

Ministry of Finance Tax Bulletin



Bulletin MFT-CT 003

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Coloured Fuels and Other Substances

Motor Fuel Tax Act and Carbon Tax Act

Latest Revision: The revision bar (|) identifies changes to the previous version of this bulletin dated May 2023. For a summary of the changes, see Latest Revision at the end of this document.

This bulletin provides information to help sellers and purchasers of coloured fuel, marine diesel, locomotive fuel, and other substances, such as heating oil and non-motor fuel oil, understand how the Motor Fuel Tax Act and Carbon Tax Act apply to their operations.

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Overview

Motor Fuel Tax

Coloured fuel (also called dyed or marked fuel) is generally gasoline or diesel that is mixed with a specific dye to distinguish it from clear fuel. Coloured fuel is taxed at a lower motor fuel tax rate than clear fuel if certain conditions are met (see Certification from Purchasers of Coloured Fuel below) and may only be used for authorized purposes, (see Authorized Uses of Coloured Fuel below).

While motor fuel tax does not apply to heating oil or non-motor fuel oil, the special rules regarding the colouring, labelling, purchasing, selling and use of these substances are set out under the Motor Fuel Tax Act and are discussed in this bulletin.

To colour fuel, heating oil or non-motor fuel oil you must receive authorization from us and follow the requirements for storing dye, colouring fuel and reporting. You must also receive authorization from us to sell coloured fuel.

Note: You may lose your authority to colour fuel and sell coloured fuel if you do not follow the procedures outlined in this bulletin. The unauthorized use of coloured fuel may result in fines and penalties.

To report the unauthorized use or sale of coloured fuel, please call 1-877-977-0858.

Carbon Tax

Carbon tax rates are based on the type of fuel (e.g. gasoline or diesel) and the tax rates do not change if the fuel is clear or coloured (e.g. clear diesel and coloured diesel are taxed at the same rate).

For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 005](#), Tax Rates on Fuels.

Definitions

A **commercial motor vehicle** is a vehicle with a permanently attached truck or delivery body, or a combination of vehicles, such as a tractor-trailer unit. There are

certain requirements for commercial motor vehicles used inter-provincially or internationally. For more information, see our [International Fuel Tax Agreement \(IFTA\) in B.C.](#) page.

Coloured fuel includes coloured gasoline, coloured diesel, coloured marine diesel and coloured locomotive fuel. It also includes methanol-based fuel of which at least 85% is methanol and ethanol-based fuel of which at least 85% is ethanol—when used for a purpose for which coloured fuel is authorized to be used.

A **coloured fuel seller** is a person authorized to sell coloured fuel, including coloured marine diesel, coloured locomotive fuel, heating oil and coloured non-motor fuel oil.

A **farmer** is a person who operates a farm on land classified as a farm under the Assessment Act of B.C.

Heating oil is a coloured light fuel oil (diesel fuel) marketed or sold for use in a furnace, boiler or open flame burner.

A **highway** is any public road, street, lane or right of way (road allowance) intended for or used by the general public for the passage of vehicles in B.C., but does not include industrial roads (e.g. logging access roads on Crown land).

A **highway project area** is a work area that is under construction as a highway or a highway under reconstruction or repair by any government, including federal, provincial or municipal governments, or that is designated for these purposes in a call for tender or contract. It does not include ongoing maintenance activities, such as grading, snow ploughing or other maintenance work done on a highway outside a highway project area.

A **licensed motor vehicle** is a vehicle registered for use on a public road. Generally, licensing includes a licence plate for the vehicle, the Owner's Certificate of Insurance, and a vehicle licence or temporary operating permit. A motor vehicle is considered unlicensed if it does not meet any of the above requirements.

Note: An Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) with an ORV number plate is considered a licensed motor vehicle.

Locomotive fuel is fuel (except propane and natural gas) for use in an internal combustion engine in any rolling stock or other vehicle when run on rails. Locomotive fuel used only in a locomotive can be clear or coloured. Locomotive fuel used in a vehicle when run on rails must be clear.

