

WHEREAS, MTBE, due to its persistence and mobility in water, is more likely to contaminate ground and surface water than other components of gasoline; and

WHEREAS, The most likely sources contributing to the possible MTBE contamination of ground and surface water include leaking underground and aboveground petroleum storage tanks, accidental spills, atmospheric deposition, urban runoff, water craft, and residential usage of fuel; and

WHEREAS, Sampling done by the Maryland Department of the Environment indicates that MTBE is present in 66 out of 1,060 public water systems tested and data from leaking underground storage tank remediation activities indicate that 210 domestic wells have been impacted by MTBE; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article - Environment**

SUBTITLE 6. TASK FORCE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF MTBE.

14-601.

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) "MTBE" MEANS METHYL TERTIARY-BUTYL ETHER.

(C) "TASK FORCE" MEANS THE TASK FORCE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF MTBE.

14-602.

(A) THERE IS A TASK FORCE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF MTBE.

(B) THE TASK FORCE SHALL:

(1) DETERMINE AND ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH GROUND AND SURFACE WATER CONTAMINATION FROM MTBE;

(2) EXAMINE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL EFFORTS CONCERNING GROUND AND SURFACE WATER CONTAMINATION FROM MTBE; ~~AND~~

(3) RECOMMEND A PLAN TO MINIMIZE AND COUNTERACT THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH GROUND AND SURFACE WATER CONTAMINATION FROM MTBE; AND

(4) EXPLORE ALTERNATIVES TO MTBE, INCLUDING ETHANOL AND OXYGENATED FUEL, WHICH CAN BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFORMULATION OF GASOLINE TO REDUCE AIR TOXIC EMISSIONS AND POLLUTANTS THAT FORM GROUND LEVEL OZONE.

(C) THE TASK FORCE SHALL BE COMPOSED OF ~~46~~ 16 MEMBERS, AS FOLLOWS: