

Did You Know?

Full Service or Self Service

All stations in **New Jersey & Oregon** only offer full service. Attendants are required to pump gas because customers are barred by statutes in both states from pumping their own gas.

New Jersey banned self-service gasoline in 1949 after lobbying by service station owners. Proponents of the ban cite safety and jobs as reasons to keep the ban. Likewise, the **Oregon** statute banning self-service gasoline lists seventeen different justifications, including the inflammability of gas, the risk of crime from customers leaving their car, the toxic fumes emitted by gasoline, and the jobs created by requiring full service. In addition, the ban on self-service gasoline is seen as part of Oregonian culture. In 1982, **Oregon** voters rejected a ballot measure sponsored by the service station owners, which would have legalized self-service gas.

The town of **Huntington, New York** also bans self-service, but for a different reason. The ban went in effect in the early 1970s during a recession. The intent was to save jobs.

The constitutionality of the self-service bans has been disputed. The **Oregon** statute was brought into court in 1989 by ARCO, and the **New Jersey** statute was challenged in court in 1950 by a small independent service station, Rein Motors. Both failed. In addition, throughout the rest of the United States, The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that the equivalent of “mini-serve” be provided to any individual displaying a disabled parking placard.

In both **New Jersey** and **Oregon**, it is legal for customers to pump their own diesel (although not every station permits diesel customers to do so; truck stops typically do). The intent of the **Oregon** Law is that diesel is not as flammable, and therefore poses less of a hazard to **Oregon** citizens.

Ban on Gas Tank Topping

Under Oregon state regulations that take effect July 1, gas station attendants will be forbidden to top off gas tanks. If a customer were to ask an attendant to top off their fuel tank, keeping in mind that Oregon has no self-service pumps, the attendant would gladly do so, until July 1.

Topping off is an age-old custom at gas stations. Some customers want to get as much gas as possible in their tanks. Others, particularly those who pay cash, want to pay a nice even number. Many attendants will ask if a customer wants the tank topped off, and some gas station owners like the practice because it allows them to sell more gas.

But the practice risks spilling gasoline and emitting hazardous chemicals into the air, endangering the health of gas attendants and motorists sitting in their cars. Topping off also can damage equipment in a vehicle’s gas tank intended to keep vapors from leaking.

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