**POLICY WATCH**
*Tracking federal and Illinois policy changes affecting clean fuels production and use*

# What the 2026–2027 RFS Volumes Mean for Illinois Fleets

On March 27, 2026, EPA finalized the highest Renewable Fuel Standard volume obligations in the program's history for 2026 and 2027 — locking in total renewable fuel requirements of 25.82 billion RINs in 2026 and 25.98 billion RINs in 2027. For fleet operators making fuel decisions this year, three things in the rule are worth understanding directly.

**A two-year planning horizon, not a one-year guess.** RFS volumes are notoriously subject to change, and mid-year uncertainty makes it hard for fleets to budget fuel costs with confidence. By setting both 2026 and 2027 volumes at once, this rule gives fleets a firmer basis for multi-year fuel and vehicle-technology planning than they've had in recent cycles.

**More demand pulled back into the market.** EPA reallocated 70% of renewable fuel volumes that had been exempted for small refineries between 2023 and 2025 — restoring an estimated 2 billion gallons of demand to the obligated pool. For fleets, more obligated demand generally supports more stable supply and blending infrastructure investment across the renewable fuel categories, rather than a market that contracts and expands unpredictably year to year.

**A built-in gap that points toward E15.** The rule holds the conventional (largely ethanol) mandate at 15 billion gallons for both years, but EPA's own consumption projections run closer to 14.4 billion gallons — leaving roughly 600 million gallons that other qualifying fuels will need to help close, through higher blends like E15 or renewable diesel. Fleets that haven't evaluated E15 compatibility for applicable vehicles may want to revisit that math, independent of any position on which fuel is “best” — this is simply where the volume math is pointing.

**The Illinois angle.** Illinois' biodiesel and renewable diesel sector already supports an estimated $3.2 billion in economic impact and roughly 8,124 jobs statewide (GlobalData study commissioned by Clean Fuels Alliance America, 2026 edition). Higher federal volume floors for 2026–2027 suggest continued, not diminished, demand for Illinois-produced renewable fuel — a relevant data point for fleets weighing in-state supply reliability against national market swings.

*IACT will keep tracking how these federal volume changes show up in real fuel availability and pricing for Illinois fleets in the months ahead.*