

NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS:
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WHAT'S AN ALTERNATIVE FUEL?

Energy Department Proposes Additional Substitute for Gasoline

The Department of Energy today published a proposed rule to add another new substitute for gasoline, called the "P-series fuels," to the regulatory definition of "alternative fuel."

P-series fuels are designed to operate in flexible-fuel vehicles that can run on E85 (85 percent ethanol mixed with 15 percent gasoline), or gasoline, or any blend of the two. Chrysler and Ford have begun to mass-produce flexible-fuel engines as standard equipment for certain vehicle models. Chrysler's most popular minivan equipped with a flexible-fuel engine is on the market today and the Ford Ranger pick-up truck will have such an engine in the 1999 model year. These auto makers will have about 250,000 flexible-fuel vehicles on the road within the next two model years.

"With our nation's increasing reliance on imported oil it is important that we develop and use clean, domestically abundant, renewable alternative fuels such as the P-series fuels," said Dan Reicher, assistant secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. "P-series fuels have the potential to displace approximately 1 billion gallons of gasoline by 2005. This will help the United States cut pollution from automobiles and fight greenhouse gas emissions."

P-series fuels are blends of ethanol, methyltetrahydrofuran (MTHF), natural gas liquids and butane. The ethanol and MTHF are expected to be derived from renewable domestic feedstocks, such as corn, waste paper, cellulosic biomass, agricultural waste and wood waste from construction. The P-series fuels emissions are generally below those for reformulated gasoline and are well below federal emissions standards. P-series fuels joins the list of alternatives to gasoline that includes ethanol (E85), methanol (M85), natural gas, propane and electricity.

A 60-day public comment period begins today, with the notice's publication in the Federal Register and ends September 28. Interested parties can also access the proposed rule on the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Internet site, <http://www.eren.doe.gov>.

For additional information, contact the National Alternative Fuels Hotline at 800/423-1DOE, or the Office of Transportation Technologies, 202/586-9171.

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