

## **Propel Fuels offers big discount on E85 gas**

By Mark Glover

Sacramento Bee, Tuesday, February 23, 2010

Sacramento-based Propel Fuels, an alternative fuels retailer and an operator/supplier of alternative fuel pumps at self-serve filling stations, will offer deep discounts on E85 fuel Wednesday at its five area stations.

The company said it will offer E85 gasoline, which is a blend of 85 percent ethanol, for 85 cents a gallon. The special-offer times are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at: 8062 Florin Road and 8090 Folsom Blvd., both in Sacramento; 7741 Auburn Blvd. in Citrus Heights; 9190 E. Stockton Blvd. in Elk Grove; and 6700 Five Star Blvd. in Rocklin.

The current price of E85 locally is around \$2.39 a gallon.

The one-day discount is designed to promote the economic and environmental benefits of E85, which the Environmental Protection Agency says reduces greenhouse gas emissions up to 20 percent compared with gasoline.

Propel said about 25,000 area motorists have flex fuel vehicles that can use E85.

## **Group petitions EPA to reduce soot pollution**

By Dan Joling, Associated Press Writer

In the Modesto Bee, S.F. Chronicle, Washington Post and other papers, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010

Anchorage, Alaska (AP) -- An environmental group petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency on Monday to reduce soot, saying it accelerates melting of glaciers and sea ice.

The Center for Biological Diversity called for regulations to be implemented under the Clean Water Act.

"Black carbon, or soot, is not only dangerous to breathe but also a potent global warming pollutant that is greatly accelerating the melt of Arctic sea ice and glaciers around the world," attorney Matt Vespa said.

Soot darkens the atmosphere, absorbs heat and raises air temperatures. On snow and ice, it absorbs heat and increases melting, the center said.

It also can contribute to warming by reducing the reflectivity of snow and ice — replacing a white surface, which bounces solar energy away from the Earth, with a dark one.

EPA spokesman Tony Brown in Seattle said he had not seen the petition and the agency had no immediate comment.

Vespa said the petition was the first to explicitly seek protection of water in its solid form.

Soot hangs in the atmosphere only about a month and is not distributed globally, unlike greenhouse gases, which last decades. As a result, reducing soot would have a quicker payoff for the climate, Vespa said.

The petition lists four main sources of soot — diesel engines, homes that burn wood or coal, forest burning and industrial processes, usually small boilers. Coal-burning industrial complexes such as power plants are not specifically targeted.

In the Arctic, the group attributes as much as 90 percent of soot to fuel consumption.

In Alaska, that could put a target on the backs of people who rely on diesel fuel or wood to heat their homes, and rural villages that use diesel to power generators for electricity. Vespa, however, said

larger sources of black carbon that his group is concerned with originate in the Arctic from ships, diesel engines associated with petroleum exploration activities, and older polluting trucks, which could be controlled through cleaner engines and fuels and particulate traps.

Emissions in the Arctic merit targeting because they have a disproportionate impact on Arctic warming and sea ice, Vespa said.

Loss of summer sea ice in the Arctic prompted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list polar bears as a threatened species in May 2008. Summer sea ice in September reached the third lowest level since satellite measurement began in 1979. The three lowest levels have occurred in the past five years.

In the western U.S. much of the soot deposited on glaciers is the result of vehicle and ship emissions, according to the petition.

The center noted the number of glaciers in Montana's Glacier National Park dropped from 150 to 26 since 1850.

The center asked the EPA to set national water quality criteria for sea ice and glaciers at preindustrial levels.

It also requested the agency publish information on soot to guide states in identifying sources of emissions and strategies for reduction.

## **E.P.A. Plans to Phase in Regulation of Emissions**

By John M. Broder, staff writer  
N.Y. Times, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010

WASHINGTON — Facing wide criticism over their recent finding that greenhouse gases endanger the public welfare, top Environmental Protection Agency officials said Monday that any regulation of such gases would be phased in gradually and would not impose expensive new rules on most American businesses.

The E.P.A.'s administrator, Lisa P. Jackson, wrote in a letter to eight coal-state Democrats who have sought a moratorium on regulation that only the biggest sources of greenhouse gases would be subjected to limits before 2013. Smaller ones would not be regulated before 2016, she said.

