

## **Diesel Engine Manufacturer Position Statements on Aftermarket Fuel Additives**

One issue of concern for both consumers and distributors of aftermarket fuel additives is how the use of aftermarket diesel fuel additives affects the potential warranty coverage of the engine by the engine manufacturer. Some parties have taken a hard-line approach to this issue in arguing that the simple addition of any substance to the fuel automatically voids the engine warranty. Bell Performance disagrees with this assessment.

To clarify this issue, Bell Performance contacted diesel engine manufacturers with the following question:

*What is the engine manufacturer position on whether the use of aftermarket fuel additives will change or void the normal engine warranty?*

As a result, Bell Performance received responses from three of the leading engine manufacturers in the marketplace today: Cummins, Caterpillar, and Mack.

Cummins response was:

*If it is determined by a Cummins dealer or distributor that use of a non-Cummins product has caused a failure during the Cummins warranty period, then the repair of that failure would not be covered by Cummins warranty.*

The interpretation of this appears to be that use of an aftermarket additive would not automatically void a warranty, but if it caused engine damage, the warranty would not cover said damage.

Mack Trucks issued the following statement:

*Mack Trucks, Inc., neither recognizes nor recommends the use of any fuel additives. We do allow a maximum of 5% bio-diesel fuel to be blended with regular diesel fuel for use in our engines.*

This is a neutral statement with respect to aftermarket additives; as expected, they don't explicitly recommend using an aftermarket additive of a specific kind (if they did, it would create a lot of logistical headaches for them having to "prove" what they recommend), but they also do not explicitly come out against use of them.

Caterpillar's statement was taken from their "Caterpillar Commercial Diesel Engine Fluids Recommendations" document, sent to Bell Performance for reference by Caterpillar, Inc. Their statement on Aftermarket Fuel Additives was taken from page seven of the document:

*There are many different types of fuel additives that are available to use. Caterpillar does not generally recommend the use of fuel additives.*

*In special circumstances, Caterpillar recognizes the need for fuel additives. Fuel additives need to be used with caution...Contact your fuel supplier for those circumstances when fuel additives are required. Your fuel supplier can make recommendations for additives to use and for the proper level of treatment.*

Some clarification was requested of Caterpillar, with the following question:

*It appears that Caterpillar is neutral on the position of fuel additives - some consumers have been under the mistaken notion that using a fuel additive automatically voids an engine warranty. As I read Caterpillar's position, it appears to me that this is not a correct assumption; a warranty would only be voided if the damage was caused by the fuel itself.*

To which Caterpillar responded with:

*You are right; the warranty would not be honoured if the cause of the failure was related to a fuel additive or even using a fuel that does not meet Cat specifications.*

The interpretation of this is the same as with the other two: the warranty is not automatically voided by adding an additive to the fuel; it is only voided if it can be shown that the additive caused the damage in question. Also relevant is that the warranty is voided if the additive causes the fuel to drop out of ASTM specifications. However, if the additive works as it should, then this would not be an issue – a good additive such as Dee-Zol would improve the ASTM specifications, not cause the fuel to drop below them.

***Conclusion: The responses from three significant engine manufacturers are consistent. Engine warranties are only voided if it can be shown that an aftermarket additive caused damage to the engine. Adding an aftermarket additive does not, in and of itself, void the engine warranty.***