

Marine HVO Retail Customer FAQ

Customer compatibility message

HVO is for diesel engines and equipment approved for EN 15940 paraffinic diesel. It can offer practical benefits such as lower lifecycle carbon impact, higher cetane, good storage stability and reduced fuel-bug risk. If you are unsure, check your engine handbook, dealer or manufacturer before filling.

At-a-glance customer guidance

Question	Customer answer
Can I use it?	Only if your diesel engine and onboard equipment are approved for EN 15940.
Is it petrol?	No. It is a diesel-type fuel. Do not use it in petrol engines.
Is it red diesel?	No. HVO is the fuel type; red diesel is a duty and marking status.
Why use it?	Lower lifecycle carbon, higher cetane, good storage stability and reduced fuel-bug risk.
Is it zero emission?	No. It may reduce lifecycle carbon impact, but it still produces exhaust emissions.
What if I am unsure?	Check your engine manufacturer, dealer, engineer or fuel berth team before filling.

Frequently asked questions

1. What is HVO?

HVO is a renewable diesel-type fuel. It is made from approved renewable feedstocks such as waste oils and fats. For boat owners, the important point is that HVO is used in diesel engines where the engine manufacturer allows EN 15940 paraffinic diesel.

2. What is EN 15940?

EN 15940 is a European standard specifying requirements and test methods for paraffinic diesel fuels, such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and Gas-to-Liquid (GTL) fuels. It covers synthetic or hydrotreated fuels containing up to 7% fatty acid methyl ester (FAME) for compatible diesel engines.

3. Is HVO the same as normal marine diesel?

No. HVO is a different type of diesel fuel, often described as renewable diesel or paraffinic diesel. It is not petrol and it is not traditional biodiesel. It is intended for compatible diesel engines.

4. What are the main benefits of using HVO?

For a compatible marine diesel engine, the main benefits are a lower lifecycle carbon footprint than fossil diesel, cleaner combustion characteristics, a typically higher cetane rating than standard diesel, good storage stability, and reduced risk of fuel-bug issues compared with diesel containing FAME biodiesel. The exact benefit depends on the engine, fuel quality, tank condition and supply chain.

5. Does HVO have a higher cetane rating than diesel?

Yes. HVO typically has a higher cetane number than conventional diesel. In simple terms, cetane relates to how readily diesel fuel ignites under compression. A higher cetane fuel can support smoother combustion, easier starting and reduced smoke in some engines. Customers should still follow the engine manufacturer guidance before use.

6. Can HVO reduce my boat's carbon footprint?

Yes, HVO can significantly reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions compared with fossil diesel when it is made from verified sustainable feedstocks. It is important to distinguish lifecycle carbon savings from tailpipe emissions: HVO is still burned in the engine and still produces exhaust emissions, but the overall carbon footprint can be lower depending on how the fuel is produced and supplied.

7. Is HVO more resistant to diesel bug?

HVO is generally more resistant to fuel-bug problems than diesel containing FAME biodiesel because it has very low or no FAME content and is less prone to absorbing water. However, no fuel is a substitute for good tank care. Water, sludge or existing contamination in the tank can still cause problems, so clean, dry storage remains important.

8. Does HVO store better over winter?

HVO generally has good storage stability, which can be helpful for boats that sit unused for long periods or over winter. That does not remove the need for normal winterisation, keeping water out of the tank, checking filters and following good fuel-management practice.

9. Can I use HVO in my boat?

Possibly, but please check first. HVO should only be used in marine diesel engines, generators, heaters or other equipment that are approved for EN 15940 paraffinic diesel. Check your engine handbook, dealer or manufacturer before filling.

10. What should I check before filling?

Check your main engine, generator, diesel heater and any other equipment that uses fuel from the same tank. If your boat is under warranty, leased, coded, commercially operated or insured under specific fuel conditions, check those requirements too.

11. Is HVO suitable for petrol engines?

No. HVO must not be used in petrol engines. It is a diesel-type fuel and should only be used in suitable diesel engines and equipment.

12. Is HVO the same as red diesel?

No. HVO describes the fuel type. Red diesel describes a marked fuel and its duty status. HVO may be supplied under different duty arrangements depending on location and use. The fuel berth team will ask for any declaration needed at the time of purchase.

