BP, Shell Pay $1.5 Million in Penalties for Auto Gas Violations Threatening Public Health

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(Washington, D.C. - Oct. 5, 2006) As part of ongoing efforts to protect public health by improving compliance with the motor vehicle fuels provisions of the federal Clean Air Act, EPA reached settlements on Sept. 27 with BP Products North America, Inc. and with Motiva Enterprises, LLC and Equilon Enterprises, LLC, doing business as Shell Oil Products US. (note: these company names were incorrect in the initial version of this release).

EPA sets gasoline and diesel fuel standards under the Clean Air Act to reduce air pollutants such as smog, carbon monoxide and air toxics from motor vehicles.

The companies, however, produced and distributed gasoline that failed to meet the regulatory requirements. Use of noncomplying fuel in motor vehicles can cause an increase in emissions that can significantly harm public health.

"These settlements underscore both the importance of enforcement of EPA standards to protect the public health, and the value of vigorous environmental enforcement efforts to address violations at multiple facilities," said Granta Y. Nakayama, EPA's assistant administrator of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. "All Americans benefit when corporations bring their facilities into compliance with our nation's fuels regulations because our citizens breathe cleaner air."

The settlements resolve alleged violations of various fuel standards that occurred from 1999 through 2004 at retail outlets, terminals and refineries located throughout the United States. For example, a number of the violations involve the summertime gasoline standard for volatility, or tendency to evaporate, which is intended to reduce smog-causing hydrocarbon emissions. Some of the violations were self-reported by BP and Shell, while others were discovered through EPA's inspection and compliance programs.

BP agreed to pay a civil penalty of $900,000 and Shell agreed to pay a civil penalty of $600,000. BP and Shell will also perform extensive remedial efforts -- including quality assurance programs and technical changes in processes and equipment -- to correct the alleged violations and to prevent the recurrence of similar violations.

For more information on the BP and Motiva settlements: epa.gov/compliance/resources/cases/civil/caa/motiva-bp0610.html

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