



ADULTERATED DIESEL FUEL

We occasionally receive reports of poor quality automotive diesel fuel in the market place, along with reports of vehicle breakdowns. Analysis has shown that the quality of some cheap fuels is inferior to that required by the Australian Standard and to fuel supplied by BP, and is a cause of serious concern. It is clear that a wide range of undesirable and waste materials is being used to adulterate diesel fuel.

It is appropriate to warn of the consequences of using such fuels.

SAFETY IS COMPROMISED.

Safety, particularly risk of explosion is a crucial area that is blatantly disregarded by backyard blenders. There is a minimum flash point required for diesel fuel to meet legal and insurance underwriters requirements for the storage and handling of dangerous goods. It is clear that flammable solvents are being blended that lower the flash point of the fuel which can then be ignited by a static discharge or other source of ignition. BP's specification and handling procedures are designed to make this risk negligible.

In many ways, low flash point diesel is more hazardous than petrol because the storage and handling equipment and procedures are not designed for a volatile product.

THE SHORT TERM EFFECT IS OFTEN ENGINE STOPPAGE.

Initial complaints from the field all centre around engine breakdown or power loss caused by blocked filters. Dirt and sediment or dissolved material from solvents, and wear metals from used lubricants, are a likely cause. Filters and diesel injection systems are not designed to cope with this unusual contamination.

THE LONG TERM EFFECT IS REDUCED ENGINE LIFE OR CATASTROPHIC FAILURE

Engine manufacturers are very specific about the diesel fuel quality required to meet their warranty conditions and engine life expectations. The use of a "cheap" fuel may therefore prove costly. Any deviation from manufacturer's requirements may increase engine and component wear or cause piston or valve deposits that may lead to premature and catastrophic failure.

IN SUMMARY

The main areas of concern with adulterated diesel are;

Low flash point	Risk of explosion
Contamination with dirt, sediment	Blocked filters, engine stoppage abrasive particles, wear metals engine damage
Wrong viscosity, volatility	Poor injection and combustion with & combustion properties loss of power, high fuel consumption & engine deposits, high smoke levels

**For further information, please call the
BP Lubricants and Fuels Technical Helpline
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or visit www.bp.com.au/fuelnews**