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Propane Marketers  
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## Automarkers Testify to Make 95 Octane the New Standard

WASHINGTON – The U.S. auto industry has started a concentrated effort to replace 87 octane regular with 95 RON octane gasoline, the same grade as Europe’s regular fuel, Automotive News reports. Last Friday, General Motors testified before the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s environment subcommittee about making the change, citing that it would be an affordable way to increase fuel economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Ford Motor Co. and GM, along with the United States Council for Automotive Research, are pushing for 95 octane to become the nation’s only grade of fuel. Currently, there are three levels of fuel: 87 octane for regular, 88 to 90 for midgrade and 91 to 94 for premium.

“This will have customer value if it is done correctly. Don’t think of the premium fuel that is available today,” said Dan Nicholson, vice president of global propulsion systems for GM, during the recent SAE International WCX World Congress Experience. “If it is done in the right framework, it could have a lot of value for customers at a low rate if we pick the right octane level. If you go too high, it’ll get expensive. But if you pick the right one, it’ll actually work for customers. They can get around 3 percent fuel economy improvement for less than 3%” cost.

Technologies like the direct-injected engines, stop/start systems and lightweight vehicle frames have accelerated fuel economy in recent years. But having a higher octane fuel, while contributing to fuel economy, also has to be affordable for drivers. “That’s been something that has been important to us. How do we do this without having a big impact on the customer?,” said David Filipe, vice president of powertrain engineering for Ford. “We don’t want to put the burden onto the customer.” Filipe capped the amount drivers should pay for 95 octane as no more than a nickel per gallon higher than regular.

[More information on page 9](#)

# NPGA News

## Annual Retail Propane Sales Survey

### Annual Retail Propane Sales Survey

For over two decades the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) has sponsored the annual survey of odorized propane sales through the American Petroleum Institute (API). Beginning this year, PERC is partnering with ICF to undertake this essential industry initiative.

Also new this year, your company will now be able to submit the survey online at [propane.com/survey](http://propane.com/survey). These changes will result in an easier to complete, more timely, and more accurate report, while also providing you and your company with increased access to useful information for business planning, benchmarking, and market intelligence.

### Why should you complete this survey?

- ¥ Under the Propane Education and Research Act, the legislation that established PERC, 20 percent of annual assessment collections are eligible for rebate back to the states. Each state's allocation of rebate funds is based on the latest retail sales data for residential, commercial, industrial, internal-combustion engine fuel, and agricultural uses and sales to retail dispensers that are compiled using the responses to this survey. Your response to the Retail Propane Sales Survey is crucial to ensure that your state receives an accurate allocation of rebate funding, 20 percent of PERC's annual revenues. State rebate funds are used to support programs such as irrigation, vehicle, forklift, and safe appliance rebate programs, workforce training initiatives, and consumer safety programs, just to name a few.
- In addition to the local level benefits awarded based on the survey data, the information you provide improves the Propane Industry's understanding of the market trends and growth opportunities at the national level and ensures that PERC funds and programs are directed toward the most effective ways to support the industry.

### Who completes the survey?

Only one person from each retail company completes the survey. Typically, the designated contact serves an operations, accounting, or management role. To find out who from your company is listed as the survey contact, and/or if you feel you should have received the survey information and did not, please email [survey@propane.com](mailto:survey@propane.com) or contact the help center at 833-286-0860, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday.

### To participate:

- To complete the survey online, visit: [propane.com/survey](http://propane.com/survey)
- If needed, you can still complete a written survey. To request a copy please email [<survey@propane.com>](mailto:survey@propane.com)

If you have any questions regarding the survey, survey access, or your participation, please contact ICF:

**Toll Free-** 833-286-0860  
 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. EST  
 Monday through Friday  
**Email:** [survey@propane.com](mailto:survey@propane.com)

# NACS News

## from Washington, DC

### New NACS report reveals insights on consumer perceptions related to gas prices and the economy overall.

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – With crude oil prices now hovering around \$75 per barrel, there are real concerns on how higher oil prices could affect everything from the stock market to demand at the pump. To help cut through the clutter, a new NACS report focuses on what drivers say about gas prices.

Among the issues covered in the report are whether consumers are more affected by whether prices are high or whether they are increasing/decreasing. The report also looks at consumer perceptions of the industry and how it sells fuels.

