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From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
Sent: Wed 8/30/2017 8:16:04 PM
Subject: EPA issues waiver for higher ethanol blends to fight Harvey shortages

By Eric Wolff

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EPA issued a waiver today to allow the sale of gasoline with 15 percent ethanol in 12 states and the District of Columbia, effectively ending the summer restriction on sales of the fuel because of Hurricane Harvey.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt says in the [waiver letter](#) the refinery closures and the disruption of the Colonial Pipeline have created fuel shortfalls, and the waiver will help ease that pressure. Retailers in some states can't sell fuel blends above E10 in the summer to avoid violating the Clean Air Act, but the law gives the administrator authority to waive those requirements in emergencies. In practical terms, the waiver allows retailers in these states to sell winter formulated gasoline early, as well as higher blends of ethanol.

"These shortages can be reduced by waiving the requirement to sell low-volatility summer [conventional gasoline]," Pruitt said in the waiver letter.

About 20 percent of the country's refining capacity is offline after Harvey battered the Gulf Coast region. Gasoline prices at the pump were up six cents a gallon today from a week ago, according to AAA.

The Renewable Fuels Association [asked](#) EPA on Monday to allow the waiver.

"Consumers facing likely gasoline supply issues as a result of Hurricane Harvey are one important step closer today to a high octane, lost cost alternative," RFA CEO Bob Dinneen said in a statement.

The waiver applies to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

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