"I share your goals of ensuring economic recovery at this critical time and of addressing greenhouse gas emissions in sensible ways that are consistent with the call for comprehensive energy and climate legislation," Ms. Jackson wrote.

The eight Democratic senators, led by John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia, said hugely significant decisions about energy, the economy and the environment should be made by elected representatives, not by federal bureaucrats.

The senators, who earlier questioned broad cap-and-trade legislation pushed by the Obama administration, join a number of Republican lawmakers, industry groups and officials from Texas, Alabama and Virginia in challenging the proposed E.P.A. regulations of industrial sources. Senate Republicans are going a step further, seeking to prevent the agency from taking any action to limit greenhouse gases, which are tied to global warming.

Ms. Jackson warned that if the Republicans thwarted the agency's efforts to address climate change, it would kill the deal negotiated last year to limit carbon pollution from cars and light trucks and would have a chilling effect on the government's scientific studies of global warming.

"It also would be viewed by many as a vote to move the United States to a position behind that of China on the issue of climate change, and more in line with the position of Saudi Arabia," Ms. Jackson wrote.

The group led by Mr. Rockefeller asked Ms. Jackson to suspend any EPA regulations of stationary sources — including coal-burning power plants and large industrial facilities — while Congress considers comprehensive energy and climate change legislation. The House passed a major climate and energy bill last summer that would have overridden some of the agency's regulatory authority. The Senate, however, has not acted on the issue and there is considerable doubt that it will do so this year.

"E.P.A. actions in this area would have enormous implications, and these issues need to be handled carefully and appropriately dealt with by the Congress, not in isolation by a federal environmental agency," Mr. Rockefeller said.

The Democrats who joined Mr. Rockefeller are Senators Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, Claire McCaskill of Missouri, Mark Begich of Alaska, Carl Levin of Michigan, Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia and Max Baucus of Montana.

Manufacturers, oil companies and business coalitions also filed petitions objecting to the proposed rules.

Environmental advocates said the E.P.A. was justified in declaring carbon dioxide and gases that contribute to global warming to be dangerous pollutants under the Clean Air Act and was moving cautiously to regulate them.

"These answers from Lisa Jackson hopefully will reassure the authors of the letter that the E.P.A. is proceeding in a very measured way and doing what is achievable and affordable to curb global warming pollution and focusing as they should on the biggest sources like power plants and not small businesses," said David Doniger, climate policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

## **EPA lays out timetable for regulating greenhouse gas emissions**

By Juliet Eilperin, staff writer

Washington Post, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2010

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson laid out the timetable for regulating greenhouse gas emissions Monday, writing in a letter to lawmakers that she plans to start targeting large facilities such as power plants next year but won't target small emitters before 2016.

The letter makes it clear the Obama administration will move ahead with curbing global warming pollution under the Clean Air Act unless Congress moves to stop it. Jackson emphasized that the administration was required to act under a 2007 Supreme Court decision that said greenhouse gases from motor vehicles qualified as a pollutant under the 40-year-old air-quality law. Jackson was responding to a letter several coal-state senators sent her late Friday.

"I share your goals of ensuring economic recovery at this critical time and of addressing greenhouse-gas emissions in sensible ways that are consistent with the call for comprehensive energy and climate legislation," she wrote.

Under the plan Jackson outlined, major emitters of carbon dioxide that are already seeking air-pollution permits would face regulation as early as the start of 2011. Medium-size emitters such as a large liquor distillery would not face restrictions until the second half of 2011 at the earliest, and smaller facilities such as dry cleaners and hospitals wouldn't come under the rules until 2016.

Jackson also wrote that an effort by Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) to block the EPA from regulating greenhouse gases would undo a deal struck last year between the auto industry, the administration and several states to limit greenhouse gases from cars and light trucks.

David Doniger, policy director of the climate center at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an advocacy group, said the letter shows that "carbon pollution can be controlled under the Clean Air Act in an effective and reasonable way."

"The EPA's reaffirming their intent is to carry out the existing law as defined under the Clean Air Act," he said. "That's their job, until and unless Congress passes a new law."

