



California State Fire Marshal Information Bulletin

April 27, 2009

INFORMATION REGARDING PLACEMENT OF E85 FUEL DISPENSING EQUIPMENT ON STATE OWNED OR STATE LEASED FACILITIES

In an effort to assist interested parties with criteria addressing E85 dispensing equipment, the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is providing this informational bulletin. E85 is the acronym for an alcohol-blended gasoline fuel that contains between 15 to 85 percent ethanol (alcohol). Presently, there are over 10,000 gas service stations in California selling petroleum fuels (gasoline and diesel); and the number of stations dispensing E85 fuel continues to increase.

The California Fire Code (CFC) and Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) require all fuel-dispensers to be listed and labeled by an approved testing laboratory and to be certified by the Air Resources Board (ARB) and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM). However, there are no E85 fuel-dispensers that have been listed/labeled by an approved laboratory or certified by ARB and OSFM.

Since October 5, 2006, Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) suspended authorization for manufacturers to use UL Markings (Listing or Recognition) on components for fuel-dispensing devices that specifically reference compatibility with alcohol-blended fuels containing more than 15 percent alcohol (i.e., ethanol, methanol or other alcohols). As a result of the UL suspension, it restricted ARB and OSFM from certifying dispensers for E85 use. For more information regarding the development of safety requirements for E85 dispensers and components, UL has provided information on their website. Please go to the following Web sites for more information:

<http://www.ul.com/global/eng/pages/corporate/contactus/faq/industries/e85/>

<http://www.ul.com/global/eng/pages/offerings/industries/chemicals/flammableandcombustiblefluids/development/>

The OSFM has approved E85 fuel dispensing stations on state occupied facilities as demonstration/test sites only. Our approval process is based upon the **Alternate Means of Protection** requests with the following conditions:

- The dispenser is approved and listed by an approved testing laboratory for the dispensing of petroleum fuels (gasoline or diesel).



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- The dispenser is certified by ARB and OSFM for use to dispense petroleum fuels (gasoline or diesel).
- Shall obtain a demonstration permit from the ARB.
- Shall conduct routine weekly inspection of all components of the system for detection of leaks and maintain proper records.
- Records shall be maintained until the dispenser is replaced or upgraded in accordance with a listing and certification program.
- The dispenser shall be replaced or upgraded within 120 days after a listed E85 dispenser is available.
- Shall have a fire extinguisher (rated for alcohol fire) mounted within 60 feet of the dispenser.
- The OSFM will be notified if any issues are detected that involve degradation of a component.
- All equipment must be suitably labeled or marked.
- There will be a limited time frame for the approved installation and shall be subjected to re-evaluation when expired.

Projects are subjected to the final approval of the enforcing authority having jurisdiction and shall be reviewed and approved on a case by case basis.

For information regarding this bulletin, please contact Supervising Deputy State Fire Marshal Steve Guarino, Fire and Life Safety Division at (916) 341-6641 or by email steve.guarino@fire.ca.gov