These insights are highlighted in a new NACS report, ***“What Consumers Think About Gas Prices (PDF),”*** available for download. By taking a deep dive into economic sentiment, the report reveals consumer perceptions related to gas prices and the economy overall.

The report also features conveniences that are of interest to consumers, such as automated checkout technologies, food trucks, mobile ordering and meal kits.

“Gas prices are transparent, meaning they are posted daily on signs, websites, social media and apps so consumers can choose where they fill-up. Add to the mix the regular drumbeat of gas prices rising or not falling fast enough in consumers’ minds and you can see why refueling is such a regular part of daily conversations. We want to add transparency to the process and encourage retailers to share this report with their customers and in social media,” said NACS Vice President of Strategic Industry Initiatives Jeff Lenard.

## Highlighted Key Findings

**Economic Sentiment** Low gas prices continued to push CONSUMER OPTIMISM to high levels throughout 2017. From October through December 2017, optimism was 60% or higher, and jumped to a new-record 65% in January 2018.

**Gas Price and Sentiment** At least 7 IN 10 CONSUMERS SAY THAT GAS PRICES IMPACT THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT THE ECONOMY, and that percentage rises when gas prices increase.

**Gas Price Perceptions** Consumers have adjusted their GAS PRICE INCREASE EXPECTATIONS DOWNWARD. They say that gas prices will only rise 30 cents this year, compared to the 76 cents rise they predicted in 2015.

### Convenience Store Perceptions

Consumers have a POSITIVE OPINION about convenience stores—nearly two in three consumers (63%) say convenience stores share their values. YOUNGER CONSUMERS AGES 18 TO 34 ARE EVEN MORE LIKELY THAN OLDER CONSUMERS TO SAY THIS.

Click on this link for full report: <http://www.convenience.org/YourBusiness/FuelsCenter/Documents/What-Consumers-Think-About-Gas-Prices.pdf>

		
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# NPGA News

## News from Washington, DC

### NPGA Positions Upheld by ICC Codes

The first round of developing the 2021 International Codes took place last week in Columbus, OH, at the International Code Development Hearings. The I-Codes are developed on a three-year cycle and even though the 2018 edition was just recently released, the number of codes and volume of proposed changes is so great that development begins almost immediately after the release of the new editions. NPGA participates in the process by providing representation to speak to the various issues that have a potential impact on the propane industry and NPGA members.

During this cycle, there were proposals to three separate codes, including the fuel gas code, the mechanical code, and the residential code, that would have prohibited the use of unvented room heaters in various buildings, including residential occupancies. The basis for the proposed prohibition is not related to fire safety but to the emissions released from the heater into the occupied space. The generation of carbon monoxide by unvented room heaters has been addressed through the ANSI Z21.11.2 standard since the early 1980s. Most proposals to ban these appliances instead refer to nitrogen dioxide and water vapor as the culprits, even though nitrogen dioxide production is limited by the performance requirements of Z21.11.2. NPGA joined with AGA, HPBA, AHRI and others to speak against the bans and in all cases, the individual code development committees voted overwhelmingly to disapprove the changes.

Other proposals that NPGA successfully presented during this first round of development were based on the long-standing policy of using NFPA 58 as the gold standard and attempting to bring other codes and standards in line with that document. All three NPGA proposals were recommended for approval by the International Fire Code Development Committee; included in those was an increase in the allowable use of propane containers in indoor exhibition events and allowing the use of propane containers in basements, pits and underfloor spaces where ventilation is provided.

**Convention 2018**  
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SDRA Seminars: Aberdeen, Mitchell, Rapid City

# Your Rights & Responsibilities As an Employer

## 1. Seminar you're attending (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.)

- Aberdeen** / Tues., May 8-Dakota Event Center
- Mitchell** / Wed., May 9-Highland Conference Center
- Rapid City** / Thurs., May 10-Comfort Suites & Convention Ctr

## 2. Your contact information

Participant's name/s \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of people attending from your business

If you have special dietary needs for the lunch, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Payment - includes seminar & lunch

- South Dakota Retailers Association member:** \$25 per person for members & their employees
- Nonmember business:** \$40 per person

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL**

Check enclosed (checks payable to SDRA)

Credit card payment  Visa  MasterCard  Discover  Am. Exp.