Marine diesel fuel is diesel fuel used in a ship as fuel for an internal combustion engine. Marine diesel fuel can be clear or coloured.

Minerals are metal ore and natural substances that can be mined and that:

- occur in fragments or particles lying on, above or next to its bedrock source (commonly described as talus),
- are in the place or position where they were originally formed or deposited, or
- are loose, fragmentary or broken rock or float that, through decomposition or erosion of rock, are found in wash, loose earth, gravel or sand.

Note: For motor fuel tax purposes, building and construction stone, marble, shale, clay, sand and gravel are **not** minerals.

Non-motor fuel oil is a clear or coloured light fuel oil (diesel fuel) marketed or sold for a use other than for use in an internal combustion engine, furnace, boiler or open flame burner. Examples of non-motor fuel oil include light fuel oil sold for use as solvents, protective coatings or explosives.

A **purchaser** is a person who buys or receives delivery of fuel in B.C. for their own use. The use of the fuel may occur within or outside of B.C. For clarity, this bulletin will refer to purchasers as **end purchasers**.

A **retail dealer** is a person who sells fuel to a purchaser in B.C.

Sellers

Authorization to Colour Fuel

You must receive authorization from us to colour fuel. Your authorization to colour fuel is specific to fuel that you own and also allows you to colour heating oil and non-motor fuel oil for use other than in internal combustion engines.

If you are authorized to colour fuel, you may only colour fuel:

- at a refinery in B.C.,
- at a bulk storage plant (includes cardlocks and terminals) owned or leased by you,
- by using a dye injector mounted on a truck, or
- onboard an authorized vessel owned or leased by you.

To apply for authorization to colour fuel, you must complete and submit an Application for Authorization to Colour Fuel ([FIN 485](#)). You must include each

physical location where you intend to dye fuel on the form. If your application is approved, we will send you a fuel dye authorization agreement to sign and return to us. Once received, we will sign the agreement and send you a copy.

You cannot delegate or transfer authorization to a new location. You must complete a new application prior to colouring fuel at any new location.

If you are not approved to colour fuel, we will send you a letter explaining why your application was refused and how to appeal the decision if you disagree. If your application is refused, you must not colour fuel. However, you may still receive authorization to sell coloured fuel in B.C. For more information, see [Authorization to Sell Coloured Fuel](#) below.

We conduct regular on-site inspections. If you are not properly handling and colouring the fuel, or appropriately storing the dye or dye concentrate, we may suspend or cancel your authorization to colour fuel. This may result in fines and penalties.

Responsibilities of Businesses Authorized to Colour Fuel

Ordering and Storing Dye Concentrate

If you are a business authorized to colour fuel in B.C., you must only use dye concentrate supplied by us. You order dye from us by completing and submitting a Requisition for Dye ([FIN 452](#)).

You need to keep dye and pre-mixed dye solution securely stored at your authorized location at all times. All pumps or containers you use to store, colour, transport or dispense coloured fuel must be clearly labelled as **marked** or **coloured fuel**.

If you transport fuel for sale or delivery, you cannot also transport or carry dye or pre-mixed solution unless it is in an authorized vessel you own or lease, or in a truck-mounted dye injector.

Dye concentrate is considered a hazardous substance; it is combustible and should be stored indoors and away from extreme cold, moisture and all sources of ignition. Care must also be taken to avoid contamination once dye containers are opened—especially from moisture. Containers should be reclosed tightly if not used in their entirety. For 3.5 kg cans, any unused dye concentrate should be stored in a resealable container.

Pre-mixed dye solution should also be stored in closed containers away from moisture and all sources of ignition. Extreme cold does not affect the pre-mix solution; however, it should be used as soon as possible after it is prepared.

Colouring the Fuel

Coloured fuel is dyed at a concentration of 14 parts per million (i.e. 14 parts of dye per million parts of fuel). If you are colouring fuel, you must create a pre-mix solution of the specific dye provided to you by us and a liquid petroleum product **before** the dye can be used to colour fuel. You can make this solution by mixing 3.5 kg of dye with 200 litres of a liquid petroleum product.

