agency currently has only one designated test method that may be used by refiners, importers and oxygenate blenders for determining sulfur content in gasoline and one test method for butane. This rulemaking provides industry significant flexibility in choosing between several American Society for Standards and Materials (ASTM) test methods for determining the sulfur content of gasoline and butane.

Background

The Agency currently has one designated test method, ASTM D 2622, that may be used by oil refiners, importers and oxygenate blenders for determining sulfur content of gasoline. Likewise, EPA currently has one designated test method, ASTM D 3246, that may be used by oil refiners, importers and oxygenate blenders for determining sulfur content of butane. This rulemaking was developed in response to concerns raised by industry related to the designated test methods. Specifically, many regulated parties preferred to use ASTM test methods other than D 2622 and D 3246, and this rulemaking permits them this flexibility.

How will the regulations affect industry?

Refiners, importers and oxygenate blenders are affected by this rule. This rulemaking allows the use of the current versions of ASTM D 5453, D 6428 and D 3120 as alternative test methods for determining sulfur content of gasoline and ASTM D 4468 as an alternative test method for determining sulfur content of butane. Refiners and importers will gain significant flexibility by choosing which of these test methods may best fit their needs for compliance measurements.

In the future, EPA will develop a performance based test methods approach and envisions that such an approach would provide additional flexibility to the regulated industry in their choice of test methods to be utilized for compliance various fuels programs.

What are the health and environmental benefits?

This direct final rule is not expected to have any adverse environmental impact because the level of sulfur in gasoline and butane will remain the same. Only the test methods used to measure the sulfur content may differ.

Where can I find more information?

You can access documents on Tier 2 gasoline sulfur requirements electronically on the Office of Transportation and Air Quality web site at:

www.epa.gov/otaq/tr2home.htm

For further information on this direct final rule, please contact Anne Pastorkovich at:

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