But Jeffrey R. Holmstead, a lawyer at Bracewell & Giuliani who represents several companies that would be regulated under Jackson's plan, said the administration does not need to act this quickly and could accomplish some of the same goals by simply tightening fuel-economy standards for automobiles.

"The way that she is proposing to do this will be litigated every step of the way," said Holmstead, who has advised Murkowski. "There's nothing that requires they regulate greenhouse gas emissions from cars or trucks this year or next year, or the year after. They clearly have enormous discretion in figuring out the timing of any regulation."

## **Coal-state Democrats oppose global-warming rules**

By Matthew Daly, Associated Press Writer

In the Modesto Bee, S.F. Chronicle, Tri-Valley Herald and other papers, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Eight Democratic senators from industrial states want Congress — not the Environmental Protection Agency — to regulate pollution blamed for global warming, saying the issue has big implications for thousands of U.S. jobs and businesses.

In a letter written by Sen. Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia, the lawmakers challenge the EPA's efforts to restrict greenhouse gases from stationary sources such as power plants, factories and mines.

Opposition to EPA regulations by Democrats could pose a serious blow to the Obama administration's effort to restrict heat-trapping greenhouse gases. While the administration is still pushing for

Congress to pass a comprehensive climate bill this year, officials have not ruled out controlling greenhouse gases through regulation.

The letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson was signed by Democrats Mark Begich of Alaska, Robert Byrd of West Virginia, Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, Claire McCaskill of Missouri, Carl Levin of Michigan and Max Baucus of Montana.

The Democrats said they did not object to EPA regulation of emissions from cars and light trucks, but questioned the agency's ability to do anything further under the Clean Air Act. The letter asked Jackson to clarify the EPA's timetable and suspend any regulations for coal-fired utilities and other industrial facilities until Congress acts on climate and energy legislation.

Jackson said late Monday that regulation of greenhouse gas emissions will not begin before January at the earliest.

For the first half of 2011, only large polluters that already must apply for Clean Air Act permits will need to address greenhouse gas emissions, Jackson said in a letter to the Democratic senators.

"I share your goals of ensuring economic recovery at this critical time and of addressing greenhouse-gas emissions in sensible ways that are consistent with the call for comprehensive energy and climate legislation," she wrote.

Last month, Democrats Ben Nelson of Nebraska, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana and Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas signed onto a resolution by Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, that would bar the EPA from issuing regulations to control greenhouse gases.

Murkowski said Monday she welcomed the letter from her Democratic colleagues and noted that 41 senators from both parties support her resolution to halt EPA's actions.

Murkowski filed it in response to an EPA finding in December that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases endanger human health. The EPA finding clears the way for rules that eventually could force the sale of more fuel-efficient vehicles and require plants to install costly new equipment or shift to other forms of energy.

Murkowski said her resolution remains the best opportunity for senators to weigh in before the EPA acts.

"It's a simple issue: Senators either support EPA imposing these regulations without input from Congress, or they don't," she said.

## **Cummins, Justice Department settle pollution case**

In the Merced Sun-Star, S.F. Chronicle, Washington Post and other papers, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010

WASHINGTON, (AP) -- The Justice Department says diesel engine manufacturer Cummins Inc. will pay a \$2.1 million penalty and will recall 405 engines for alleged violations of the Clean Air Act.

Federal court papers on a settlement between the government and the Indiana-based company say that Cummins shipped heavy duty diesel engines to vehicle equipment manufacturers between 1998 and 2006 without including pollution control equipment.

The settlement requires Cummins to recall 405 engines found to have reached consumers without correct after-treatment devices installed.

Cummins will mitigate the effects of excess emissions from its engines through permanent retirement of emission credits equal to the excess tons of pollution.

## **Clean energy is mired in politics**

### **Uncertainty over proposals in Congress has firms holding off on investments**

By Jim Tankersley, staff writer

L.A. Times, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010

Reporting from Washington - At a time when the U.S. economy is desperate for jobs and investment in future growth, a slew of clean-energy projects are on hold largely because of political stalemate in Washington.

With President Obama's energy and climate proposals bottled up in Congress, business leaders say they cannot tell what direction government policy will take on a variety of issues, including new energy taxes, tougher emissions standards for factories and vehicles, and guaranteed markets for start-up wind and solar power plants.

