Combating Myths About E10 In Small/Marine Engines

E10 is a fuel containing 90 percent gasoline and 10 percent ethanol – and approved for use in small engines by major manufacturers.

However, persistent misinformation continues to swirl around the use of E10 in small engines – and around ethanol-blended fuels in general.

Frequent myths include:

- Ethanol damages engines.
- Ethanol corrodes engine parts.
- Ethanol hurts the environment.

As much as WE know the true benefits of biofuels, there are some groups and publications who support anti-ethanol efforts and are happy to perpetuate misperceptions about ethanol. A few of those to note include:

- **BoatUS:** Also known as Boat Owners Association of the U.S. – a boat owners association that is also a member of Smarter Fuel Future Coalition, an anti-ethanol coalition supported by the American Petroleum Institute and American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers.
- **The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA):** A boating and marine engine trade association that has lobbied against biofuel policies.
- **The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI):** An outdoor equipment trade association that has funded an anti-ethanol “Look Before You Pump” campaign.
- **The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA):** an active member of Smarter Fuel Future.
- **American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE):** a less active but anti-ethanol motorcycling organization.

Knowledge is power – so thank you for helping educate boaters and other small engine users about the benefits of fueling up with E10 at the pump and debunk myths about biofuels!

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**Posting Tips**

We recommend the following protocol when combatting myths about ethanol and small engines:

- **Do** feel empowered to comment on third-party news stories, tweets and other public posts with these debunking facts.
- **Do** follow the guided language below to make sure your comment is accurate.
- **Do** use third-party links to studies or other research to add credibility to your statements.
- **Do not** comment angrily or post vitriol/expletives. Simply state the facts.
- **Do** provide hyperlinks to studies and news reports validating the facts.
- **Do not** waste time debunking myths on a small news outlet’s post or on an opposition group’s website – your comment could draw additional attention to a negative post that was previously “under wraps.” For that same reason, avoid retweeting or reposting negative coverage.

With those do’s and don’ts in mind, below are recommended responses to myths and misconceptions about ethanol. **Feel free to copy and paste these comments directly.**
**Myth: Ethanol is dangerous for small/marine engines.**

**Responses:**

E10 great for small engines! The National Boat Racing Association uses E10 exclusively for all their races, as ethanol provides a high-octane boost that burns cleaner and cooler than gas alone: [https://www.odumagazine.com/angling-for-ethanol/](https://www.odumagazine.com/angling-for-ethanol/)

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**Myth: Ethanol is harmful to the environment.**

**Response:**
E10 is gasoline mixed with 10 percent ethanol. Ethanol helps keep the air we breathe cleaner by reducing emissions – and it replaces toxic fuel additives like MTBE, which poisons groundwater. That’s why nine out of 10 small engine users support choice at the pump: [https://growthenergy.org/2017/06/12/poll-small-engine-owners-power-up-on-ethanol-blends/](https://growthenergy.org/2017/06/12/poll-small-engine-owners-power-up-on-ethanol-blends/)

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**Myth: Ethanol is confusing/easy to mistake for another fuel.**

**Response:**
Marinas sell fuels that are appropriate for boats and meet the demand of their customers, and an overwhelming majority of American boaters -- 94 percent -- find it easy to pick the right fuel at the pump and are confident in their selection: [https://bassanglermag.com/boating-biofuels-and-dirty-politics](https://bassanglermag.com/boating-biofuels-and-dirty-politics)

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**Myth: Ethanol corrodes small engine parts.**

**Response:**
Testing done by the National Association of Corrosion Engineers determined that fuel containing ethanol is not any more corrosive than non-ethanol fuel. In fact, the issues observed in small engines often come from petroleum-based aromatics, which cause damage to the lines and fuel seals. Any fuel can be corrosive given the right conditions, so users should always follow manuals and practice proper storage procedures.
Myth: Ethanol causes water to get into the engine.

Response:
Ethanol is already in 98 percent of gasoline sold in the United States, so most outdoorsmen are already using it issue-free without even realizing it. But outdoor equipment is often stored for an extended period of time between uses, which can lead to problems – even if the owner uses non-ethanol fuel. Ethanol can help keep systems dry and unfrozen, but over a long enough period, only good maintenance will ensure consistent engine performance.

In fact, testing by the Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory demonstrates that ethanol helps to “keep fuel systems ‘dry’ by moving low levels of water out of the system.” Boat experts at West Marine also report the ability to protect against moisture build-up is one of the reasons “E10 may actually be a superior marine fuel.”