



OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT  
INSTITUTE

# OUTDOOR POWER REPORT



Quarterly Report | April 2015



## MESSAGE FROM KRIS KISER, OPEI PRESIDENT:

**Registration is now open** for our 2015 annual meeting, which is being held June 23-25 in La Posada De Santa Fe, New Mexico. Economist Alan Beaulieu, generational divide expert Jason Dorsey, and astronaut and author Mike Mullane will inspire and challenge us.

GIE+EXPO is already poised to break more records this year. Early exhibit sales are currently well above their levels in 2014 at this time. Many returning exhibitors are planning to significantly increase the size of their exhibit spaces for the 2015 show. If you have not yet booked your exhibit space, now is the time to turn in your reservation. We will likely exceed 2014's largest-ever blockbuster record!

## MARKET STATISTICS

- In early February, OPEI launched publication of its expanded market statistics program for corded/cordless products to include walk-behind mowers, handheld blowers, chain saws, snow throwers, grass trimmers, and hedge trimmers. The program, and its growth, are central to innovation in this key member service.
- In early March, OPEI launched opeistats.org, a new secure repository for summary report data and forecasts. This site allows OPEI to remove all MSC related news and resources from its website, and offer the convenient and timely delivery of information to eligible member companies through this new online portal.

## TURFMUTT

- The **TurfMutt** program has recently expanded with a new partnership with Scholastic Education, the global children's publishing, education and media company. The new TurfMutt website now features exciting new content including lesson plans for teachers, learning activities for families, interactive games, a TurfMutt storybook, and the **Be A Backyard Superhero** contest, where schools have a chance to win \$5,000 to improve their green space.
- In promotion of this new partnership, **TurfMutt** has been featured in Scholastic's Parent and Child Magazine, Instructor Magazine, and across digital platforms reaching over one million parents and teachers. This new partnership will also be promoted by industry partners such as the U.S. Department of Education, Outdoor Alliance for Kids and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

## FEDERAL REGULATIONS

- EPA has been silent since its December announcement to postpone the proposal of Renewable Volume Obligations under the RFS for 2014. The agency is now rumored to be considering a combined proposal of RVOs for 2014, 2015, and 2016 later this summer.
- Reacting to the Federal government's suspension of visa processing for seasonal workers in early March, OPEI and other industry partners including PLANET, NHLA, and NAEDA released a March 17th statement urging resumption of this important program. Federal authorities have since resumed priority processing, and announced their intent to propose a corrective interim rule by April 30.

## UTV/ANSI B71.9 COMMITTEE

- On CPSC Recreational Vehicle Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: OPEI filed an appeal for information withheld by CPSC in response to December 2013 and December 2014 FOIA requests. As a result, CPSC reversed its earlier decision and released information previously withheld for OPEI's ongoing incident analysis.
- As a follow-up to OPEI's January 7th public comments to the proposed rule, OPEI provided comments to the Commissioners demonstrating the definitions of "tripped" and "untripped" rollovers provided by OPEI are well aligned with those by NHTSA and other vehicle experts.

- The B71.9 Committee continues incident analysis and vehicle testing in preparation for final comments to the CPSC's ROV NPR. While final comments are due April 8th, OPEI has filed comments requesting a second comment period extension in order to complete testing aimed at understanding the repeatability and reproducibility of the proposed J-turn & understeer tests, as well as complete incident data analysis based on recently released data.

## CONGRESS

- On February 26, Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA) proposed S 577, Corn Ethanol Mandate Elimination Act of 2015. The legislation would eliminate the mandate for RFS use of corn ethanol, but would not invalidate existing waivers, or rescind further EPA waiver authority.
- On February 4, Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) introduced HR 704, RFS Reform Act of 2015, which would focus on rescinding EPA waiver authority to introduce new mid-level blends, and would also repeal the existing partial-waiver for E15, capping ethanol blends at E10.
- Following the Easter recess, sister bills are expected to be announced in both the House and Senate to reauthorize Trade Promotion Authority. U.S. exporters have been advocating for passage of this key legislation to facilitate completion of the TPP and T-TIP free trade pacts.
- On March 10, Senators David Vitter (R-LA) and Tom Udall (D-NM) introduced S 697, Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, which would reform the current Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). A priority of manufacturers, the legislation would provide the process for approval of new chemicals and substances, and preempt disparate state laws.

## STATE ISSUES

- California has proposed the first major revision of its 30-year old consumer product safety rule Proposition 65. OPEI is working with the larger business community through the California Chamber of Commerce to submit comments by April 8.
- On February 21, unions and west coast port authorities resolved their long-running dispute which closed or slowed access to ports for weeks. OPEI added its support to a National Retail Federation coalition which pushed for a resolution based on the primary impact to U.S. businesses.

