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REFINERS CAN OBTAIN ANTIKNOCK SOLUTION RIGHTS

CLEVELAND - The fuel injection device developed and produced by Thompson Vita-Meter Corp., a subsidiary of Thompson Products, Inc. (see OILGRAM March 4) will be marketed through automobile jobbers, but manufacture and distribution of the alcohol-water-tetraethyl antiknock solution will be through the oil industry, OILGRAM learned today from C. H. Van Hartesveldt, vice president of Thompson Vitameter and former Atlantic Refining Research man.

Hartesveldt told OILGRAM there will be "nothing exclusive" in arrangements for making and marketing the solution. Any refiner who will sign an agreement calling for payment of a sales commission to Thompson and assuring manufacture of the solution according to Thompson specifications, will be eligible to enter the field. However, he pointed out that the straight-run gasoline to be used with the solution should be at least 60 octane.

Hartesveldt cited a hypothetical case to illustrate economic factors entering into manufacture of the antiknock solution. A refiner, he said, could manufacture solution for 25¢ per gal. and sell it to a jobber at 50¢ per gal., plus shipping costs. The marketer could, in turn, market it to service station outlets at about 80¢ per gal., the solution to be sold to the consumer at about \$1 per gal.

The company recommends sale of straight-run gasoline with solution as a new product under the name "Vitane," and that the price charged be about 0.5¢ less than housebrand product. This will increase profit on this gasoline and also will result in price to motorists of 0.5¢ to 1¢ below premium grade price, after having added cost of antiknock solution per gallon of gasoline.

For the present, antiknock device and solution will be made available primarily to fleet operators. As solution becomes more readily available at refineries, fuel injection system will be offered to general public.

Though fuel injection system is designed to take over at least part of the job of adding octane numbers to gasoline at its point of use rather than at refinery, it is not to be construed as meaning abandonment of present refining equipment. Rather, it will mean better utilization of existing equipment.

Fuel injection also carries with it incentive for development of automobile engines to use higher octane fuels. In short, refineries will not be set back, but instead the automotive industry probably will be advanced, Hartesveldt said.

Nor does the use of fuel injection necessarily mean a third grade of fuel, though the use of straight-run gasoline is stressed now for fleet operation, he pointed out. As higher compression motors are manufactured, fuel injection will be applied to regular and premium grade fuels in order to reach the required octane rating.