



<http://www.epa.gov/history/topics/lead/03.htm>

[EPA press release - November 28, 1973]

EPA Requires Phase-Out of Lead in All Grades of Gasoline

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Russell E. Train today announced the promulgation of final regulations to protect public health by reducing the amount of lead in all grades of gasoline.

The new regulations restrict the average lead content, measured quarterly, in all grades of gasoline produced by any refinery to 1.7 grams per gallon (gpg) by July 1, 1975, 1.2 grams per gallon by July 1, 1976, 0.9 grams per gallon by July 1, 1977, and 0.6 grams per gallon by July 1, 1978.

According to EPA, a significant portion of the urban population, particularly children, are over-exposed to lead through a combination of sources including food, water, air, leaded paint, and dust. Although leaded paint is a primary source of exposure for poisoning in children, leaded gasoline is also a significant source of exposure which can be readily controlled. The total amount of lead used in gasoline amounts to well over 200,000 tons a year.

"Lead from stationary sources and deteriorating leaded paint from buildings combine with lead from gasoline to cause high lead levels in dirt and dust," Train said. "Of these sources, lead from gasoline is the most ubiquitous source of lead found in the air, dust and dirt in urban areas."

The new lead limits prescribed by EPA today are based on "total pool averaging," a method which allows refiners to average lead usage over all grades of gasoline produced, including the unleaded grade.

On January 10, 1973, EPA required the general availability of one grade of unleaded gas by July 1, 1974, in order to protect the catalytic converters which will appear on many new cars in 1975. Lead in gasoline may cause disintegration of the converters, which control auto air pollution emissions.

Also on January 10, EPA re-proposed annual reductions of the lead content in all other grades of gasoline in order to protect public health. The re-proposal, based on a pool averaging of only the leaded grades of gasoline, phased out lead content to 1.25 gpg by January 1, 1978.

Today's final regulations reflect a change from the re-proposed averaging of leaded grades to an average of both leaded and unleaded. This change in computation methods required EPA to revise downward the grams per gallon limits, although the actual average amount of lead per gallon of gas reaching the consumer will be the same as re-proposed on January 10--a 60 to 65 percent reduction from present levels.

EPA estimates that the new low-lead reductions, depending on how many cars after 1975 will require lead-free gas, will cost the oil industry up to \$75 million in the costs of raw stocks, operating and capital costs at the refinery, and product distribution costs. The \$75 million figure represents a cost impact of less than 1/10 of a cent per gallon.

EPA said the low-lead regulations in 1980 would increase total crude oil usage by only .4 percent, thereby having a minimal impact on the energy shortage.

The new regulations provide a two-year delay, until July 1, 1977, in implementation for small refineries to provide additional time to adapt to the new regulations.

The new regulations become effective upon publication in the *Federal Register*.