For best results, follow these steps to ensure the dye is well-mixed.

1. Mix the fuel in a 203.5 litre drum mounted on its side with a tap attached
2. Fill the drum one quarter full of liquid petroleum
3. Add the dye
4. Add more liquid petroleum until the drum is full

When you mix clear fuel with a pre-mix dye solution, you must ensure you mix them in the correct quantities. To colour gas or diesel fuel, the ratio is one part pre-mix dye solution to 1,250 parts of fuel. To determine the quantity of pre-mix in millilitres to add to the clear fuel, multiply the number of litres by 0.8. For example, if you have 500 litres of clear fuel, you multiply the litres by 0.8, which equals 400 ml of pre-mix dye ($500 \times 0.8 = 400$).

If automatic measuring devices are not available, you need to use measuring cups accurately calibrated in millilitres. For best results, add the pre-mix dye solution to a partially filled mixing tank. This method ensures the dye is well-mixed.

Note: Coloured fuel may darken with time due to the normal oxidation of the fuel.

Reporting Dye Used and on Hand

If you are authorized to colour fuel, you use the Dye Stock Report to indicate the amount of dye in storage and the amount of fuel coloured during the reporting month. You must prepare the report for each reporting period but only submit it to us when we ask for it. When requested, you can submit the report online using [eTaxBC](#) or by mail, courier or in person using the Dye Stock Report ([FIN 476](#)).

Authorization to Sell Coloured Fuel

You must apply to, and receive authorization from, us to sell coloured fuel, coloured marine diesel and coloured locomotive fuel in B.C. An authorization to

sell coloured fuel also allows you to sell heating oil and coloured non-motor fuel oil for use other than in internal combustion engines.

If you sell heating oil, it must be coloured before you sell it. If you sell marine diesel, locomotive fuel, or non-motor fuel oil, you are not required to colour it before you sell it. However, at or before the time you sell non-motor fuel oil (whether coloured or not) to a person for the person's own use, you must obtain from the purchaser a Certificate of Exemption – Substances Sold for Use Other Than in Internal Combustion Engines ([FIN 480](#)). You must keep this completed certificate in your records.

To apply for authorization to sell coloured fuel, you must complete and submit an Application for Authorization to Sell Coloured Fuel ([FIN 461](#)), including a signed copy of the agreement attached to the application that contains the terms and conditions of your authorization to sell coloured fuel.

You must apply for authorization for each physical location (e.g. a cardlock, gas station or marina fuel dock) and you cannot delegate or transfer authorizations to a new location. You must complete a new application prior to selling coloured fuel from any new physical location.

If your application is approved, we will sign the agreement and send you a copy, along with labels to be affixed to all pumps that dispense coloured fuel.

If you are not approved as a coloured fuel seller, we will send you a letter explaining why your application was refused and how to appeal the decision if you disagree. If your application is refused, you must not sell coloured fuel in B.C.

Note: Wilfully colouring fuel or selling coloured fuel without authorization is an offence under the Motor Fuel Tax Act and conviction may result in a fine of up to \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to two years.

Relabelling Fuel

Relabelling fuel is purchasing one type of fuel and then selling it as another type of fuel, or as another substance (i.e. not for use in an internal combustion engine) at either the same or at a lower tax rate. Relabelling fuel is different from colouring fuel (e.g. dyeing clear diesel to create coloured diesel).

The authority of fuel sellers to relabel varies based on the type of business, the initial fuel type or substance, and the final fuel type or substance sold. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 001](#), Fuel Sellers.

Responsibilities of Fuel Sellers

If you sell coloured fuel, marine diesel (clear or coloured) or locomotive fuel (clear or coloured), you must follow the conditions outlined below.

Coloured Fuel Pump Labels

You must attach our coloured fuel labels that outline authorized uses of coloured fuel in a clearly visible location on all coloured fuel pumps. See a [sample of the Authorized Uses of Coloured Fuel](#) label.

