

# The Minnesota Biodiesel Law

## Frequently Asked Questions

Beginning in May of 2009, Minnesota fuel providers began blending five percent biodiesel (B5) into nearly all diesel fuel sold throughout the state. A ten percent blend (B10) will begin July 1, 2014 and a 20 percent blend (B20) is scheduled for 2018. The blend returns to B5 between October and March of each year. Some stations also offer B20 or higher blend choices as an option for customers. Following are questions diesel vehicle and equipment users may think about when using biodiesel blends.

**1. Does biodiesel affect how my engine operates?**

Biodiesel blends of 20 percent (B20) or less should not change the engine performance in a noticeable way. Biodiesel typically has a higher cetane number and increased lubricity compared to petroleum diesel fuel. However, from an operational perspective, with lower blends of biodiesel fuel you will notice no difference in the performance of your engine.

**2. Does using biodiesel void my vehicle warranty?**

Vehicle makers do not warranty any fuel, including petroleum fuel. They warranty the parts and workmanship of their vehicle. Use of biodiesel blends, in and of themselves, does not void the parts and workmanship warranty of a vehicle. If problems are specifically caused by the fuel, whether pure petrodiesel or biodiesel blends, they are typically the responsibility of the fuel supplier. Many users have used B10 or B20 blends that meet stringent ASTM standards and report similar or fewer issues than with petrodiesel alone. Many vehicle makers already actively support and encourage biodiesel blends up to 20% (B20), provided the fuel meets ASTM standards. While not required by state law, much of the diesel sold in Illinois is already an 11% biodiesel blend (B11) which is being used with great success. For OEM statements on vehicle warranties visit:

<http://www.biodiesel.org/using-biodiesel/oem-information>.

**3. What are the standards or specifications for biodiesel fuel?**

The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) has a biodiesel blend stock standard (ASTM D6751) that describes minimum standards for biodiesel fuel properties. All biodiesel fuel sold, including biodiesel fuel used for blending, must meet this standard. When mixed with diesel, biodiesel blends up to 5% must meet ASTM D975, and blends of biodiesel from B6 through B20 must meet ASTM D7467.

**4. Does biodiesel blended fuel require special dispensing equipment?**

Dispensing equipment does not need to be modified for blends up to B20. Retailers can use their existing petroleum diesel fuel dispensing equipment for B20. For blends higher than 20 percent, the retailer will have to demonstrate UST system equipment compatibility to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

**5. What cold weather precautions need to be taken when using B5?**

B5 will behave like petroleum diesel fuel and you should continue your normal winter fueling practices when using it. Blends of 20% and higher may see an increase of the cold flow properties (cold filter plugging point, cloud point, pour point) at 3 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit, but this can be avoided with simple precautions.

**6. Is there enough supply of biodiesel fuel to meet the blending requirements?**

Minnesota has the capacity to produce 63 million gallons of biodiesel each year. Many neighboring states also produce biodiesel. No supply concerns are expected and provisions of the law ensure an adequate and affordable supply will be available before higher blend requirements are put into the marketplace.

**7. Where will the fuel blending occur and who is responsible for proper blending?**

Most blending will take place at the petroleum refinery or at other fuel terminals. Terminals have invested in sophisticated blending equipment to ensure proper blending of fuel.

**8. What differences are there with biodiesel blends?**

B5-B20 blends offer many benefits with no noticeable shortcomings. Adding biodiesel improves the lubricity properties of the fuel. This added lubricity will help protect equipment by preventing wear. Though a reduction in miles per gallon (MPG) may be seen in much higher blends of biodiesel, lower blends will show no loss. From an operational point of view, Minnesota fuel will run just like the petroleum diesel used in other states, but with [fewer air emissions](#).

**9. Are there costs difference?**

There are costs associated with blending any fuel. However, experience with B5 hasn't resulted in a significant impact on fuel pricing. Lower biodiesel blend fuel pricing remains dominated by the cost of petroleum fuel. Provisions of Minnesota's law provide an "off-ramp" to moving to higher biodiesel blends during warming months if the Minnesota Department of Commerce and Governor determine that the higher blend may impact fuel prices notably.

**10. Where can I get more information concerning biodiesel and using biodiesel in my vehicle?**

University of Minnesota Center for Diesel Research Biodiesel Helpline  
1-800-929-3437

Biodiesel Handling & Use Guide  
<http://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy09osti/43672.pdf>

U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy  
Alternative Fuels Data Center  
[www.afdc.energy.gov](http://www.afdc.energy.gov)

National Biodiesel Board  
[www.nbb.org/](http://www.nbb.org/)

Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
[www.mda.state.mn.us/](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/)

Minnesota Soybean Growers Association  
Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council  
[www.mnsoybean.org](http://www.mnsoybean.org)

American Lung Association in Minnesota  
[www.CleanAirChoice.org](http://www.CleanAirChoice.org) • [www.Biodiesel.mn](http://www.Biodiesel.mn)