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Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. How to submit registration and payment

**ONLINE** at <https://www.sdra.org/events/laborlaws.asp> -or-

**CALL** SDRA with your registration and credit card information: 1-800-658-5545 -or-

**MAIL** your completed form and check or credit card information to SDRA • PO Box 638 • Pierre, SD 57501 -or-

**FAX** your completed form to SDRA at (605) 224-2059 (Note: we advise against sending credit card information via fax)

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- Politics and the workplace
- Social media issues in hiring decisions and on-the-job
- Risks and rewards of making exceptions to company policies
- Can you establish different policies for different employees?
- Being sensitive to pay equity issues
- Accommodating pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers: state and federal requirements
- Wage and hour update
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## PLUS: Get the Scoop on a New Law That Requires Businesses to Report Data Breaches

The South Dakota Attorney General's office will fill you in on a new data breach reporting law that could impact your business. Find out:

- Who is covered under this new state law
- What constitutes a breach
- What types of records are covered
- What internal steps a business needs to take if they suspect or know there has been a data breach
- When and how a business must notify customers, vendors, employees or the public about a known or suspected breach
- When and how a business must notify the Attorney General's office of a known or suspected breach

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..... *continued from page 1*

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a hearing on “High Octane Fuels and High Efficiency Vehicles: Challenges and Opportunities.” Witnesses testifying before the subcommittee included:

•**Timothy Columbus, Counsel for NACS and SIGMA;**

*Other Testifiers: CEO, Growth Energy; General Motors, on behalf of the US Council for Automotive Research; Illinois Corn Growers Association; American Fuel and Petrochemicals Manufacturers*

The purpose of the hearing was to examine the potential for high octane fuels and the vehicles designed for them. Members of the subcommittee looked at the impact of a potential transition to high octane fuels and vehicles on refiners, biofuel producers, automakers, fuel retailers and consumers. Both Subcommittee Chairman John Shimkus and full Committee Chairman Greg Walden shared that legislation looking at fuels and the Renewable Fuel Standard is a priority for the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Members on a bipartisan basis stressed the importance of understanding the impact on consumers when looking at changes to the Renewable Fuel Standard and introducing new fuels.

In his testimony, Tim Columbus shared the fuel retailing perspective and outlined the importance of the market and its role in shaping the appropriate fuel blends. Throughout the hearing, Columbus stressed that fuel retailers want to sell legal fuels in a lawful manner that customers want to buy. Regarding the potential for high octane fuels, Columbus stated, “In considering any change to the fuels market, it is relevant to consider how the market will adjust to meet new requirements. In the case of the octane solution, the key to successful retailer integration is the flexibility of the RON (Research Octane Number) regime. As previously discussed, if a fuel meets RON and RVP (Reid Vapor Pressure) specifications, it is up to the market to determine which fuel blends are desired by customers.” **To view his entire testimony, you can click here.**

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment is looking a legislation on the Renewable Fuel Standard and a proposal looking at high octane fuels is under consideration.

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## Is the Time of Oil Over?

*Experts say the fuel has a future, but that it's changing slowly.*

April 25, 2018

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – While yesteryear's high oil prices drove industry efficiencies, the elevated cost of oil also brought about an oversupply and lower prices, CNBC reports. "That era of high-price oil that we had drove innovations all over the place especially in terms of shale but it also enabled oil operators to make much bigger risks," said John Kilduff, founding partner of Again Capital.

The volatility of oil prices—which are creeping up again because of Middle East tensions—often highlights the benefits of less expensive, alternative energy. While renewables investments will continue to expand, the end of the oil era is not yet here. "I think oil's got another four or five decades before we see anything," said John Eichberger, executive director of the Fuels Institute. "Change is coming, but it's going to take time."

The International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts that demand for oil will experience growth until 2040 because of emerging markets, such as India. But the IEA also said China is pushing for clean power, estimating that by 2040, one out of every four vehicles on Chinese roads will be electric.

"Electric vehicles (EVs) will compete and probably beat internal combustion on a cost basis pretty soon, which will give consumers a choice," Eichberger said. However, he pointed out that the infrastructure to support EVs will take years to build.



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# SOUTH DAKOTA — 2018 CHEMICAL AND OIL INDUSTRY SAFETY & COMPLIANCE WORKSHOPS



The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) invites you to workshops led by representatives from the DENR, U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Department of Homeland Security, and Environmental Protection Agency. Participants will have ample time to ask questions.

