

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

A.G. KAWAMURA, Secretary

Division of Measurement Standards
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DMS NOTICE
P - 06 - 1

January 5, 2006

Discard: 01/04/07

TO WEIGHTS AND MEASURES OFFICIALS

SUBJECT: Water Contaminated Motor Vehicle Fuel

On January 2, 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in seven California counties due to severe rainstorms.

It is possible that service stations and consumers may experience fuel problems due to water contamination from the rains and flooding.

Field detection of this contamination can be performed by weights and measures officials and actions taken to limit the public's exposure to contaminated fuels.

The following guidance is provided.

GASOLINE:

- 1) Dispense the gasoline into a clean glass container, cap it and allow it to warm to at least 70 degrees F. Visually inspect it for water drops, floating particles or cloudiness. The gasoline should be clear, bright, and free of any undissolved water, sediment and suspended matter.
- 2) If particles or water drops are visible or the sample remains cloudy/milky; the gasoline must be removed from sale. Remember that contaminated 87 or 91 octane products will affect blended 89-octane quality.
- 3) Even if you observe no water, pour the glass container of contaminated contents into a sample can and fill the sample can up to 80-90% full with the grade in question. Make sure to note on the sample tag your findings and actions being taken. Contact your local DMS office and make arraignments to transport the sample to the DMS Petroleum Products Laboratory. The DMS Petroleum Products Laboratory will confirm your test results or notify you if there is a problem with the sample.

- 4) Coordination with your regional DMS office will be necessary because a “water phase separation” sample may need to be taken by DMS personnel.

DIESEL:

- 1) Dispense the diesel fuel into a clean glass container, cap it and visually inspect it for water drops, floating particles or cloudiness. The diesel fuel should be free of any undissolved water, sediment and suspended matter.
- 2) If particles or water drops are visible, the diesel fuel must be removed from sale. If the diesel fuel remains cloudy/milky, recommend to the station owner that they voluntarily remove the suspect diesel fuel from sale until the DMS Petroleum Products Laboratory evaluates the sample for contamination.
- 3) Even if you observe no water, pour the glass container of contaminated contents into a sample can and fill the sample can up to 80-90% full with the suspect diesel fuel. Make sure to note on the sample tag your findings and actions taken. Contact your local DMS office and make arraignments to transport the sample to the DMS Petroleum Products Laboratory. The DMS Petroleum Products Laboratory will confirm your test results or notify you if there is a problem with the sample.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Cleary', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Cleary
Director

cc: Ed Williams