Certification Required from Purchasers of Coloured Fuel, Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel

In most cases, you must obtain a completed and signed copy of the Coloured Fuel Certification (Includes Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel) ([FIN 430](#)) before you sell coloured fuel, marine diesel (clear or coloured) or locomotive fuel (clear or coloured), to an end purchaser for their own use:

- through a cardlock, including at a terminal rack or bulk plant, or
- in an amount greater than 45 litres.

The certification must be completed by the end purchaser to certify they will use the fuel only for an authorized use. You must keep the certification on file. You may make additional sales of the fuel based on the certification you have on file for a specific purchaser if:

- the information on the certification is current, and
- you can link each sale to the certification you have on file (e.g. by an account, name or reference number).

You do not need to obtain this certification in the following situations.

- You transfer the coloured fuel directly into the supply tank of a ship or a boat that is on or in the water.
- You transfer marine diesel directly into the supply tank of a ship that is on or in the water.
- You sell the fuel to a farmer that has provided you a completed and signed Certificate of Exemption – Farmer ([FIN 458](#)), or a copy of their valid Farmer Identity Card issued by the BC Agricultural Council.
- You sell fuel to an eligible First Nations purchaser or band on First Nations land (see [Bulletin MFT-CT 002](#), Sales to First Nations and the Fuel Tax Exemption Program).

- You sell locomotive fuel to an end purchaser with a Registered Consumer Certificate for locomotive fuel. **Note:** Authorized coloured fuel sellers may sell coloured diesel fuel to a registered consumer as locomotive fuel if the invoice shows the coloured diesel is being sold for use in a locomotive (e.g. coloured diesel sold as locomotive fuel).
- You sell clear or coloured non-motor fuel oil. In this case, you must obtain from the end purchaser a completed and signed Certificate of Exemption - Substances Sold for Use Other Than in Internal Combustion Engines ([FIN 480](#)).
- You sell coloured diesel, coloured gas, coloured marine diesel, coloured locomotive or coloured non-motor fuel oil, to a customer for resale purposes **if** that customer is also an authorized coloured fuel seller. See our [Listing of Authorized Coloured Fuel Sellers](#).

If a certification is required and you have not obtained one from your customer, you must collect motor fuel tax on the sale of fuel at the clear motor fuel tax rate (i.e. the same rate as if the fuel was clear gasoline or clear diesel. For information on dedicated and provincial motor fuel tax rates by region, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 005](#), Tax Rates on Fuels.

If the tax you collect is greater than the security you paid on the fuel, you must remit the additional tax using the Motor Fuel Tax Return Self Assessors ([FIN 135](#)).

If you sell fuel without obtaining the required documentation and you do not collect and remit motor fuel tax at the clear motor fuel rate, you may be subject to a penalty equal to the difference between the tax you collected and the tax you were required to collect, as well as additional penalties and interest.

See our [Summary of Requirements for Sales of Coloured Fuels, Non-Motor Fuel Oil and Heating Oil](#) for an outline on the requirements for sales of these fuels and substances, and the potential consequences of not complying with those requirements.

Reporting Tax on Sales Invoices

You must provide a fuel sales invoice if you sell fuel:

- From a bulk storage facility, cardlock or terminal rack
- For resale to another fuel seller
- To a registered consumer, registered air service or registered marine service
- To an end purchaser who is purchasing more than 45 litres of coloured fuel
- To a farmer who is purchasing coloured fuel
- To a customer who requests an invoice

You must provide an invoice to your customer showing:

- The date of the sale
- Your name and address
- The location of the sale if different than above and, if applicable, where the fuel was delivered
- The name and address of the person you sold the fuel to
- The type of fuel or substance sold (e.g. gasoline, diesel, locomotive fuel, non-motor fuel oil etc.)
- The quantity of each type of fuel sold
- The rates for motor fuel tax and carbon tax, for each type of fuel sold, as separate lines or columns on the invoice
- If the fuel is coloured indicate as “marked” or “dyed”, and the price of the coloured fuel per unit of sale

Suspension and Cancellations of Authorizations

Your authorizations to colour fuel or sell coloured fuel or both may be suspended or cancelled for not complying with the Motor Fuel Tax Act, Carbon Tax Act or their respective regulations, or if you do not meet the terms and conditions set out in your authorizations. You may appeal the suspension or cancellation if you disagree with our decision.