That has companies reluctant to pull the trigger on green-energy investments that could create employment and combat climate change. Case in point: New Jersey's largest utility, Public Service Enterprise Group Inc., is exploring development of a massive wind farm 16 miles off the state's coast. But it won't commit until the political winds in Washington are more certain, said Ralph Izzo, PSEG's president and chief executive.

"It's one thing to manage risk," he said. "It's another thing to gamble." The U.S. logjam stands in sharp contrast with the situation in China and Europe. Green investment there is booming in large part because their governments have committed to making renewables a major component of their national energy policies.

Last year, for the first time, China surpassed the United States in private clean-energy investment. Meanwhile, China's government is poised to outspend the U.S. 3 to 1 on public clean-energy projects over the next several years.

"The investments being made in China are just huge government investments that the venture capital industry couldn't hope to match," said Tom Baruch, who heads CMEA Capital in San Francisco.

At stake for Americans are thousands of new jobs, from low-skilled maintenance work to high-level engineering, that are expected to result as the world transitions away from fossil fuels. The International Energy Agency estimates there could be as much as \$10 trillion in international spending on clean energy over the next several decades.

Partly because of the bad economy, U.S. venture capitalists cut total clean-energy spending by half last year from a 2008 peak.

The Obama administration earmarked more than \$80 billion in its economic stimulus package for clean energy, including research ventures, home weatherization programs and manufacturing tax credits.

But to spur more private investment and job creation, the federal government must reassure Wall Street that the need for clean energy will grow, experts said.

"The key has to be that you create a sustained demand" for clean-energy technologies, said Ethan Zindler, head of North American research for Bloomberg New Energy Finance, which tracks clean-energy investment globally.

The utility sector is increasingly anxious about what types of power will make economic sense in the coming decades.

NextEra Energy Resources, which generates power in 26 states, is ready to double its annual wind energy spending to \$4 billion, said Lewis Hay III, CEO of FPL Group Inc., the utility's parent company.

But "that's just not going to happen" until Congress passes a climate bill or a renewable electricity mandate, Hay said.

Obama's preferred energy bill would mandate greater use of renewable power nationwide and in effect

increase the price of fossil fuels by limiting emissions through a so-called cap-and-trade system.

The nation's largest business lobbying group, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, says the Obama plan doesn't provide the kind of certainty that will spur clean energy forward.

Karen Harbert, who leads the Chamber's Institute for 21st Century Energy, said investors needed to see more streamlined permitting processes and more predictable tax structures instead of a patchwork of incentives.

"Certainty," she said, "actually means simplicity."

[Bakersfield Californian, Commentary, Tuesday, Feb 23, 2010:](#)

### **Why global warming should concern us all, Central Valley folk in particular**

As a concerned citizen, I always favor a healthy debate, but not a steady stream of tactical distractions that are designed to hide the truth, obscure the facts and divert attention away from the real issues. Unfortunately, that's what's happening in the debate about energy and global warming.

The fact is that the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, and every major scientific organization in America, has studied decades of data and concluded our climate is changing due to man-made pollution. Some who never accepted this evidence now point to a few lines from the hacked e-mails of two British scientists to make their case. But, according to the Associated Press, the emails at the center of the so-called climate-gate scandal "don't undercut the vast body of evidence showing the world is warming because of man-made greenhouse gas emissions."

It is time for us to stop getting distracted by climate change deniers and start focusing our full attention on the important work of getting our economy back on track, improving our national security and restoring our air quality. Any energy and global warming solution must address three main issues: energy independence, job creation and limiting greenhouse gas pollution.

