

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
(FONSI)**

**VA NEBRASKA-WESTERN IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA  
ETHANOL- 85 (E85) FUELING STATION**

November 2013

# **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR PROPOSED ETHANOL- 85 (E85) FUELING STATION OMAHA VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER, NEBRASKA**

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), and Title 38, Part 26.4(a) (Environmental Effects of VA Actions), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate and document potential environmental effects associated with the Proposed Action.

### **Background**

In response to recent federal initiatives, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is considering alternatives for reducing the intensity of fossil fuel use at its facilities. In accordance with these initiatives, the VA proposes to install and operate ethanol-85 (E85) fueling stations at many of its VA medical centers (VAMCs). The VAMC vehicle fleets are comprised mostly of flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs) that are used by VA personnel including ambulances, cars, trucks and buses. In addition, VAMCs are often near or collocated with other regional VA facilities whose personnel would also have access to an E85 station once installed. The purpose of installing E85 fuel tanks at VAMC campuses is to support the existing VHA FFV fleets that are currently underutilized owing to lack of E85 availability, and to reduce the number of DOE waivers that are currently needed by the VA to comply with Section 701 [42 U.S.C. 6374(a)(3)(E)] of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requiring federal fleets to replace petroleum use with alternative fuels. If FFVs are eventually phased out and replaced with hybrid vehicles, any E85 tank could be used for gasoline (E10) and almost all hybrid vehicles run on gasoline. There is some interest in fueling hybrids with E85 (Flex Fuel hybrids), but they are not widely available at this time.

The Omaha VAMC is located in Douglas County, in the state of Nebraska. The Omaha VAMC is part of the integrated Nebraska Western Iowa Healthcare System (NWIHCS). The Omaha division is the tertiary care site, providing inpatient, medical, surgical, and psychiatric care; ambulatory care services; and clinical research programs.

### **Summary of the Proposed Action**

Under the Proposed Action, an E85 AST alternative fueling station, storing up to 10,000 gallons, would be constructed and operated at the VAMC facility in Omaha, Nebraska (Figure 2-1). It is likely that a 5,000 gallon AST would be installed at this facility where the existing gasoline and diesel underground storage tank (UST) fueling station is located. The current fueling station includes two (2) 1000-gallon USTs that would be removed prior to the installation of the E85

AST. The Omaha VAMC is an acute, highly affiliated facility. It is a teaching hospital providing a full range of patient care services as well as education and research, and it also has a major clinical research program. Figure 2-2 shows an aerial view of the facility. Figure 2-3 is a campus facility map, highlighting the preferred site for the proposed E85 fueling station which would replace the existing gasoline and diesel USTs and fueling station. Improvements of infrastructure would not be required to accommodate access for vehicles or fuel delivery trucks at this site. The estimated footprint of the AST, including a concrete pad and sufficient access to the tank, would be approximately 460 square feet (SF), assuming that a light-weight, double-walled tank is installed. The proximity to existing electrical power, required safety setbacks from buildings and property lines, and the VA Antiterrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) requirements were considered during the site selection process. Preference was given to locating the E85 fueling station where the current fueling area is located, replacing the existing UST fueling system.

### **Determination**

The VA has selected the Proposed Action as the preferred alternative for complying with federal initiative and for reducing the intensity of fossil fuel use at its facilities. No significant adverse impacts would occur to the following resources:

- Noise
- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Air quality
- Socioeconomics
- Transportation and Parking
- Cultural and Historical resources
- Geology and Soils
- Ground Water and Water Quality
- Wetlands, Floodplains and Surface Waters
- Vegetation and Land Use
- Wildlife
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Solid and Hazardous Materials and Wastes
- Safety

The Proposed Action includes the following environmental protection commitments to be implemented during the project to ensure that project implementation does not have a significant impact on the environment:

- Site roads will be regularly cleaned and maintained;
- Material handling systems and site stockpiling of materials will be designed to minimize exposure to wind;
- All fuels will be stored and maintained in a designated equipment staging area;
- No wastewater will be discharged into state water without a NPDES permit;

- Existing features, such as trees, walls, and hedges, which are to be retained, will be identified in the contract documentation and strict instructions issued so that they are protected during the construction process;
- Noisy equipment will be replaced whenever possible;
- Construction staging activities will occur as far from noise sensitive areas as possible;
- The timing or sequence of the noisiest construction activities will be scheduled to avoid sensitive times of the day;
- Fuels, lubricants, and hydraulic fluids for equipment and chemical substances used on the construction site will be carefully handled to avoid spillage, properly secured against unauthorized access or vandalism, and provided with spill containment; and
- Any spillage of fuels, lubricants, hydraulic oils, or chemical substances will be immediately contained and the contaminated soil removed from the site and properly disposed.
- All applicable local, state and federal permits and notifications will be submitted and followed prior to and during construction activities.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based on the analysis and conclusions presented in the EA, VA finds that the implementation of the proposed project as described, including mitigating measures, will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed action is not required.

**Responsible Officials**

Robin Fried 12/26/2013  
 Robin Fried, MBA Date  
 GEMS Coordinator  
 VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

Helal Ramzy Harb 12/26/13  
 Helal Ramzy Harb Date  
 Chief, Engineering Service  
 VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

Ellen Mylan 12-27-13  
 Marci Mylan, PhD, MPH Date  
 Health Care System Director  
 VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System