

National Boating Federation

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E15 Ethanol Fuel Sales Could Be Threatened: Just as a 15% blend of ethanol in gasoline gains traction in the marketplace, a mandated label change at gas pumps threatens to slow sales of fuel known as E15. Effective this week, federal regulators say E15 must be labeled as a “Flex Fuel” in most areas of the country. The change would suggest it could be used only in “Flex Fuel” vehicles that run on a higher percentage of ethanol. But it’s the same fuel that gas stations have called E15 and regulators said was approved to use in any vehicle 2001 and newer. Most gasoline contains 10% ethanol, a biofuel made from corn.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2017 Work Plan Includes Increased Funds for Dredging Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway: As indicated by NMMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released its final FY17 work plan last week, which includes the largest amount of funds for dredging the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) in more than five years – \$15.6 million almost 80 percent more than proposed in President Obama’s final President’s Budget. As stated by the **National Boating Federation: This is indeed good news for the Recreational Boating Community**, and for commercial shipping as well. The increases came in part from the advocacy provided by the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association (AIWA); NMMA has a seat on the AIWA board of directors. Stretches of the AIWW are in dire need of dredging, with some areas silted into depths as shallow as three feet. If maintained to anywhere near its authorized depth of eight feet, pleasure craft would not need to use the Atlantic for part of a north-south journey, and shipping tonnage would significantly increase, releasing pressure on I-95 and railways. The breakdown by states is as follows:

Virginia- \$4.14M

North Carolina- \$1.833M

South Carolina- \$6.6M

Georgia- \$181K

Florida- \$2.85M

In addition, President Trump’s FY18 budget proposal for dredging the AIWW is \$10.9 million. This budget is expected to change as Congress debates and enacts next year’s budget:

Virginia- \$5.479M

North Carolina- \$2.812M

South Carolina- \$199.5K

Georgia- \$181K

Florida- \$2.224M

Isobutanol Cleared for Marine Use in Maryland: As reported in *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*, due to the efforts of the Marine Trades Association of Maryland (MTAM) and Executive Director Susan Zellers, Marylanders may finally have a feasible and better alternative to ethanol in our boat fuel tanks.

Ethel alcohol (ethanol), which is used as a biofuel additive to gasoline, is the same alcohol found in alcohol beverages. Many boaters who have had unpleasant and costly experiences with the blend would agree that we should have left that combustible in our drinks. Issues with engine failure, fuel line deterioration and useless water-soaked E-10 fuel on board have been persistent.

After extensive testing by NMMA in collaboration with the Department of Energy and the Argonne National Laboratory, isobutanol-blended fuel (i12.5) presents a solution to the problems. Higher-chain alcohols such as this are not as volatile or corrosive as ethanol, and they do not absorb – the three main complaints about ethanol-blended fuel (E-10).

Now it's a matter of switching over, which will take some time as marine fuel distributors and outlets develop the supply chain. And there is the question of price, which is unknown at the moment and will certainly fluctuate with supply and demand.

Interested marine fuel vendors with questions should contact Greg Roda, groda@gevo.com, at Biofuel Producer Gevo.

A list of **Isobutanol Advantages**

- + Ethanol-free
- + No phase separation
- + No water solubility issues
- + 30% higher energy content than ethanol
- + High octane
- + Reduced emissions
- + Made from renewable resources

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Interested marine fuel vendors with questions should contact Greg Roda, groda@gevo.com, at Biofuel Producer Gevo.

Meeting of the National Recreational Boating Safety Coalition: The meeting was held on June 13, 2017, in Washington DC. Coalition Chairman Tom O'Day chaired the meeting and a number of organizations with boating interests were in attendance.

The U.S. Coast Guard provided a good written report: 2016 Recreational Boating Statistics. The following are a few key items from the Executive Summary of the Coast Guard report:

- + The fatality rate was 5.9% deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels. This rate represents an 11.3% increase from last year's fatality rate of 5.3 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.
- + Where cause of death was known, 80% of fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims with reported life jacket usage, 83% were not wearing a life jacket.
- + Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents; where the primary cause was known, it was listed as the leading factor in 15% of deaths.
- + Operator inattention, operator inexperience, improper lookout, excessive speed, and machinery failure rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents.

Steve Blackistone, representing the NTSB, reported on Shared Waterways. The following are just a summary of his comments: An increase in the number of interactions between regular boats and paddle boats. There is a 22% increase in non-powered boats. The Coast Guard estimates that only 28% of motorized vessels are not required to have mandatory boating education. Small boats are difficult to be seen by commercial vessels. We should all be supporting Mandatory Boating Education (MBE). The Coast Guard Authorization bill is in the works.

Another report was provided about MBE. Two items which are significant: Almost all states have some sort of mandatory boater education laws for motorboat operators EXCEPT seven (7) states (Alaska, Arizona, Idaho, Maine, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming) which have virtually none. All states have child life jacket use laws EXCEPT two (2) states (Virginia and Wisconsin) which have none except for a Federal requirement of under 13 for Federal and state waters where there is no state requirement.