

NEW  
YORK/WASHINGTON  
(Reuters)

-

The

U.S.  
Environmental  
Protection  
Agency  
said  
on  
Tuesday  
it  
would  
complete  
a  
rule  
to  
boost  
sales  
of  
higher-  
ethanol  
blends  
of  
gasoline  
by  
the  
summer  
driving  
season,  
despite  
a  
partial  
government  
shutdown.

FILE  
PHOTO:  
An  
empty  
podium  
awaits  
the  
arrival  
of  
U.S.  
Environmental  
Protection  
Agency  
(EPA)  
Acting  
Administrator  
Andrew  
Wheeler  
to  
address  
staff  
at  
EPA  
headquarters  
in  
Washington,  
U.S.,  
July  
11,  
2018.  
REUTERS/Ting  
Shen

The  
statement  
from  
the  
environmental  
regulator  
came

after  
the  
agency  
warned  
at  
least  
two  
lawmakers  
that  
the  
shutdown  
had  
delayed  
its  
timeline  
for  
initially  
rolling  
out  
the  
rule,  
according  
to  
two  
sources  
briefed  
on  
the  
matter.

President  
Donald

Trump  
pledged  
in  
the  
run-  
up  
to  
November's  
congressional  
elections  
to  
lift  
the  
summer  
ban  
on  
sales  
of  
so-  
called  
E15  
gasoline,  
in  
a  
boost  
to  
an  
ethanol  
industry  
upended  
by  
trade

wars  
and  
weak  
demand  
growth  
at  
home.

The  
Trump  
administration  
hoped  
to  
have  
the  
rule  
published  
by  
February  
and  
approved  
by  
June,  
but  
the  
EPA  
recently  
told  
lawmakers  
that  
the  
timeline

would  
be  
delayed  
because  
of  
the  
partial  
government  
shutdown,  
said  
the  
two  
sources,  
who  
spoke  
to  
Reuters  
on  
condition  
of  
anonymity.

An  
EPA  
spokesman  
said  
the  
agency  
would  
still  
complete  
the

rule  
before  
the  
summer  
driving  
season.

“This  
is  
a  
priority  
for  
both  
President  
Trump  
and  
Acting  
Administrator  
Wheeler.

The  
ongoing  
partial  
shutdown  
will  
not  
impede  
EPA’s  
ability  
to  
keep  
to  
our



deadline,”

Michael

Abboud

said

in

an

emailed

statement

in

response

to

a

request

for

comment.

The

acting

EPA

administrator

is

Andrew

Wheeler.

The

EPA

currently

bans

the

higher

ethanol

blend,

called

E15,  
during  
summer  
because  
of  
concerns  
it  
contributes  
to  
smog  
on  
hot  
days  
-  
a  
worry  
biofuels  
advocates  
say  
is  
unfounded.

E15  
gasoline  
contains  
15  
percent  
ethanol,  
versus  
the  
10  
percent  
found

in  
most  
U.S.  
gasoline.

Trump's  
decision  
to **Trump**  
lift **to**  
the **halt**  
ban **relief**  
of **funds**  
summer **for**  
sales **California**  
of **fires**  
E15  
was  
applauded  
by  
corn-  
belt  
farmers  
and  
lawmakers  
and  
criticized  
by  
the  
oil  
lobby  
as  
an

illegal  
overreach  
by  
the  
EPA  
and  
its  
acting  
administrator.

The  
proposal  
is  
expected  
to  
be  
coupled  
with  
a  
slew  
of  
reforms  
to  
the  
credit-  
trading  
market  
that  
underpins  
the  
nation's  
renewable

fuel  
policy.

Brooke  
Coleman,  
executive  
director  
of  
the  
Advanced  
Biofuels  
Business  
Council,  
said  
the  
EPA  
had  
been  
drafting  
the  
E15  
proposal  
for  
a  
long  
time  
and  
should  
have  
no  
issues  
meeting

its  
June  
1  
target.  
He  
said  
the  
EPA  
should  
delay  
the  
trading  
reforms  
if  
they  
are  
slowing  
the  
process  
down.

“That  
would  
keep  
the  
president’s  
promise  
to  
rural  
communities  
while  
taking

some  
pressure  
off  
regulators,”  
Coleman  
said.

Reporting  
by  
Jarrett  
Renshaw  
in  
New  
York  
and  
Chris  
Prentice  
in  
Washington;  
Editing  
by  
Leslie  
Adler  
and  
Peter  
Cooney

*Our  
Standards: The  
Thomson  
Reuters  
Trust  
Principles.*

**Trump**

**nominates  
acting  
EPA  
head,  
an  
ex-  
coal  
lobbyist,  
to  
run  
agency**

2  
hours  
ago

**In  
disaster's  
wake,  
how  
do  
you  
get  
from  
stop  
to  
go?**

Sponsored  
Content

**Trump  
to  
halt  
U.S.  
relief  
funds  
for  
California  
wildfires**

30  
minutes  
ago

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delayed

a

minimum

of

15

minutes.

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here

for

a

complete

list

of

exchanges

and

delays.

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