

UPDATED INFORMATIVE DIGEST

Amendments to the Specifications for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Used in Motor Vehicles

Sections Affected:

Amendment of Title 13, California Code of Regulations, section 2292.6, "Specifications for Liquefied Petroleum Gas." This section controls the properties of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG or "propane") that is sold commercially for use in motor vehicles in California.

Background

In 1992, the Board adopted section 2292.6, which took effect on January 1, 1993. The Board included a maximum limit of ten percent by volume on the propene content of vehicular LPG. That propene limit was to have declined to five percent on January 1, 1995. However, in 1994, the Board delayed the effective date of the five-percent propene limit to January 1, 1997, and then in 1997, the Board again delayed the effective date of the propene limit until January 1, 1999. In the interim, the propene limit remained at ten volume percent. The Board delayed the effective date of the propene limit out of concerns raised by the vendors of commercial propane (who supply the motor vehicle LPG used in California) that too little of the commercial propane available to them meets the original specifications set by the Board.

The LPG specifications also include a maximum limit on butanes and heavier species, of 2.5 percent by volume. This limit is also contained in the specifications for industrial and commercial grade propane.

When the Board adopted the specifications for vehicular LPG, and other alternative fuels, it set essentially identical standards for the motor vehicle fuel sold commercially in California and the fuel used for emission standard certification testing of new motor vehicles. The purpose for the commercial fuel specifications is to ensure that motor vehicles certified on LPG will receive in-use fuel having a quality similar to that of the certification fuel, so that the vehicles will achieve their emission standards in use.

The Amendments

Following a December 11, 1998 hearing, the Board adopted the following amendments to the section 2292.6, title 13, CCR specifications for LPG intended for use in motor vehicles:

- (1) Retain the current interim propene limit of 10 percent by volume as a permanent limit.
- (2) Establish a new 2.0 percent by volume maximum limit for butenes.
- (3) Establish a new 0.5 percent by volume maximum limit for pentenes and heavier.
- (4) Amend the optional 2.5 percent by volume maximum limit for butanes and heavier to a 5.0 percent by volume limit for butanes.
- (5) Reduce the maximum sulfur content limit from 120 to 80 parts per million by weight.

Finally, the Board approved an amendment, which requires the staff to review the LPG regulation in five years to determine whether it should be retained, revised, or repealed.