Coloured Fuel Exemptions – Motor Fuel Tax and Carbon Tax

As a coloured fuel seller, you are not required to collect motor fuel tax or carbon tax on sales in B.C. to the following specific types of end purchasers.

First Nations

You are not required to collect motor fuel tax or carbon tax on sales to eligible First Nations purchasers if title to the fuel passes on First Nations land. For more information, including the documentation required, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 002](#), Sales to First Nations and the Fuel Tax Exemption Program.

Farmers

You are not required to collect motor fuel tax or carbon tax on sales of coloured gasoline and coloured diesel to persons who qualify as farmers in certain situations. You may make tax-exempt sales (point-of-sale exemptions) of coloured gasoline and coloured diesel to farmers if the fuel is:

- delivered to a storage tank on the farmer’s farm,
- sold from a bulk agent on the farmer’s account (i.e. not a cash, credit card or debit card sale), or

- sold through a cardlock system on the farmer's account.

To make tax-exempt sales to farmers you must also obtain, and keep as part of your records, a copy of a signed current BC Farmer Identity Card or a completed and signed Certificate of Exemption – Farmer ([FIN 458](#)).

You may not make tax-exempt sales of coloured gasoline and coloured diesel fuel to farmers from a retail gas station. However, you may sell coloured gasoline or coloured diesel fuel to farmers from a retail gas station (does not include cardlocks) at the applicable motor fuel and carbon tax rate, if you obtain, and keep as part of your records, one of the following:

- A copy of a signed current BC Farmer's Identity Card
- A completed and signed Certificate of Exemption – Farmer ([FIN 458](#))
- A completed and signed Coloured Fuel Certification ([FIN 430](#))

The farmer may apply to us for a refund of the motor fuel tax and carbon tax they paid on the coloured fuel by completing the Application for Refund of Motor Fuel Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 147](#)) and the Application for Refund of Carbon Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 108](#)).

Refunds for Businesses

If you pay security on fuel and you sell that fuel at a lower rate of security or tax (e.g. you purchase clear fuel, then colour and sell coloured fuel, coloured marine diesel, coloured locomotive fuel, heating oil, or coloured non-motor fuel oil), or pay security on coloured fuel and sell the fuel exempt of tax (e.g. to an eligible First Nations purchaser or farmer), you may apply for a refund of the difference.

Note: You may not be eligible for a refund if you purchase clear fuel, then colour and sell coloured fuel at the coloured fuel rate, without obtaining the required certification from your customer. See Certification Required from Purchasers of Coloured Fuel, Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel above.

If you are a collector, you may claim a refund on your regular motor fuel tax return or carbon tax return or both by deducting the refund amount from the amount of the security due on the return for the same reporting period.

If you are operating only as a deputy collector or retail dealer, you may apply for a refund using an:

- Application for Refund of Carbon Tax – Deputy Collector or Retail Dealer ([FIN 143](#)), or

- Application for Refund of Motor Fuel Tax – Deputy Collector or Retail Dealer ([FIN 152](#)).

You must include a schedule of sales supported by copies of the sales invoices that include the date, name and address of the customer and seller, and the volume and type of fuel sold.

For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 007](#), Refunds for Deputy Collectors and Retail Dealers.

End Purchasers

In most cases, you must complete and sign a Coloured Fuel Certification (Includes Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel) ([FIN 430](#)) before you can purchase coloured fuel, marine diesel (clear or coloured) or locomotive fuel (clear or coloured), for your own use. The purpose of this form is to ensure you are aware of, and will use the fuel for, an authorized purpose (see Certification Required from Purchasers of Coloured Fuel, Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel above for details).

Authorized Uses of Coloured Fuel

General Use

You may use coloured fuel in:

- Locomotives
- Ships and boats
- Tractors when used off-highway
- Tractors when used on-highway by, or on behalf of, a farmer for the purposes of the farmer's farm
- Unlicensed motor vehicles (see licensed motor vehicle in the Definitions section above).

