

Biodiesel Task Force

Biofuel Permit Working Group

Biodiesel Dispensing and Storage Site Permitting Summary

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INTRODUCTION

Biodiesel and vegetable based fuels move through a distribution infrastructure prior to deposition into vehicle tanks. The fuel is transferred to and from storage tanks in both the residential and commercial sectors. Biodiesel will be stored and used in a more diverse manner than traditional petroleum based fuels due to increased accessibility and differing physical characteristics of the fuels.

Regular gas stations can be permitted through an existing permitting process through the following agencies: Department of Building Inspection, Planning Department, Department of Public Health, Fire Department and regional agency via Bay Area Air Quality Management District. This information is summarized in the Planning Department Memorandum Titled "Permit Process – Current Requirements for Regular Gas Stations".

The following is a list of scenarios where biodiesel is dispensed into vehicles through a fueling infrastructure that is different from the regular gas station. This fueling infrastructure may be seen due to the reduced toxicity and volatility of these fuels compared to petroleum fuels. In addition, the availability of the fuel is far greater and can be acquired in an agriculture area or at a restaurant. Both supplier and consumer scenarios will be reviewed to identify the permitting agency and prepare a Permit Process Memorandum that encompasses the relevant regulations.

Biofuels blended with traditional petroleum fuels take on the characteristics of both the mixed fuels. The following discussion is for product dispensing that is not governed by existing regular gas station regulations and therefore permitted as such. The product dispensed in the following scenarios must match the properties of a different liquid. Biodiesel in blends excess of B99 meet this requirement.

SCENARIO OVERVIEW

Scenario 1 - Business dispensing biodiesel to the Public

In a commercial area, a current business such as an automobile repair shop or alternative health food store, would like to begin dispensing biodiesel for their customers. This also includes biodiesel only dispensing stations. All commercial business that have a space for holding a tank and vehicle access are potential options. This fuel is for retail sale.

Scenario 2 - Buyers club dispensing biodiesel

Buyers clubs purchase fuel in bulk quantity and have it delivered to a location, residential or commercial, to be picked up by members. All taxes are paid at the certified metered bulk purchase and then the fuel is divided among the buyers club. This fuel can be poured directly into a vehicle's tank or into plastic fueling jugs.

Scenario 3 – Biodiesel storage in a commercial unit

Commercial fleets wishing to use biodiesel can purchase fuel in bulk and store it on site to be used as needed. This fuel will be used only by the commercial entity and the volume of storage will be maximized to reduce cost and frequency of delivery.

Scenario 4 – Biodiesel storage in a residential unit

Residents of San Francisco can purchase fuel in bulk to store at home or in their vehicle, which overcomes the most difficult component of all alternatives, access. This storage capability allows for ease of fueling and reduced frequency of vehicle trips to fuel at a station if available.

Scenario 5 - Filling of residential and commercial storage tanks

All fuel tanks at both residential and commercial sites need to be filled by a fueling truck. This activity will need to take place periodically as fuel is used.

Scenario 6 - Mobile dispensing of fuel for special events and fleet vehicles

Often called “wet fueling” small to medium fleets have a vendor fuel their trucks while they are parked overnight. Public events such as car shows, earth day events, parades, concerts and press conferences, may include fueling of generators, trucks and specialized equipment. In addition, construction equipment on construction sites also need to be filled periodically. These activities occur every day in San Francisco with regular petroleum diesel and may also occur with Biodiesel.

Scenario 7 – Biodiesel Production Small Scale

Biodiesel can be produced in very small quantities such as for education purposes or for personnel private vehicle use. The level of production for this scenario is considered to be 100 gallons or less per week. The intent is to identify the volume of methanol, vegetable oil and finished biodiesel product that could be stored within a residential or commercial location.

Scenario 8 – Biodiesel Production Full Scale

Commercial biodiesel production is a business that could be developed within the city limits. The intent of this scenario is to outline the parameters that this type of business could operate and under what conditions. The volume of biodiesel that could be considered would be 100 gallons or more per week with no upper limit on the volume.