

## APD ALERT

### Mandatory Use of E85 Fuel



#### **Background**

There are various regulations that require agencies to increase the use of alternative fuels. The Energy Policy Act requires Federal agencies to use alternative fuels when they are available. **Alternative fuels are “available” when there is an alternative fuel merchant located within a five-mile radius or fifteen-minute drive from the vehicle’s garaged location.**

Agencies submit an annual report that lists the garage location of alternative fueled vehicles (primarily E85 flex fuel vehicles). The Department of Energy (DOE) performs an analysis to determine whether there are E85 fuel merchants readily available. **If there are no E85 fuel merchants within the criteria, the vehicle receives a waiver from using E85 fuel.** If there are merchants that meet the criteria, the agency must routinely refuel the vehicle using E85 fuel. The five-mile radius/fifteen-minute drive may not be the most direct route.

DOE does not exclude private merchants that are not available to the public, such as fueling centers on military bases or state government facilities. It is up to the agency to contact the facility to request access. If the merchant declines, then the agency would have a post-waiver.

#### **Policy**

REE offices assigned E85 vehicles that do not have a waiver must refuel using E85 fuel as the primary fuel source. (See enclosed spreadsheets of E85 vehicles, sorted by REE Agency and ARS Area or NASS Field Operations.) AFM property management officials are responsible for monitoring E85 fuel use vehicles that do not have a waiver.

REE offices are responsible for notifying their respective AFM Business Service Center (BSC) or PSSB if there are changes to the vehicle location or discrepancies with the merchant, such as, the merchant no longer carries E85 fuel, the merchant is no longer available to the public, or the merchant does not accept USDA’s fleet card.

If the merchant is a private fueling center, DOE requires the agency to contact the merchant, in writing, to request access. **The agency must show that they have attempted to use the facility and the merchant denied the request. Offices must submit all documentation to PSSB.**

PSSB will keep the documentation on file and include it with the next waiver submission. The office must also use this supporting documentation to show all efforts to use alternative fuel.

### **Reporting E85 Fuel Use**

Increased use of alternative fuels is a sustainability scorecard for USDA agencies. Due to issues with improperly coding of alternative fuels by the fleet credit card or fuel vendors, REE agencies will manually track and report all E85 fuel use (APD Alert 2010-4, dated Jan 2010, revised September 2011). This helps ensure REE agencies receive proper credit for all E85 use.

Offices will collect E85 data using the attached spreadsheet and provide approved justifications when they do not refuel with E85 fuel when required.

- ARS: BSCs are responsible for collecting E85 use from locations and reporting information to PSSB.
- NASS: State Statistical Offices will report E85 use to PSSB.

**ARS:** There is a separate spreadsheet for each Area and tabs for each location. We highlighted the location name in **Red** if the location has E85 vehicles that must refuel with E85 (no waiver). Non-highlighted tabs have E85 vehicles that are not required to use E85 fuel. However, if the office has the opportunity to use E85 fuel, they should report the information to us.

**NASS:** There is a separate spreadsheet for the Eastern and Western Field Operations. We highlighted the State in **Red** if the office must refuel with E85 (no waiver). Non-highlighted tabs list E85 vehicles that are not required to use E85 fuel. However, if the office has the opportunity to use E85 fuel, they should report the information to us.

PSSB will forward reminders to submit E85 fuel use at the end of each quarter.

### **E85 Route Planning**

Use the link below to assist drivers in planning routes to increase the use of E85 fuel. This link provides the location of alternative fuels based on the fuel type, city, state, and zip code. It will also map a route of merchants between the “start” and “end” point.

**<http://afdc.energy.gov/afdc/locator/stations/state>** (Department of Energy – Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy).

### **Questions**

For questions, please contact:

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