Industrial Machines

You may use coloured fuel in industrial machines when the equipment is:

- used off-highway (use on private roads is permitted), or
- travelling to or from a location where the use of coloured fuel in the vehicle is authorized.

Industrial machines include bulldozers, backhoes, front-end loaders, shovels, graders, earth compactors, rollers, grass mowers, crushers, lumber carriers,

skidders, forklifts and any machine equipped with caterpillar tracks. Locomotives are not considered industrial machines.

Farmers

You may use coloured gasoline and coloured diesel exempt of motor fuel tax and carbon tax for the following authorized uses:

- Operating a ship
- Operating a tractor when used on other than a highway
- Operating an industrial machine when used on other than a highway
- Operating a stationary engine or portable engine
- Operating a tractor when used on a highway by or on behalf of a farmer for the purposes of the farmer's farm
- Operating a farm truck being used by a farmer or other person in the operation of the farm
- Operating a motor vehicle that is not licensed to operate on a highway when used on other than a highway
- Operating a tractor, an industrial machine or road building machine, or a motor vehicle not licensed to operate on a highway, when proceeding to or returning from a location where the use of the fuel in the tractor, machine or motor vehicle is otherwise authorized

Farm Vehicles

You may use coloured gasoline and coloured diesel exempt of motor fuel tax and carbon tax in farm trucks licensed as farm vehicles under the Commercial Transport Act (i.e. vehicles with a farm licence plate, also known as an A or G plate) when the vehicle is used:

- in the operation of a farm, or
- for limited personal use that can be reasonably linked to the operation of the farm. For example, driving your children to school, picking up groceries, or driving to the bank, post office or hardware store.

You cannot use coloured gasoline or coloured diesel in farm vehicles for any purpose that cannot be reasonably linked to the operation of the farm. For example, you cannot use coloured gasoline or coloured diesel in farm vehicles when the vehicle is used in the operation of another business, to drive yourself to school or another place of employment, or for recreational purposes.

The states of Washington, Idaho and Montana do not allow farmers to use coloured fuel in licensed vehicles on public roads. However, if you use clear fuel in

a farm truck while operating internationally for a farm purpose, (e.g. travel to the United States to deliver your farm product to a customer), you may apply for a refund of the motor fuel tax and carbon tax paid on the clear fuel purchased in B.C. by submitting an Application for Refund of Motor Fuel Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 147](#)) and an Application for Refund of Carbon Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 108](#)). For more information see [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers, and [Bulletin CT 002](#), Carbon Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

Stationary Engines

You may use coloured fuel in stationary or portable engines, such as generators and chainsaws. You may also use coloured fuel to operate a stationary engine on a motor vehicle if it is separate from the engine used to power a motor vehicle and each engine has its own fuel tank (e.g. refrigeration units on trucks).

Where there is a single fuel tank for fuel used to operate the motor vehicle while in motion and when stationary, you must use clear fuel in the tank. However, you may be eligible for a refund of the difference between the clear and coloured fuel tax rates, see [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

Road-building Machines

Road-building machines are equipment primarily designed for earth moving, grading, paving and constructing highways.

You may use coloured fuel in road-building machines when the vehicle is used:

- at a highway project area by any government,
- by or for the provincial government in construction or repair of roads maintained by the provincial government and not part of a highway project area, such as logging, mining, or petroleum and natural gas access roads on Crown land, or
- for travel to and from locations where the use of coloured fuel is authorized.

You must use clear fuel in road-building machines when used on a highway outside a highway project area for grading, clearing, snow ploughing or other maintenance activities.

Road-building machines include:

- Bulldozers, compactors, loaders, self-propelled compressors, paving machines, rollers, cranes, scrapers, tractors, machines equipped with shovels, articulated rock trucks

- trucks that, because of their size, are not permitted to travel on-highway without a permit

Road-building machines do not include vehicles that were originally designed for the transportation of persons or property and later have machinery attached to them. Road-building machines also do not include dump trucks designed to comply with the size and weight restrictions under the Commercial Transport Act. For example, road-building machines do not include mobile cranes, dump trucks, flushers, street sweepers, vans and buses.

