

What Is The Difference Between Clear And Dyed Diesel?

Previously, diesel fuel was sold without any dyes added to it. The government now requires this fuel to be sold with three different colors: clear, red, and blue. The coloring is part of a new effort by two federal agencies, as well as Congress, to clean the air and collect fuel taxes. If you are a buyer or supplier of dyed diesel, there is also legal information regarding this type of fuel that you should be aware of.

Clear diesel

The fuel sold without dye added, known as clear diesel, is road vehicle grade fuel that is available for sale to the general public at regular gas stations. This type of gasoline is meant for use by the vehicles that travel the roads every day, like cars, trucks, and SUVs. However, clear diesel can also be used in boats.

Clear fuel has low sulfur levels and is legally taxable. Any vehicle that has a diesel engine and is licensed by the state for on-road use must use this clear fuel.

Dyed diesel

Most dyed diesel, sold in the U.S., comes with a red coloring and is not usually available for purchase by the public. However, you may occasionally see this dyed gasoline at a fuel station. By law, this dyed gas is only for use in off-road vehicles, such as farm tractors, heavy construction equipment, and generators. Because it is not supposed to be used for on-road vehicles, this fuel is not taxed within the United States.

Diesel that is designated for use by U.S. government vehicles is dyed blue instead of red. This color variation helps to keep clear fuel used by the general public separate from the gas used by government on-road vehicles.

A common misconception about dyed diesel is that it causes loss of performance when used. There is no proven link between the different dyes and lost performance.

Legal information about dyed diesel

Because dyed diesel is non-taxed, the federal and state governments are strict about it not being used in on-road vehicles. The laws surrounding the use of dyed fuel range from stiff financial penalties to significant jail time.

Distributors cannot knowingly transport dyed fuel with the intention of supplying on road vehicles. Also, fuel retail locations that carry dyed diesel cannot knowingly sell the gas for use in an on-road vehicle.

Retail customers cannot knowingly use dyed diesel in an on-road vehicle. A law enforcement officer can take a sample from any gas tank to check the fuel. If dye is found in an on-road vehicle, the penalties can run into the thousands of dollars.

Removing dye from fuel is a criminal offense at both the state and federal level. The dyes used leave behind minute traces that lab testing can identify. Penalties for selling or using dyed diesel with the dye removed are quite serious.