Gasohol Encyclopedia Article

Gasohol

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Gasohol

Gasohol is a term used for the mixture of 10% ethyl alcohol (also called **ethanol** or grain alcohol) with **gasoline**. Ethanol raises the **octane rating** of lead-free **automobile** fuel and significantly decreases the **carbon monoxide** released from tailpipes. It has also been promoted as a means of reducing corn surpluses. By 2001, 2.2 billion gal (8.3 billion l) were being produced a year and this number is expected to rise to 4.6 billion gal (17.4 billion l). However, ethanol also raises the vapor pressure of gasoline, and it has been reported to increase the release of "evaporative" volatile **hydrocarbons** from the fuel system and oxides of **nitrogen** from the exhaust. These substances are components of urban **smog**, and thus the role of ethanol in reducing **pollution** is controversial.