Oil and Gas Exploration Activities

You may use coloured fuel when operating a commercial vehicle (other than a pickup truck) off-highway, that is actively engaged in exploring or drilling for petroleum or natural gas, to deliver the following supplies and equipment:

- Drilling equipment
- Drilling rigs
- Drilling supplies
- Fuel and water
- Geophysical equipment and supplies
- Seismic equipment and supplies
- Well servicing equipment and supplies

Note: The authorized use of coloured fuel used in commercial vehicles described above does not extend to persons delivering supplies and equipment for a company that is involved in the production (pumping etc.) or transportation of petroleum or natural gas (e.g. by pipeline, motor vehicle, vessel etc.).

For example, a delivery company or a geophysical surveying contractor using a commercial motor vehicle off-highway may use coloured fuel to transport seismic equipment, or water to be consumed in the drilling process, to an oil or gas exploration site, if the commercial vehicle is operated 100% off-highway.

The delivery company must not use coloured fuel to deliver supplies and equipment after exploration ends. Therefore, coloured fuel **must not be used** to deliver equipment and supplies for casing and cementing, perforation, acidizing and fracturing, ongoing maintenance of a productive well, or any other activity that occurs after completion of the well, including the delivery of water consumed in well servicing equipment used on a producing well.

If you deliver qualifying supplies and equipment in a commercial vehicle to a person who is actively engaged in oil and gas exploration, and any portion of the trip is on a highway, you must use clear fuel. However, you may apply for a refund of the difference between the tax paid on clear fuel and the coloured fuel tax rate, for the portion of the fuel consumed off-highway. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

You may not use coloured fuel to deliver any other supplies, such as road-building materials, administrative supplies, food or water for a drilling crew.

Note: Pickup trucks used by persons actively engaged in exploring or drilling for petroleum or natural gas are not authorized to use coloured fuel, unless they are unlicensed and used on private roads. A pickup truck is a vehicle that meets the criteria as a pickup (PU) by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC).

Logging and Mining Industry Activities

You may use coloured fuel in off-highway vehicles used in the logging and mining industry, including:

- Trucks when used for hauling logs or lumber, or to transport minerals
- Fire trucks when used as fire trucks
- Ambulances when used as ambulances
- Crew crummies or buses used for the transportation of your employees, contractors or agents of your company, or employees of the contractors and agents (crew crummies are trucks, buses or vans with a seating capacity of six or more persons)

You may also use coloured fuel in the vehicles described above in limited circumstances (e.g. to take the vehicle for repairs) if operating on a highway under a temporary operating permit issued under the Commercial Transport Act (for more information on permits, contact your local Autoplan broker or ICBC at 1-800-663-3051).

If any portion of the trip by these vehicles is on a highway, other than operating under a temporary operating permit, you must use clear fuel. However, you may apply for a refund of the difference between the tax paid on clear fuel and the coloured fuel tax rate **for the portion of the fuel consumed off-highway**. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

Note: Multi-tank vehicles must not carry coloured fuel in the supply tank of a motor vehicle where another supply tank attached to the same engine in the same vehicle contains fuel that is not coloured.

Unauthorized Use of Coloured Fuel

If you purchase or use coloured fuel for an unauthorized purpose, you must self-assess the difference between the coloured fuel tax and the clear fuel tax rate that should have been paid on that fuel. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 006](#), Self-Assessing Motor Fuel and Carbon Tax.

If you fail to do this, you may be assessed:

- the difference between the coloured fuel tax and the clear fuel tax that should have been paid on that fuel, and
- a penalty equal to the greater of:
 - 3 times the clear fuel tax that should have been paid, or
 - an amount of up to \$1,000 for each vehicle per day.

You may be assessed penalties for all unauthorized purchases or uses during the previous 4 years.

Heating Oil and Non-Motor Fuel Oil

In addition to the uses of coloured fuel described above, fuel may be coloured and sold for use other than in an internal combustion engine as heating oil or as coloured non-motor fuel oil.

