

TECH ALERT TECH ALERT TECH ALERT TECH ALERT TECH ALERT TECH ALERT

## Technically Speaking

by Bill Sangrey and John Carpenter

You may not be aware but in June, 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the sale of E15 gasoline. We are all familiar with E10 which is 10% ethanol, 90% gasoline. E15 is 15% ethanol and 85% gasoline. The E15 blend is suppose to be better for the environment than E10 however nine auto manufacturers have serious concerns regarding potential engine damage in some vehicles if E15 is used. MAC enjoyed a technical session at K.C. Strawmyre's garage last year given by Bill Sangrey in which Bill showed the adverse effects of E10 on older fuel systems especially if the vehicle is idle for most of the time. Ethanol separates from gasoline over time and reportedly combines with water to form a corrosive mixture that eats fuel system components. Various reports state that the EPA claims E15 can be used in all vehicles built since 2001, however, the American Automobile Association (AAA) and several auto manufacturers warn that E15 can damage fuel lines and void new car warranties. According to AAA, "automotive engineering experts believe that sustained use of E15 gas, both in newer and older vehicles, can cause accelerated engine wear and failure, fuel system damage, and false "check engine" lights for vehicles not approved by manufacturers to use E15."

Reportedly, Toyota, VW, Nissan, Chrysler, and BMW have all gone on record stating they will not cover fuel-related claims caused by the use of E15. AAA President and CEO Robert Darbelnet also reports that Ford, Volvo, Honda, Mercedes Benz, and Kia have stated that the use of E15 in their vehicles will void their warranties because of the potential corrosive damage to gaskets, fuel lines, and other engine components. Whether these claims are accurate or not will take much more testing and a lot more time. However, as far as I'm concerned, until the real truth is known I will be very cautious about using E15 in any of my vehicles except the ones marked for flex fuel use. If I can avoid it, I will never use E15 in any of my classic motorcycles or cars built prior to 2001. An interesting Fox News report on this subject can be viewed at:

<http://video.foxbusiness.com/v/2000862202001/warnings-not-to-use-e15-gas-in-your-car/>

