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How Ethanol Can Impact Your Engine

NewsUSA

(NU) - When consumers fill their tanks at the gas station, they will see signs reading "may contain 10 percent Ethanol. However, many don't know what this means or how it can affect their engine performance. Ethanol-blended fuel has become standard in the United States, and the Environmental Protection Agency recently mandated an increase in the amount of ethanol added to fuel, meaning, it is even more important that consumers understand the pros and cons of Ethanol.

Ethanol is a biofuel distilled from corn and sugar that has many benefits, including reducing greenhouse emissions and lowering the cost of fuel at the pump.

However, ethanol-blended fuel can also have negative side effects on your car, boat and small engines, such as lawnmowers and snowblowers, over time. Some signs that ethanol is affecting your engine's performance include:

- **Efficiency:** Ethanol-blended fuel's lower energy efficiency may reduce fuel economy of your engine.
- **Stalling:** Ethanol can cause engine stalling if the water in the ethanol separates from the gasoline and floods the engine. This problem is most likely in engines that sit unused for long periods of time.
- **Corrosion:** Ethanol can contribute to corrosion of fuel tanks and other components, and the risk is even greater with small engines with aluminum parts.
- **Clogging:** Ethanol can loosen debris in the fuel line that leads to clogs.

Fortunately, there are several easy things you can do to help protect your engine from ethanol-related side effects. **Treatment:** Using a non-alcohol based fuel stabilizer and treatment product, such as STA-BIL 360 Performance,



can help protect gas-powered engines. A stabilizer may be especially beneficial for engines that sit for long periods without starting. Stabilizers are designed to absorb the excess water that may be present if ethanol begins to separate from gasoline and protect the insides of the fuel tank and parts.

Turn it on: Start up your stored classic car, boat and seasonal equipment, such as lawn mowers or snow blowers a few times during the off-season months to make sure they are running smoothly. **Tank it up:** Cars, lawn mowers, snow blowers, boats, and other gasoline-powered tools and vehicles should keep their tanks at 95 percent full with fuel, and add a fuel stabilizer if they are to sit unused for a long time. This strategy helps prevent condensation while allowing room for expansion in warmer weather.

Trust your source: Buy fuel from a reputable gas station. A station with a quick turnover of their products helps ensure that the gasoline is fresh.

Test the lines: Rubber fuel lines dating from before the mid-1980's should be inspected. These lines may not be compatible with ethanol-blended fuel, and may need to be replaced.

For more information about protecting your engine, visit www.sta-bil.com.