

POTPOURRI NOTICE

Department of Environmental Quality Office of Environmental Assessment Division of Environmental Planning

Solicitation of Comments on Fuel Options for Ozone Control (0009Pot3)

The 5-parish Baton Rouge ozone nonattainment area, which includes the parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge, did not meet the 1999 statutory deadline to comply with the one-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). Implementation of additional emission reduction controls is necessary as Louisiana has experienced many days of elevated ozone levels this summer at ozone monitors throughout the state and especially in the Baton Rouge area. A number of the monitored readings have exceeded the one-hour ozone standard.

The LDEQ is preparing a revision to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) which will specify emission reduction control strategies to improve the overall air quality in Louisiana. Rules to implement emission reduction controls for inclusion in the SIP must be promulgated. In accordance with R.S. 49:953 of the Administrative Procedure Act, any proposed rule must include a Fiscal and Economic Impact Statement. Further, the LDEQ is required, by R.S. 30:2019(D) and R.S. 49:953(G) to perform a cost/benefit and risk analysis if a rule has a fiscal impact of \$1 million or more and is not required for compliance with a federal law or regulation.

The LDEQ is considering options to reduce the vapor pressure specifications for gasoline sold in the state during the ozone season (May – September). Low Reid vapor pressure (RVP) gasoline is fuel that is refined to have a lower evaporation rate and lower volatility than conventional gasoline. Use of low RVP gasoline reduces the evaporative emissions generated during vehicle refueling and decreases the emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other ozone-forming emissions from gasoline-powered engines. The Louisiana Environmental Quality Act, specifically R.S. 30:2054.B(2)(b)(vii), currently limits LDEQ from proposing any fuel specification requirement that is not required by the Clean Air Act Amendments or that pertains to a specification other than RVP. The fuel options under consideration are as follows:

1. Require gasoline with a lower RVP of 7.0 or 7.2 pounds per square inch (psi) to be sold in the 5-parish Baton Rouge ozone nonattainment area;
2. Require gasoline with a lower RVP of 7.8 psi to be sold statewide (64 parishes);
or
3. A combination option which would require gasoline with a lower RVP of 7.0 or 7.2 psi to be sold in the 5-parish Baton Rouge ozone nonattainment area and would require gasoline with a lower RVP of 7.8 psi to be sold in the other 59 parishes.

The LDEQ requests all interested parties to submit information and comments regarding the fuel options to the Department for consideration. The LDEQ specifically requests comments regarding the following issues:

1. What are the expected environmental benefits and/or disbenefits of the fuel options under consideration?
2. What are the potential risks to human health and the environment?
3. What are the potential manufacturing costs/impacts for the fuel options?
4. What are the potential distribution costs/impacts for the fuel options?
5. What other fuel specification options should LDEQ consider? Please answer these questions for any options suggested.
6. Could the fuel options be implemented for the 2002 ozone season? If not by 2002, then when at the earliest?
7. Other information or comments regarding fuel options or strategies.

Comments are due no later than 4:30 p.m. CST on Wednesday, November 1, 2000, and should be submitted to Ms. Patsy Deaville, Regulation Development Section, Box 82178, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2178 or hand-delivered to 7290 Bluebonnet Boulevard, Fourth Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70810 or faxed to (225) 765-5095. Persons commenting should reference this document as "Fuel Options for Ozone Control."

Should the LDEQ propose a rule to implement a fuel option, the public will have an additional opportunity to comment during the rulemaking process.

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Assistant Secretary