



Search

CONNECTING MANUFACTURING'S LEADERS

Download your FREE sample report 

- IW HOME
- LEADERSHIP & STRATEGY
- OPERATIONS
- ECONOMICS & PUBLIC POLICY
- TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
- RANKINGS



- [Current Print Issue](#)
- [Get a Free Subscription](#)
- [eNewsletters](#)
- [Daily News](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Forums/Blogs](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Web Events](#)
- [In Person Events](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Benchmarking Tools](#)
- [Associations](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Manufacturing 101](#)
- [NAM/IW Mfg Index](#)
- [Sponsored White Papers](#)
- [Permissions/Reprints](#)
- [Advertising Info](#)
- [About IW](#)
- [Contact Us](#)



[Home](#) : [Economics & Public Policy](#) : [Environment](#) : Viewpoint -- Raising Ethanol Levels Could Hurt Consumers, Manufacturers -- If Not Done Right

Viewpoint -- Raising Ethanol Levels Could Hurt Consumers, Manufacturers -- If Not Done Right

When ethanol levels are raised, small engines react differently and in a potentially dangerous way -- boat engines may seize up and gas may leak, the RPM increases on chainsaws as the clutch and chain are constantly engaged, and rubber and other components in small engine products grow corroded.

By Kris Kiser, AIISAFE

May 14, 2008 -- In early March, the State of Minnesota and the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA) released parts of a screening study in response to legislation passed by the State of Minnesota requiring the use of 20% volume ethanol blended gasoline (E20). Under the Clean Air Act, E20 must meet certain tests before being allowed for use in most vehicles and small engines.

After one year of testing, the study sponsors concluded that E20 will not harm current automotive fuel systems. They also claimed E20 provided similar power and performance to 10% ethanol blended fuel throughout the entire calendar year. As a result, Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty's lauded the study and urged for an increase in the blend rate.

As a member of AIISAFE, an organization that represents 13 national consumer, manufacturing, and gasoline retailer associations and speaks on fuel-related legislation for over 250 million Americans that own and operate over 400 million products, the study's conclusions set off some very loud alarm bells.

Let's be clear. We are not anti-ethanol. We certainly support the national move toward the increased use of ethanol, turning plants and plant material into fuel that can decrease our dependence on gasoline and help the U.S. achieve "energy security."

Many point to Brazil as a prime example of higher ethanol blends helping a country become energy independent, but we can't compare ourselves to this model. Brazil is a different market place with much less stringent emission standards and a different climate. Also, because higher ethanol blended fuels are available in large amounts, Brazil has invested in a host of new "flex-fuel" vehicles (FFV), which are specifically designed to run on any level of ethanol. With the exception of flex-fuel vehicles, U.S. products were designed to run on zero or 10% ethanol only.

Our main concern at AIISAFE is just as our name implies -- the safety of more than 400 million products currently in use, including recreational boats and marine engines, chainsaws, lawnmowers, motor vehicles, motorcycles, all terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles, generators, and related vehicles and equipment.

There are several flaws with the released study. First, it tested only recent model automobiles, but the national fleet still includes hundreds of millions of older model

SITE TOOLS:

- [resize type](#)
- [send to a friend](#)
- [print this page](#)
- [reply to this article](#)
- [Discuss in the Forums](#)
- [eNewsletters](#)
- [get a free subscription](#)

[What can we do for you? Check out relevant articles in finance, regulations and trade : Grant Thornton](#)

[Keeping you up-to-date on your industry's complex regulatory requirements : Grant Thornton](#)

[Our cost-reducing life sciences solutions feature lifecycle management and FDA compliance : IFS](#)

[Maintain your competitive edge with our optimized information systems for the oil & gas industry : IFS](#)

[More Related Links »](#)

Related Items

Recent Articles

- [DOE, Volvo Group Agree to Expand Cooperation to Build More Fuel-Efficient Trucks](#)
- [Showa Shell to Build Giant Solar Panel Plant](#)
- [Pemex Warns of 40% Drop in Oil Output](#)

Recent Forum Posts

IW RSS Feeds

Get IW headlines sent directly to your RSS newsreader. [XML](#)
[Click here for details.](#)

Latest Threads in the IW Forums

- [Purported Five Myths About the Death of U.S. Manufacturing](#)
- [U.S. Car Sales Slump Badly in June](#)
- [Your Work Laptop Can Now Be Seized Without Cause](#)

Online Poll

Which one of the following athletes would make the best manufacturing CEO?

- Roger Federer
- Tiger Woods
- Kobe Bryant
- Tom Brady
- Derek Jeter

[SUBMIT](#) [VIEW RESULTS](#)

[After you have voted, comment in the IW Forums.](#)

cars. Also, it failed to study the millions of small engine products currently used by consumers and to test emission impacts and vehicle durability over time.