## ELECTRIC PRODUCTS

- The OPEI Electric Products Committee continues engagement with the review and development of standards for electric products. Technical work on these standards occurs within the framework of the IEC standards committees. OPEI staff is fully engaged on the IEC committees on behalf of OPEI members.
- The next meetings of the IEC TC 116 MT 3 Committee are being held the week of April 20 and the week of July 13. Key items on the agenda include standards for Hedge Trimmers, Robotic Lawnmowers, Pedestrian Controlled Walk-Behind Lawnmowers, Chainsaws, Lawn Trimmers and Lawn Edge Trimmers, and Brush-Cutters and Grass-Trimmers.

## EPA CERTIFICATION FUEL

- On February 19th EPA published a Direct Final Rule (DFR) allowing the optional use of ARB RFG 3 (E10) certification fuel for exhaust gas emissions certification. In addition to certification fuel, the DFR also clarifies and changes some bonding allowances and incorporates a new EVAP test procedure for small diameter fuel lines (per OPEI request).

## EPA SMALL ENGINE CATALYST GUIDANCE

- OPEI met with EPA to discuss a draft guidance document which would require additional catalyst design information as part of the engine certification process. Ultimately the information is being requested for use by EPA Enforcement when conducting product inspections at ports. During the meeting OPEI also discussed its concerns with destructive catalyst testing procedures developed by EPA for small spark-ignited engine catalyts.



## **ANSI STANDARDS**

- A new OPEI committee has begun work on a new ANSI standard for wheeled string trimmers. OPEI is also collecting canvass volunteers to review upcoming revised ANSI standards for tillers, log splitters, and chipper/shredders. Work is progressing on a North America standard for Robotic Electric Lawnmowers.

## **ASTM FUEL GASOLINE & OXYGENATED FUELS STANDARD**

- OPEI continues to participate in the development of the next revision of the D4814 “oxygenated fuels” standard, which looks to include ethanol blends up-to E15. OPEI has provided numerous comments and feedback regarding known limitations of E15, which includes small spark-ignited engines. The subcommittee is expected to finalize and approve a draft prior to the June 22-23 D02 and A00 committee meetings.

## **INTERNATIONAL INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (IICEMA)**

- OPEI is participating in “Small Engine Emissions Visioning” and “Worldwide Emissions Label” task groups. The next IICEMA meeting is scheduled for November 9 – 11th in Tokyo, Japan.

## **MEXICO HANDHELD SAFETY STANDARDS TASK GROUP**

- OPEI has been participating in committee meetings organized by Mexico’s General Bureau of Standards for development of chain saw, hedge trimmer, grass trimmer & brush cutter and backpack sprayer voluntary safety standards. The draft standards are scheduled to be published this spring for a 60 day public comment period and are expected to be finalized this summer. Work to make the standards mandatory is tentatively slated to begin late 2015.

## **LEAF BLOWER CODES/BANS TASK GROUP**

- The task group continues work on materials aimed at providing facts to address blower misconceptions regarding noise, emissions and debris. The informative package is scheduled to be finished later this year.
- In the meantime some communities are reconsidering new or revised blower restrictions. In Encinitas, CA, the City Council agreed to reconsider a current proposed regulation after one large HOA commented that the proposed restriction would increase maintenance costs by \$26,000-\$52,000. Meanwhile in Sunnyvale, CA, an advisory commission voted 4-1 to recommend to the City Council to provide blower education resources as opposed to blower bans and further restrictions.

## **US TAG TO ISO TC23/SC17**

- The US TAG submitted affirmative ballots to move forward to develop revisions to the 11806-1 standard for hedge trimmers and brushcutters as well as 11681-2 for chain saws. The TAG also provided comments to TC23/SC17 regarding IEC 62841-4-1 for electric chain saws.
- The next meeting of the TC23/SC17 Committee is scheduled for October 2015 in Brazil.



## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- April 7-8, 2015, OPEI Board Meeting, Washington, DC
- April 14-24, 2015, IEC TC 116 WG7 and MT3 Meetings, Athens, Greece
- April 21-23, 2015, Ground Supported Committees (B71.6, B71.7, B71.8) Meetings, Chicago, IL
- April 30, 2015, OPEIC Meeting with BC Ministry of Environment, Victoria, BC
- May 4-7, 2015, Handheld Products, Engine & Fuels and B175 Committee Meetings, Alexandria, VA
- May 4-8, 2015, British Columbia Stewardship Conference, Vancouver, BC
- May 12-14, 2015, Robotic Mower Committee Meetings, Alexandria, VA
- June 10, 2015, Legal and Regulatory Compliance Committee Meeting, webinar
- June 23-25, 2015, OPEI Annual Meeting, Santa Fe, NM
- June 25, 2015, OPEI Board Meeting, Santa Fe, NM
- October 5-9, 2015, ISO TC 23 SC 13, Minneapolis, MN
- October 14, 2015, Legal & Regulatory Compliance Committee Meeting, Alexandria, VA
- October 13 or 15, 2015, (TBD) Ground Supported Products Committee Meetings, Alexandria, VA

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