## **Morning Workshop (9 am – noon) topics will include:**

- Risk Management Program (RMP) regulations
- Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standard (CFATS)
- Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) reporting requirements
- Spill/Release reporting requirements
- Tier II reporting requirements
- OSHA worker safety topics

## **Afternoon Workshop (1:30 – 3:00 pm) topics will include:**

- Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Requirements
- Facility Response Plan (FRP) Requirements
- Oil Inspection Procedures
- EPA Spill Response Authority and Case Study

## **Audience**

Businesses and Industries that use and store hazardous substances and/or are subject to RMP, EPCRA, PSM, CFATS, SPCC, and FRP.

## **Times/Dates**

<b>Mitchell</b>	August 28, 2018	9am-12pm:	Morning Workshop
		1:30pm-3:00pm:	Afternoon Workshop
<b>Aberdeen</b>	August 29, 2018	9am-12pm:	Morning Workshop
		1:30pm-3:00pm:	Afternoon Workshop
<b>Pierre</b>	August 30, 2018	9am-12pm:	Morning Workshop
		1:30pm-3:00pm:	Afternoon Workshop
<b>Rapid City</b>	August 31, 2018	9am-12pm:	Morning Workshop
		1:30pm-3:00pm:	Afternoon Workshop

## **Register for Morning Workshops:**

<https://2018sdchemicalworkshops.eventbrite.com>

## **Register for Afternoon Workshops:**

<https://2018sdoilworkshops.eventbrite.com>

# FDA Targets Youth Tobacco Sale Violations

## New enforcement action for e-cigarettes

WASHINGTON – This week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) cited 40 retailers for violations related to youth sales of JUUL e-cigarettes. The agency also announced a new blitz of retail establishments targeting youth sale violations, part of new action the FDA is taking to examine the youth appeal of e-cigarettes. The agency also is taking steps to foreclose online sales of these products to minors.

These first steps in a new effort aimed at stopping youth use of e-cigarettes are part of the agency's **comprehensive plan** announced in July. "The FDA has been conducting a large-scale, undercover nationwide blitz to crack down on the sale of e-cigarettes – specifically JUUL products – to minors at both brick-and-mortar and online retailers. The blitz, which started April 6 and will continue to the end of the month, has already revealed numerous violations of the law," said FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb in a statement.

"We'll hold retailers accountable for continued violations. Let me be clear to retailers. This blitz, and resulting actions, should serve as notice that we will not tolerate the sale of any tobacco products to youth," he said. "It's clear there's need for strong federal enforcement of these important youth access restrictions and we'll continue to hold retailers accountable by vigorously enforcing the law with the help of our state partners. Today's action should serve to put retailers on notice to stop selling products to minors."

Gottlieb reinforced the agency's commitment to stopping youth tobacco use. "Make no mistake. We see the possibility for ENDS products like e-cigarettes and other novel forms of nicotine-delivery to provide a potentially less harmful alternative for currently addicted individual adult smokers who still want to get access to satisfying levels of nicotine without many of the harmful effects that come with the combustion of tobacco. But we've got to step in to protect our kids.

"As the FDA considers regulating nicotine levels in cigarettes to render combustible cigarettes minimally or non-addictive, products such as e-cigarettes may offer a potentially lower risk alternative for individual adult smokers. These ENDS products will still need to be put through an appropriate series of regulatory gates by the FDA. But the viability of these products is severely undermined if those products entice youth to start using tobacco and nicotine."

The **We Card Program's online training program** includes attempted e-cigarette and vaping product purchase scenarios in its award-winning interactive training module – equipping sales associates with the practice at not only "carding" and examining IDs, but calculating customer ages based upon an ID's date-of-birth using a variety of age calculation tools, including the **We Card Calendar**. We Card's training covers FDA regulations and federal law as well as state-specific laws where minimum-age laws may be 18, 19 or 21 years old. NACS is a founding member of the We Card Program, and Lyle Beckwith of NACS serves as its Chairman of the Board of Directors.

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# EPA Announces Availability of Funding to Reduce Emissions from Diesel Engines Nationwide

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of grant funding to modernize the nation’s diesel fleet by retrofitting or replacing vehicles with cleaner, more efficient diesel engines. EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$40 million in Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA) grant funding to eligible applicants, subject to the availability of funds.

“These grants will incentivize improvements to aging diesel fleets and improve air quality throughout the country,” **said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.** “EPA will continue to target funds to areas facing significant air quality issues.”

“Steps to reduce emissions from older diesel trucks are some of the most cost-effective measures we can take to improve the air Americans breathe,” said Rep. Ken Calvert (CA-42).

“By prioritizing the DERA grant funding in regions that have some of our most complex air quality challenges, the resources being awarded can make a significant impact. I am pleased Congress was able to provide \$40 million for these grants and appreciate the efforts of everyone at EPA in making it a success.”

Diesel-powered engines move approximately 90 percent of the nation’s freight tonnage, and today nearly all highway freight trucks, locomotives, and commercial marine vessels are powered by diesel engines.

EPA is soliciting proposals nationwide for projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, especially from fleets operating at goods movements facilities in areas designated as having poor air quality. Priority for funding will be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended.

Eligible applicants include regional, state, local or tribal agencies, or port authorities with jurisdiction over transportation or air quality. Nonprofit organizations may apply if they provide pollution reduction or educational services to diesel fleet owners or have, as their principal purpose, the promotion of transportation or air quality. All those eligible may apply until Tuesday, June 12, 2018.

Under this competition, EPA anticipates awarding between 20 and 80 assistance agreements. Applicants must request funding from the EPA regional office that covers their geographic project location. The maximum amount of federal funding that may be requested by an applicant varies by Region.

- **Region 1** (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont) will accept proposals requesting up to \$1,000,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 2** (New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,000,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 3** (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,500,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 4** (Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,000,000 in grant funds.

..... [continued on page 14](#)



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- **Region 5** (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin) will accept proposals requesting up to \$3,000,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 6** (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,500,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 7** (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska) will accept proposals requesting up to \$1,500,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,400,000 in grant funds.**
- **Region 9** (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands) will accept proposals requesting up to \$2,500,000 in grant funds.
- **Region 10** (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington) will accept proposals requesting up to \$900,000 in grant funds.

EPA anticipates releasing a separate Request for Proposals for Tribal applicants during 2018.

Since the first year of the DERA program in 2008, EPA has awarded funds to more than 730 projects across the U.S. Many of these grants funded cleaner diesel engines that operate in economically disadvantaged communities whose residents suffer from higher-than-average instances of asthma, heart and lung disease.

For more information and to access the Request for Proposals, visit [www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-diesel-national-grants](http://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/clean-diesel-national-grants).

For more information on the National Clean Diesel campaign, visit [www.epa.gov/cleandiesel](http://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel).

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# 2018 Training Programs

Certified Employee Training Program

<b>January 3-4</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Salem</b>
<b>February 6-8</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Salem</b>
<b>March 6-7</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>
<b>April 3-5</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>
<b>May 1-2</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Sioux Falls</b>
<b>May 8-10</b>	<b>4.1 Distribution Systems</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>
<b>June 5-7</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Sioux Falls</b>
<b>June 12-14</b>	<b>4.1 Distribution Systems</b>	<b>Mitchell</b>
<b>July 10-11</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Aberdeen</b>
<b>July 17-19</b>	<b>3.0 Basic Plant Operations</b>	<b>Mitchell</b>
<b>July 31-Aug 1-2</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Aberdeen</b>
<b>August 14-16</b>	<b>4.2 Distribution Systems</b>	<b>Mitchell</b>
<b>September 17-18</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Deadwood</b>
<b>October 9-11</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Rapid City</b>
<b>November 7-8</b>	<b>Basic Principles and Practices</b>	<b>Mitchell</b>
<b>December 4-6</b>	<b>2.2/2.4 Propane Delivery</b>	<b>Mitchell</b>

## 2018 UST Owner/Operator Training

<b>March 20</b>	<b>Sioux Falls Ramkota</b>
<b>March 21</b>	<b>Rapid City Ramkota</b>
<b>March 22</b>	<b>Pierre Floyd Matthews Center</b>
<b>May 9</b>	<b>Rapid City Ramkota</b>
<b>May 10</b>	<b>Sioux Falls Ramkota</b>
<b>Aug 28</b>	<b>Sioux Falls Ramkota</b>
<b>Aug 29</b>	<b>Aberdeen Ramkota</b>
<b>Aug 30</b>	<b>Mitchell Highland Cnf Center</b>
<b>Nov 7</b>	<b>Rapid City Ramkota</b>
<b>Nov 8</b>	<b>Sioux Falls Ramkota</b>

**March 20 & Aug 28 classes: 1 - 5 pm.**  
Remaining Classes 8 am to 12 noon.

Please go to the [sdp2ma.com](http://sdp2ma.com) website.  
Class schedule will be posted under



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UST Owner/Operator



## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

What is large, scary, and has the ability to crush you? If you said elephant, you're not wrong, but, for the sake of this article, a fellow distracted driver is the correct answer.

### Painting a not-so-pretty picture

Let's create a dot map. First, picture the lower 48 states. Now, cover everything east of the Mississippi River and the western half of Washington, Oregon, and California with 32,000 red dots. At first glance, the map almost looks solid red over these areas. So what? These dots illustrate the more than 32,000 traffic fatalities in 2016.<sup>1</sup> Those dots are people! (To see an actual version of this illustration, the Web address of the NHTSA report is listed at the end of this article.)

### There must be a way to prevent this

Over the decades, the number of vehicle crash fatalities across the nation has relatively declined. But, in recent years, crash fatalities have increased dramatically. Between 2014 and 2015, fatalities increased 8.4 percent year over year - the largest year over year increase in over 50 years. Between 2015 and 2016, fatalities increased another 5.6 percent over the previous record-breaking year.<sup>2</sup>

When seatbelts and specialized vehicle bumpers became required years ago, it was soon realized that technology can help prevent injuries and deaths. Today, a different type of technology is developing and usage is increasing across various industries. Current technology will monitor driver performance and allow business leaders to coach employee individual performance.

Federated has recently built relationships with three vendor partners who specialize in driving technology – Lytx®, Sentinel HDx, and SmartDrive®. These relationships allow Federated clients access to discounted products and services.

### The real elephant in the room

There seems to be two schools of thought when it comes to vehicle technology. On one hand, in-cab cameras and vehicle telematics that monitor drivers' actions can be helpful for coaching a driver. On the other hand, they are sometimes perceived as too intrusive. The same for camera systems that record the surrounding traffic. Video could be used to defend against alleged driver negligence, but it could also reveal a company's poor driving. If you are considering implementing in-cab cameras, consult with your human resources and legal counsel to discuss any requirements for use of this technology in your state.

A technology company claims that using their technology can reduce collision frequency by up to 50 percent and collision severity by up to 80 percent.<sup>3</sup>

In the end, we all know the greatest asset is the driver behind the wheel each day. Engaging drivers and reducing risky behaviors behind the wheel is our ultimate goal. To this end, we have continued our goal of safe driving by adding reinforcement to our Drive S.A.F.E. campaign. Drive S.A.F.E.R adds this Reinforcement at the end to complement our previous Speed, Attention, Fatigue and Emotion messages.

As long as crash statistics continue to rise, we will continue to drive home prevention tools for our clients. There is real impact to the bottom line, but our greatest impact is keeping our roadways safe and making sure everyone makes it home safe today and every day.

<sup>1</sup> NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS/Esri); [https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/GISMaps/STSI\\_MAP\\_Mobile.htm?1&USA&VAR1=1&41&-99&32,166&30,056&30,202&5](https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/GISMaps/STSI_MAP_Mobile.htm?1&USA&VAR1=1&41&-99&32,166&30,056&30,202&5)

<sup>2</sup> "2016 Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview," U.S. Department of Transportation, Accessed March 2018. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/Publication/812456>

<sup>3</sup> Lytx® DriveCam® safety program (FARS/Esri); [https://info.lytx.com/LR-17-11-FederatedClient\\_LP.html](https://info.lytx.com/LR-17-11-FederatedClient_LP.html)

*This article is intended to provide general information and recommendations regarding risk prevention only. There is no guarantee that following these guidelines will result in reduced losses or eliminate any risks. This information may be subject to regulations and restrictions in your state and should not be considered legal advice. Qualified counsel should be sought regarding questions specific to your circumstances and applicable state laws. © 2018 Federated Mutual Insurance Company. All rights reserved.*