When ethanol levels are raised, small engines react differently and in a potentially dangerous way -- boat engines may seize up and gas may leak, the RPM increases on chainsaws as the clutch and chain are constantly engaged, and rubber and other components in small engine products grow corroded. All of this can lead to engine and product failure, and potentially, safety hazards.

First and foremost, increasing ethanol levels in gasoline above current limits is a safety and product liability issue. Neither the small engine industry nor vehicle manufacturers can risk customers getting hurt. Second, vehicle and product failures may cause non-compliance with federal and state laws. If problems occur, consumers and the government may blame the manufacturer, not the fuel. This could have a disastrous impact on manufacturers, but if the fuel does get blamed, it could create a consumer backlash against ethanol in general. AllSAFE wants to prevent both of these potential outcomes.

So, what do we advocate? AllSAFE recommends fully studying the impacts of blends like E20 before taking any steps to adopt the fuel. We want to work with the Department of Energy and EPA to conduct appropriate studies using scientific protocols. We need to secure comprehensive and credible emissions data, including exhaust, evaporative and permeation effects, as well as safety, product performance and consumer satisfaction. Without that information, it would be reckless to move to higher levels of ethanol. But with it, we are hopeful our nation can calculate a transition to levels leading to the energy security all of us desire.

We urge manufacturers of all products that use gasoline to stay informed on the issues and engaged in this discussion, identifying one or more persons at your company to stay up-to-date and report back to the rest of your executive team. Information and updates can be found at www.allsafe-fuel.org, as well as the latest developments.

Any policymaker considering the use of E20 must weigh many factors -- product safety, consumer awareness, the environment and our economic infrastructure. If done right, we can all win and secure an energy independent future for our country.

Kris Kiser is a spokesman for AllSAFE and vice president of public affairs for the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, member of AllSAFE. AllSAFE speaks on fuel-related legislation that affects over 250 million Americans who own and operate over 300 million products, including recreational boats and marine engines, chainsaws, lawnmowers, motor vehicles, motorcycles, all terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles, generators, and related vehicles and equipment. For more information, visit www.allsafe-fuel.org.

- [Purported Five Myths About the Death of U.S. Manufacturing](#)
- [U.S. Car Sales Slump Badly in June](#)
- [Your Work Laptop Can Now Be Seized Without Cause](#)
- [Your CEO Needs A Psychic Friend](#)
- [Expecting More From 'Lean'](#)

Webcasts and Events

- [Save Green by Going Green: How Managing Emissions and Energy Can Reduce Costs](#)
- [Best Practices for a Carbon-Efficient Supply Chain](#)
- [Manufacturing Competitiveness Online Conference](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility: How To Get Green with IT](#)
- [How Can Your Company Prepare to Manage Carbon as an Asset?](#)

White Papers

- [\\$18 Million in Rebates and Incentives for Businesses to Improve Energy Efficiency](#)

Discuss Or Bookmark This Article

[Post In The IndustryWeek Forums](#)

Discuss this article in [the IndustryWeek Forums](#). Post your thoughts read what others have to say. It only takes a few minutes to register and join the community.

Social Bookmarking Services

- [del.icio.us](#)
- [Digg this](#)
- [Googleize](#)
- [Newsvine](#)
- [reddit](#)
- [Yahoo MyWeb](#)

SITE TOOLS:

- [send to a friend](#)
- [print this page](#)
- [reply to this article](#)
- [Discuss in the Forums](#)
- [eNewsletters](#)
- [get a free subscription](#)

IW Marketplace

[Lean Manufacturing: Self Assessment Checklist](#)

Lean Manufacturing 16 page self audit checklist by R. Michael Donovan will help you assess "how does your company measure up?". It will help jumpstart a new or reinvigorate a current lean effort.

[Managing MRO & Tools with RFID -- A 6 Month ROI](#)

The average ROI that is reported from CribMaster RFID users is 6 months or less. With CribMaster you gain control of indirect material of all kinds with robust software, vending or RFID.

[How to Build an Online Parts Catalog That Drives Aftermarket Sales](#)

Learn how OEMs reduce the cost of creating, distributing and delivering updated parts and service information to their dealer networks and customers.

[Solutions to Manufacturing Challenges](#)

Read about manufacturing dilemmas in the IW Manufacturing Business Challenge. This e-newsletter gives you insight into common problems manufacturers encounter and provides expert solutions. Sign up for free.

[Sales & Operations Planning: Everything You Need to Know](#)

Ensure S&OP success by visiting the NEW S&OP Knowledge Center. Learn best practices and get the latest information on how to effectively integrate supply and demand: webcasts, white papers, customer case studies, recommended readings and much more.

[Buy a Link Now](#)

[Leadership & Strategy](#) | [Operations](#) | [Economics & Public Policy](#)
[Technology & Innovation](#) | [Rankings](#)

[Subscription Services](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Contact Us](#)



Copyright© 1998-2008 Penton Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

Technical questions or bug reports? E-mail webmaster@industryweek.com

Ads by Google