



Maritime New Zealand

THE USE OF BIOFUELS IN MARINE ENGINES

The use of bioethanol blended petrol in marine engines is not recommended because there is a greater risk of water in the fuel tank and the engine not functioning adequately. If you have any questions about biofuels, consult your fuel supplier and engine manufacturer.

The reason the presence of water is a problem is that it can lead to the ethanol/petrol blend becoming unstable and separating into two phases, one rich in ethanol and the other rich in hydrocarbons. Such a blend will not function adequately.

Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) endorses the advice from the Ministry of Transport (MOT), which has done a significant amount of work on the impact of biofuels in the maritime sector, together with the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA).

Check with engine manufacturer or fuel supplier

While some skippers using biodiesel have reported that their emissions are cleaner and service intervals are longer, MNZ advises that skippers should check with their engine manufacturer or fuel supplier to ensure that biodiesel is compatible with their engine before using it.

Carry sufficient fuel and maintain your motor

All vessel skippers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that their craft are seaworthy and operated safely – this includes ensuring that engines and other equipment is maintained and functions properly.

This rule applies no matter what type of fuel is being used.

At the beginning of every summer the Coastguard and the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand respond to dozens of incidents in which recreational boaties get into trouble because they have not ensured that they are carrying sufficient fuel or have not maintained their motors properly over winter.