

TECHNICAL TALK

By Chuck and Marlene Isom

Hi Folks'

Nice to be back home in Ohio, but the weather, well let's not go there.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. This month I want to discuss moonshine, Hooch, rotgut, white lightning, best known to you all as ethanol. Billed as an environmentally friendly substitute for gasoline ethanol is an alternative that many think can help wean America off imported oil, it is cleaner-burning, generates money for farmers and could be a boon to the economy. That is good. The United States produced nearly 5 billion gallons last year, a figure that is expected to double in less than 2 years. It is a sweet promise but has a bitter reality. The Bad. Us taxpayers are subsidizing the cost of making ethanol. The industry received between \$5.1 billion and \$6.8 billion government money last year. It is expected to grow to as much to as \$8 billion a year. That is one of the disadvantages of ethanol. Another is it causing our food prices to go up. Today virtually all the ethanol is made from corn, (90%) and corn is used in most food. Ethanol does not have as much punch as gasoline it takes 1.4 gallons to 1 gallon of gas to match the energy content. I am referring to the 85-15 blend that is 85 percent ethanol 15 percent gas. But it reduces emissions of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas linked to global warming by about 36%. We have been using the 10-90 percent a long time in the summer months here in Ohio. Most vehicles will operate on that mixture. The cost of driving on E85 is 30 percent higher than the cost of driving on regular gasoline. Gas companies are fighting the use of ethanol. Gas companies are still trying to dig themselves out of a mess they got into for using a gas additive that started back in the 80's. It is called Methyl Tertiary Butyl ether (MTBE). It is known to contaminate ground waters. Many water suppliers at least 175 are in a class action law suit for damages to their water supply they are asking for one billion in damages. The trial starts next January. Tampa Florida just joined the suit. Gas companies started phasing out MTBE in 2000 and replacing it with ethanol. Only about 1000 of the nations 180,000 gas stations sell the E85-15 blend and your car need's special equipment to use it. There is only one station in Florida that sells the 85-15 blend. The federal GOVERNMENT MANDATES WE USE 35 BILLION GALLONS of ethanol a year by 2017. So ethanol is here to stay. it has caused corn prices to double from \$2 a bushel to over \$4 per bushel. Ethanol can be made from anything that has a wood or green leaf structure. It can also be made from sugar cane but the price of sugar is so high it is more profitable for the farmers to sell their cane to sugar manufactures. Imagine sugar in your gas, put some sugar in your gas tank and see what happens. No, No, just kidding. We now have stoves that use corn as a fuel. As farmers convert to growing more corn other food items will be planted less. Farmers use corn to feed their livestock so less livestock will be grown that will effect the cost of our beef and milk products. Fred Nichols said that on his way home from Arizona he put some 25 -75 blend in his motor home and it caused it to run and perform better than regular gas. I have not tried anything over 10-90 percent I also try to avoid that in my motorcycle. This is ugly. Gas stations are losing millions of gallons of gas due to leaking storage tanks at the stations. In Hillsborough county in Florida (Tampa area) they have had 2400 discharges from leaking gasoline tanks since 1883 of those 1079 have been cleaned up, and 700 others are in the cleanup process. The rest have not been acted on, In Florida alone there have been 23,990 leaks confirmed. I can't imagine how many it would be in all of the United states. Again we are the ones paying for those losses. MTBE can spread faster and farther than any other gasoline additives. Because of the chemical solubility it is also difficult to remove. As gasoline prices continue to soar other ways are popping up to improve mileage. One such company Fuel Freedom International has a pill, put one in each time you fill up and it is suppose to improve gas mileage up to 14%. The pill is called MPG-Cap, they are sold on line in packages of 10 for \$19.95. They are suppose to create a thin coating in the engines combustion chamber allowing the fuel to burn more efficiently. Don't use the pill's with Chevron products, new Havoline motor oil that has a formula that protects against deposit buildup that they claim causes engines to age prematurely. It works immediately upon contact with the engines moving parts. creating a protective coating that shields against deposit formation. It keeps PARTS COATED SO THERE IS NO PLACE FOR DEPOSITS TO ADHERE TO, ALSO IS SUPPOSE TO HELP MAINTAIN ENGINE POWER AND PRESERVE FUEL ECONOMY. What to do?, What to do? You be the Judge