- High-value crops produced in Kern County, including almonds, citrus and grapes, will be most vulnerable to climate change because it takes a long time for those crops to mature, and they need predictable amounts of water. Climate change throws predictability out the window and with it could go billions of dollars of production.
- The working group of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley concluded that it would take the following steps, among others, for the struggling Central Valley economy to become robust: Align region-wide economic development efforts in support of target industries: (1) agribusiness, including food processing, agricultural technology, and biotechnology; (2) manufacturing; (3) supply chain management and logistics; (4) health and medical care; (5) renewable energy; and (6) accelerate the adoption of renewable and clean energy in the San Joaquin Valley.
- Kern County has ample sun to take advantage of solar energy. The state's first utility scale solar farm broke ground in nearby Fresno County in August. Why can't Kern become a hub for solar manufacturing? The local economy must transition away from dependence on oil because oil is drying up. That's why even Chevron Oil has joined in support of the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization, which is dedicated to creating a clean energy future in the region and creating green jobs at the same time.
- An economist at Cal State Fullerton, Jane Hall, estimates that the San Joaquin Valley spends about \$22 billion in health care, lost days at work, lost days at school, and lost lives because of air pollution. Climate change will likely lead to more hot days and more smoggy days in the San Joaquin Valley. It means more sick kids, more days when workers won't be able to work outside and another huge drain on the region's struggling economy.

To achieve these goals will require smart legislation crafted with careful consideration of both economic and environmental impacts. Thankfully, stakeholders across the policy and political spectrum, including energy companies and environmental organizations, have come together to create a climate bill that includes a limit on carbon pollution and provides benefits for businesses, consumers, and agriculture.

Some with a vested interest in the way America currently buys and uses energy claim that solving climate change will limit our freedoms. Actually, it is just the opposite. The new energy bill allows for American businesses to decide how to keep their pollution in check. Instead of a top-down approach, such as a carbon tax or strict government regulation, the climate bill offers a bottom-up solution. With a market-based limit on carbon pollution, each factory and business can decide for itself how to limit its net carbon emissions.

The cap on carbon will create jobs by driving investment in clean energy technologies. Manufacturing solar panels and transforming local oil fields into an array of solar modules is hard work and demands a strong work force. The climate bill also creates real economic opportunity for farmers. Under the new climate legislation, farmers will be paid for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through methods including carbon sequestration, wetland conservation and methane capture. We need a climate and clean energy bill to boost our economy, create jobs, improve our national security and our air quality, and help us beat China and Europe in the race to create a global clean energy economy. Let's get it done.

*Eric Holst is managing director of the Center for Conservation Incentives for Environmental Defense Fund. EDF received the California Rice Commission's "Circle of Life Award" in 2008 for partnering with California rice farmers to find solutions to global warming.*

[Washington Post blog, Monday, Feb. 22, 2010:](#)

## **Jackson gives timeline for climate regulation**

By Juliet Eilperin

Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa P. Jackson laid out the timetable for regulating greenhouse gas emissions Monday, writing in a letter to lawmakers that she plans to start targeting large facilities like power plants next year but won't target small emitters before 2016.

The missive, a response to a letter several coal-state senators sent Jackson late Friday, makes it clear the Obama administration will move ahead with curbing global warming pollution under the Clean Air Act unless Congress moves to stop it. But Jackson emphasized the administration had to act under a 2007 Supreme Court decision that said greenhouse gases from motor vehicles qualified as a pollutant under the 40-year-old air-quality law.

Jackson wrote that the agency was trying to "provide a manageable path forward for businesses and state governments" while still complying with the Supreme Court decision.

"I share your goals of ensuring economic recovery at this critical time and of addressing greenhouse-gas emissions in sensible ways that are consistent with the call for comprehensive energy and climate legislation," she wrote.

Under the plan Jackson outlined, major emitters of carbon dioxide that are already seeking air-pollution permits would face regulation as early as the start of 2011. Medium-sized emitters such as a large liquor distillery would not face carbon restrictions until the second half of 2011 at earliest, and smaller facilities such as dry cleaners and hospitals wouldn't come under the rules until 2016.

Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club, praised the decision as "a reasonable timeline for new regulations for big carbon polluters under the Clean Air Act. Just as it has with other pollutants for 40 years, EPA has now made crystal clear that it will address global warming pollution in a way that benefits both our economy and our environment."

But Jeffrey R. Holmstead, an attorney at Bracewell & Giuliani who represents several companies that would be regulated under Jackson's plan, said the plan will face a serious legal challenge.

"The way that she is proposing to do this will be litigated every step of the way," said Holmstead, who has advised Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) on how to block EPA from acting under the Clean Air Act.

