



Press Statement
Safety Concerns at Service Stations
21st October 2009

The Energy Regulation Board (ERB) would like to encourage petroleum products consumers to take safety precautions as they buy fuel from service stations during this period of fuel supply challenges. This is in light of the high number of consumers found at service stations where fuel is available.

We also wish to urge consumers to remain calm as they buy fuel as any form of commotion at a service station may compromise public safety.

ERB has observed with grave concern the unsafe manner in which some consumers are purchasing petroleum products at service stations in the last few days. A trend has emerged where many consumers are using plastic containers for carrying fuel.

It should be emphasized that plastic containers are not the best means of carrying fuel. While we appreciate the challenges consumers are facing in buying fuel, we wish to emphasise that using plastic containers is unsafe and has the potential to compromise public safety at service stations. The ERB will not allow consumers to use plastic containers for refilling vehicles and we would like to inform the general public that oil marketing companies, dealers and the security wings have been advised to exercise zero tolerance on this issue. Consumers are also encouraged to avoid other unsafe practices such as smoking at the service station.

It is important to note that petrol is a highly flammable substance which would cause serious injury and loss of life if a fire was to break out given the high number of consumers found at some service stations during this period.

We also wish to encourage fuel dealers to ensure that safety measures are adhered to in order to avoid a tragedy. In that regard, ERB expects that OMCs do not, for whatever reason, compromise on safety requirements as they attend to consumers.

Further, we wish to reiterate that the hoarding of petroleum products by any OMC is illegal. ERB will therefore not hesitate to take punitive action against any OMC found to be hoarding petroleum products, especially now when the country is facing supply challenges.

LUKONDE T. MFULA
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR