



State of New Jersey

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Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Alternative Fuels and Conversions April 2013

What happens if an alternative fuel conversion is not done properly?

Installation of non-certified conversion kits is considered emission control system tampering in violation of Section 203(a)(3) of the federal Clean Air Act. An improper conversion produces unknown pollutant levels, placing the operator and other people at risk of health-related injuries. Vehicles not properly converted may not operate properly, may damage emission control systems and void the warranty. In addition, they may not be able to pass inspection and may not be legal to operate on the road. At the very least, you may end up with an uninspected vehicle and at worst you could face administrative fines, suspension of the vehicle registration and a damaged or inoperable vehicle. Save yourself the trouble and do it right!

Can I convert my vehicle to run on natural gas (CNG) or propane (LPG)?

Generally, yes. However, be advised that any vehicles that are converted to operate on an alternative fuel must be converted using a system certified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) otherwise it will be considered tampering in violation of the Clean Air Act. The lists of certified conversion systems are updated periodically. You may obtain the latest information at this website: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/consumer/fuels/altfuels/altfuels.htm> (scroll down to "EPA-Compliant Conversion Systems"). Also note that certified conversion kits are unique to specific year/make/model/engine ranges and may not be used on just any vehicle, even if similar in design.

Can I convert my vehicle to electric?

Yes. Conversion kits for battery electric vehicles do not need to be certified by USEPA. If you convert your vehicle to a pure battery electric vehicle and it does not combust any fuel for any purpose (e.g., heating, backup power or range extension), it is exempt from emissions inspection. The NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) reserves the right to inspect the vehicle for safety and you may need to ensure the vehicle includes properly marked high voltage cables, battery disconnects, proper braking and suspension for the increased battery load and other factors.

Can I convert my hybrid electric vehicle into a plug-in hybrid electric?

At this time, the only certified conversion kits are for the Toyota Prius: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/consumer/fuels/altfuels/altfuels.htm> (scroll down to "EPA-Compliant Conversion Systems"). Since hybrid vehicles retain the ability to burn gasoline or diesel fuel, even if you use the battery as much as possible, they are not exempt like pure battery electric vehicles would be and thus still must go to inspection.

Can I convert my vehicle to run on cooking oil?

Vehicles converted to enable the use of used cooking oil or straight vegetable oil as fuel sources must use conversion systems certified by the US EPA as noted above and use fuel that has been registered with the US EPA as a motor vehicle fuel. To date, the US EPA has not certified any cooking oil or straight vegetable oil conversions, making it unlawful to use any vegetable oil or used cooking oil as a fuel source, or to convert any vehicle to use it as a motor fuel. These conversions may violate vehicle warranties and affect the operation of particulate controls such as Diesel Particulate Filters. Combusting vegetable oil or used cooking oil in a vehicle also subjects other people to breathe unknown chemical compounds, creating unknown health risks. The official policy can be viewed at <http://www.stopthesoot.org/co.pdf>

If you have any questions, please contact the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Mobile Sources (BMS) at 609-292-7953.