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Consumer Reports Study Supports California's
Cleaner-Burning Gasoline

California Air Resources Board Chairman John D. Dunlap said Tuesday he is very pleased with the results of fuels testing by Consumer Reports that found California's cleaner-burning gasoline to be the most effective of the various pollution-reducing gasolines used in the United States.

"Consumer Reports is the latest independent authority to conclude that California's cleaner-burning gasoline effectively reduces vehicle emissions. Their study adds further support to the extensive testing by ARB and industry which demonstrated that California's cleaner-burning gasoline reduces smog-forming emissions more than any other gasoline in America," Dunlap said.

The Consumer Reports study also agreed with extensive ARB/industry tests that found that cleaner-burning gasoline does not have a significant effect on fuel economy or vehicle acceleration, Dunlap said.

In its November issue, Consumer Reports discusses its tests of acceleration, fuel economy and emissions produced by California gasoline, conventional gasoline, two varieties of smog-reducing gasolines used in other states in accordance with federal law, and a wintertime gas formulation used in other states to reduce carbon-monoxide emissions in winter months.

Both regular and premium grades of California gasoline "stood out in our emission test," the Consumer Reports article stated. "As we expected, the advanced California (cleaner-burning) fuels, both regular and premium, proved most effective in reducing emissions of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons."

California gasoline since March has met ARB's cleaner-burning specifications. Separate testing by ARB and industry researchers has demonstrated that cleaner-burning gasoline reduces smog-forming emissions from motor vehicles by 15 percent and reduces cancer risk from exposure to gasoline-based toxics by 30 to 40 percent.

Due to the use of cleaner-burning gasoline, levels of cancer-causing benzene in California's air were approximately 50 percent lower in Spring 1996 than in previous springtime months when conventional gasoline was used. ARB and local air districts currently are studying connections between the use of cleaner-burning gasoline and decreases in ground-level ozone (the main component of smog) that occurred throughout much of California this past summer.

Cleaner-burning gasoline costs an average of 10 cents more per gallon to produce and leads to an average reduction in fuel economy of 1 to 3 percent. Gas-tax records and traffic surveys

indicate that gasoline consumption and vehicle use have remained stable since the introduction of cleaner-burning gasoline.

The Air Resources Board is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. ARB's mission is to promote and protect public health,welfare, and ecological resources through effective reduction of air pollutants while recognizing and considering effects on the economy. The ARB oversees all air pollution control efforts in California to attain and maintain health based air quality standards.

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