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From: POLITICO Pro
Sent: Wed 7/5/2017 3:59:30 PM
Subject: Sources: EPA expected to trim biofuel levels for 2018

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07/05/2017 11:56 AM EDT

EPA will lower the amount of biofuel that must be used in the U.S. next year, marking the first ever reduction in volumes under the Renewable Fuel Standard, according to industry sources.

The proposal, which is expected to be released as soon as today, will call for 19.24 billion gallons of biofuel for 2018, slightly below the 19.28 billion gallons EPA had mandated for this year, ethanol and oil industry sources tell POLITICO.

The volume mandate of conventional biofuels like ethanol will remain at 15 billion gallons, equal to the level set by the Obama administration for 2017 and the maximum allowed under the law.

However, sources say EPA will submit a requirement for advanced biofuels that is less than the 4.28 billion gallons required in 2017. Advanced biofuels have lower life-cycle carbon emissions than corn ethanol, and the requirement is generally filled by biogas, advanced biodiesel, cellulosic ethanol, and imported Brazilian sugar ethanol.

Three weeks ago, when several industry sources had expected volumes to be released, advanced biofuel volumes were expected to increase to 4.38 billion gallons, up 100 million gallons from 2017. The reduction is an attempt to reduce the use of imports to meet RFS requirements and to boost U.S. producers, according to the sources.

WHAT'S NEXT: Once the rule is released, EPA will take comment on its volumes and calculations. It has a final deadline of Nov. 30 to issue a final rule.

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