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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

February 19, 2004

Dear Stakeholder:

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) staff is seeking to revise the existing regulation pertaining to Portable Fuel Containers (PFC's). Our intent is to develop revisions that will improve customer acceptance, the ongoing enforcement program, and provide assurance that the regulation achieves the estimated emissions reductions.

On November 19, 2003, the California ARB staff held a public workshop to discuss the proposed changes and request comments or suggestions. Following the workshop and comment period, the ARB staff drafted a preliminary Certification Procedure, revised Regulation, and a new version of Test Method 513, the permeation test. Each of these documents can be downloaded from our web site at: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/pfc/pfc.htm>.

If interested in being notified by e-mail of Portable Fuel Container rulemaking activities you can also sign up for e-mail notification at the web site. If you do not have access to the Internet or would prefer to have these documents mailed to you, please contact Joe Fischer at (916) 323-1169.

It is our intention in releasing these draft documents for comment to work with each of you to create a more successful regulation. The following are some of the significant changes we envision for the regulation revision.

1. Certification Procedure 501 (CP-501)

As mentioned in our September 30, 2003, Stakeholders letter and during the public workshop, the ARB staff believes a certification procedure for manufactures to use when designing, manufacturing, and testing portable fuel containers is needed. The certification procedure is in draft form and may be altered during the workshop process. We would appreciate any comments or suggestions that you may have.

2. Draft Permeation Test Method

The ARB staff is releasing a new draft test method for conducting permeation tests. The new method is equivalent to the adopted test method used for the ARB's Small Off-Road Engine program (SORE). The method is also equivalent to the SAE and

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.

California Environmental Protection Agency

US EPA methods used for permeation testing of motor vehicles. The method for PFC's is being revised to ensure that barrier treatments and technologies meet permeation for a period of time more closely resembling the minimum one-year warranty period. This revision is also intended to clarify the steps required for permeation testing and produces a longer saturation period. Please note that the ARB staff is not proposing to change the existing permeation standard.

3. Use of American Society of Testing Methods (ASTM) Test Methods As A Basis For a Certification Program

The ARB staff has been working with the ASTM committee in an effort to amend ASTM method F-2234-03 for use in the ARB certification program. Since the last public workshop, staff has been in contact with ASTM members. At present, the ASTM committee has assembled a team to work with ARB staff prior to the next public workshop. Although we have not drafted a revised ASTM method at this time, we will discuss changes at the next public workshop and will have a draft ASTM method in the near future.

4. Spill-Proof Spouts

Since the last public workshop, staff has been in contact with several manufactures regarding spill-proof spouts and has received numerous comments regarding the current designs. Some manufactures have already submitted test reports to the ARB staff in an effort to depict real world uses. The ARB staff is currently working on a new marketplace study to depict end users experiences. The ARB staff has reevaluated the number of PFC's used for filling motor vehicles and may find that the number of motor vehicle refueling is higher than previously thought.

During the upcoming public workshop, we would like to discuss the manufacturer's findings and discuss some possibilities for spill-proof spouts in order to make them user friendly and capable of fueling on-road motor vehicles. Please have any comments, suggestions, or test data available to us prior to, or at the next public workshop for discussion.

The ARB staff is soliciting your comments regarding these proposed regulation changes. Should you wish to share information or provide suggestions, please provide written comments no later than March 15, 2004. We will try to address each of your comments at the public workshop scheduled for March 17, 2004 in Sacramento, California. Please note the enclosed Public Workshop notice for the date, time and location of the workshop.

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If you have questions or need additional information regarding the PFC regulation changes, please feel free to contact Joseph Fischer at (916) 323-1169 or by e-mail at jofische@arb.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

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William V. Loscutoff, Chief
Monitoring and Laboratory Division

Enclosure