13. Can HVO be mixed with diesel already in my tank?

In many cases HVO can mix with diesel already in a boat tank, but customers should still check engine and equipment compatibility. If your tank contains old or contaminated fuel, water or sludge, consider having the tank inspected or cleaned before switching.

14. Will HVO clean my tank or filters?

Do not rely on HVO to clean a tank. If your tank has water, diesel bug, sludge or old fuel residue, those problems should be dealt with separately. After any fuel change, it is sensible to monitor filters and carry spares.

15. Will HVO affect my engine warranty?

It can depend on the engine manufacturer and model. Some manufacturers approve EN 15940 fuels for certain engines, while others may not. Always check the manufacturer guidance if the engine is under warranty.

16. Can I use HVO in my diesel heater?

Only if the heater manufacturer allows it. Many boats have heaters, stoves, boilers or generators that may draw from the same tank as the main engine, so check each item of equipment, not just the engine.

17. Does HVO reduce emissions?

HVO can reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions compared with fossil diesel, depending on how it is made and supplied. It can also reduce smoke and odour in some applications. It is not zero-emission fuel and it still produces exhaust emissions when burned.

18. Is HVO better for the marine environment?

HVO can help reduce the carbon impact of boating where it is correctly sourced and used in compatible engines. However, it is still a fuel and must be handled carefully. Spills into the harbour, marina, river or sea must still be avoided.

19. Will my boat perform differently on HVO?

Most customers using compatible diesel engines should not need to change how they operate the boat. Some users may notice less smoke, less smell or smoother running. The effect can vary by engine, condition, fuel system and operating pattern.

20. Is HVO more expensive than marine diesel?

HVO is often more expensive than conventional diesel because of the renewable feedstock, production and supply chain. The retail price can change with market conditions and supply availability.

21. Is HVO available for both leisure and commercial vessels?

Yes, subject to engine compatibility and the correct duty treatment. Commercial operators should also check any company, insurance, coding, class or contract requirements before switching.

22. What is the simple rule?

Use HVO only if your diesel engine and onboard fuel-burning equipment are approved for EN 15940 paraffinic diesel. If you are unsure, check before filling.

23. Does it Smell?

HVO typically has less diesel smell than conventional diesel, helping to keep boats cleaner smelling. However, reduced odour can make spills less obvious, so always supervise refuelling carefully and visually check for leaks, spills and overflowing tank breathers.

24. Is HVO a biodiesel?

HVO is not biodiesel (FAME). Although both are made from renewable feedstocks, they are different fuels with different chemical properties. HVO is a renewable paraffinic diesel produced by hydrotreating waste oils and fats to meet the EN 15940 fuel standard. It contains little or no FAME, giving it better storage stability and a lower risk of fuel-bug problems than conventional biodiesel blends. It should only be used in diesel engines approved for EN 15940.

25. IS HVO vegetable oil?

No. It is a highly refined renewable diesel fuel, not raw vegetable oil.

Short customer notice for pump or website

HVO Renewable Marine Diesel

For diesel marine engines and equipment approved for EN 15940 paraffinic diesel. Not for petrol engines. Please check your engine, generator and heater guidance before use. Duty treatment depends on declared use. HVO can reduce lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions compared with fossil diesel, typically has a higher cetane rating than conventional diesel, and is generally more resistant to fuel-bug issues during storage. It is not zero-emission fuel.

Staff response to common customer question

“Can I put this in my boat?”

HVO may be suitable if your marine diesel engine and any connected generator or heater are approved for EN 15940 paraffinic diesel. Please check your handbook, dealer or manufacturer if you are unsure. It must not be used in petrol engines.

Customer checklist before first use

- ☐ Check main engine compatibility with EN 15940.
- ☐ Check generator, heater, boiler or stove compatibility if they use the same fuel tank.
- ☐ Check warranty, insurance, coding or commercial operating requirements if relevant.
- ☐ Consider tank condition if the boat has old fuel, water, sludge or diesel bug history.
- ☐ Ask the fuel berth team what declaration is required for your intended use.

Customer note: this FAQ is general information only. Compatibility remains the responsibility of the vessel owner or operator.