Although coloured diesel, heating oil and coloured non-motor fuel oil can be chemically identical, their authorized uses and tax rates are different. Coloured diesel fuel is intended for use in internal combustion engines and is subject to motor fuel tax of 3¢ per litre, unless a specific exemption applies.

Heating oil and non-motor fuel oil are not subject to motor fuel tax, but are subject to carbon tax, PST and in some cases the ICE Fund tax. Coloured heating oil is not subject to PST if it is sold for residential heating purposes. For more information on PST exempt sales of residential energy products, see [Bulletin PST 203](#), Energy, Energy Conservation and the ICE Fund Tax.

Unauthorized Use of Heating Oil and Non-Motor Fuel Oil

You must not use:

- Heating oil or non-motor fuel oil in an internal combustion engine
- Non-motor fuel oil in a furnace, boiler or open flame burner
- Heating oil in a furnace, boiler or open flame burner unless the heating oil is coloured

If you use heating oil or non-motor fuel oil for an unauthorized purpose, you must pay to the government, on or before the 15th day of the month following the month in which the substance is used, motor fuel tax at the rate of 15¢ per litre. You may also be subject to an additional penalty. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 006](#), Self-Assessing Motor Fuel and Carbon Tax.

Marine Diesel and Locomotive Fuel

You may use marine diesel fuel in an internal combustion engine of a ship and use locomotive fuel in an internal combustion engine in any rolling stock or other vehicle when run on rails. When marine diesel fuel or locomotive fuel is used for a higher-tax purpose (e.g. to operate a vehicle on-highway), you must self-assess motor fuel tax on the difference between the tax paid on that fuel and the clear diesel tax rate. For more information, see [Bulletin MFT-CT 006](#), Self-Assessing Motor Fuel and Carbon Tax.

If you fail to self-assess the additional tax owing, you may be assessed the difference between the tax paid and the clear diesel tax rate as well as additional penalties.

Refunds of Motor Fuel Tax and Carbon Tax on Coloured Fuel

You may apply for a refund of motor fuel tax or carbon tax if you:

- Paid tax in error, (i.e. there is no legal obligation for you to pay tax)
- Overpaid tax, (e.g. you paid more motor fuel tax than you should have because of an error in calculation)
- Correctly paid tax at the time of purchase, but you are a person who qualifies for a refund (see below)

You apply for a refund of motor fuel tax or carbon tax or both, using an:

- Application for Refund of Carbon Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 108](#))
- Application for Refund of Motor Fuel Tax – Purchaser of Fuel ([FIN 147](#))

For more information, see [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers, and [Bulletin CT 002](#), Carbon Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

Specific Motor Fuel Tax Refunds and Carbon Tax Refunds where Clear Fuel is used for a Coloured Purpose

There are specific tax refund provisions for motor fuel tax and carbon tax where clear fuel is used for a coloured fuel purpose. For more information, see

[Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers, and [Bulletin CT 002](#), Carbon Tax Refunds for Purchasers.

If you use clear fuel where you are authorized to use coloured fuel, you cannot claim a refund of the difference between the clear and coloured fuel tax rates except in the specific uses outlined in [Bulletin MFT 002](#), Motor Fuel Tax Refunds for Purchasers. For example, if you use clear fuel in a lawnmower and you are authorized to use coloured fuel in that same lawnmower, you cannot claim a refund of the difference between the clear and coloured fuel tax rates.

Your refund claim must be received by us within 4 years of the date you paid the tax (i.e. the fuel purchase date). Claims for amounts of less than \$10 **are not** eligible for a refund.

Need more info?

Online: gov.bc.ca/fuelandcarbontax

Toll free: 1-877-388-4440

Email: CTBTaxQuestions@gov.bc.ca

[Subscribe](#) to receive email notifications when B.C. tax information is updated.

The information in this bulletin is for your convenience and guidance and is not a replacement for the legislation.

Latest Revision

December 2023

- Revised the definition of a licensed motor vehicle as they no longer require a validation decal on the plate
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