



Info Alert

National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

EPA Finalizes 2017 RFS Requirements

Nov. 29, 2016

On Nov. 23 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [finalized](#) the 2017 volume requirements for the [Renewable Fuel Standards \(RFS\) program](#). The release includes the volume requirements and percentage standards for all categories of biofuels, including cellulosic biofuel, advanced biofuel, renewable fuel, and biomass-based diesel.

Specifically, the final volume rule requires 15 billion gallons of conventional biofuels, such as ethanol, to be added into the nation's fuel supply, a 0.2 increase from the [proposed](#) 14.8 gallons that EPA called for in May 2016, keeping with levels set by Congress. In addition, the required volume for biomass-based diesel for 2017 is double the minimum level set by Congress. Other types of biofuels will grow as well, cellulosic biofuel increases 35 percent from the 2016 standard, advanced biofuel increases 19 percent from the 2016 standard and total renewable fuel volumes will grow 1.2 billion gallons, a 6 percent increase from the 2016 standard. For an annual breakdown, please visit EPA's [website](#).

EPA expects the finalized rule to drive the market to “overcome constraints in renewable fuel distribution infrastructure,” leading to “substantial growth” in the future production and growth of use of renewable fuels. Following the release, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released two reports stating that the RFS is both [unlikely](#) to meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets and its goal to [expand](#) the nation's renewable fuels sector due to a “limited production of advanced biofuels to be blended into domestic transportation fuels and limited potential for expanded production by 2022.”

Under the Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA is required to determine annual RFS volume requirements for four categories of biofuels—cellulosic biofuel, biomass-based diesel, advanced biofuel and renewable fuel that apply to all motor vehicle gasoline and diesel produced or imported in 2017.

For further questions or concerns regarding the rule, please contact NCSL staff, Kristen Hildreth (202-624-3597) or Ben Husch (202-624-7779).