

ETHANOL AND AUTOMOBILE ENGINES

Will the use of ethanol void my car's warranty?

No. When the use of ethanol began in 1979, most automobile manufacturers did not even address alcohol fuels. As soon as each manufacturer tested their vehicles, they approved the use of a 10% ethanol blend. Today, all manufacturers approve the use of 10% ethanol blends, and some even recommend ethanol use for environmental reasons.

Will ethanol work in fuel-injected engines?

Yes. Ethanol has never contributed to burning or fouling of port fuel injectors. Fuel injectors are manufactured to very exact tolerances, so it takes a very small amount of deposits to affect the efficiency of an injector. Components of gasoline, such as olefins, have been identified as causing deposits that result in fouled injectors. Since 1985, all ethanol blends and nearly all non-ethanol gasoline have contained corrosion inhibitors and detergent additives that are designed to prevent injector deposits. These detergents have been very effective in alleviating this gasoline problem.

If I use ethanol, do I need a gas line anti-freeze?

No. Gas line anti-freeze is alcohol. All alcohols have the ability to absorb water, and therefore condensation in the fuel system is absorbed and does not have the opportunity to collect and freeze. Since an ethanol blend contains up to 10% ethanol, it is able to absorb more water than a small bottle of gas line anti-freeze, therefore eliminating the need and expense of adding this product.

Can I switch between regular gasoline and ethanol-blended gasoline?

Yes. There are no problems associated with filling up your gas tank with ethanol-blended fuel and then using gasoline for your next fill.

Will there be a difference in gas mileage with ethanol-blended fuel?

For most drivers using a 10% ethanol blend, there should be no difference. It is true that ethanol contains less energy than regular gasoline, but it burns more efficiently, and this helps make up for the difference in energy. Some drivers have found slightly increased mileage. Regardless, at a 10% ethanol blend, any difference should be minimal.

Won't ethanol burn valves?

Ethanol will not burn valves. Ethanol burns cooler than gasoline. Many high-powered racing engines use pure alcohol for this reason.

Does ethanol lead to plugged fuel filters?

Ethanol can loosen contaminants and residues that have been deposited by previous gasoline fills. These can collect in the fuel filter. This problem has happened occasionally in older cars, and can easily be corrected by changing fuel filters. Symptoms of a plugged fuel filter will be hesitation, missing, and a loss of power. Once your car's fuel system is clean, you may note improved performance.

Can I use ethanol-blended fuel in my vintage vehicle?

The majority of on-road vehicles are compatible with ethanol blends of up to 10%. However, some older models (pre-1980) may require additional maintenance or modification when fuelled with ethanol-blended gasoline. Individuals should consult their owners' manuals to obtain information on the use of ethanol-blended gasoline with their vintage vehicle.

Why do some mechanics say not to use ethanol?

Some mechanics suspect ethanol when a fuel-related problem occurs in an engine. Because ethanol is a solvent, it can loosen residues and contaminants in the fuel system that may clog the fuel filter. This is not a common problem and may happen in older vehicles that have never used ethanol-blended gasoline. It can be corrected by replacing the fuel filter.

