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Answering the Call in Delaware *Stations must equip pumps with call buttons for disabled*



DOVER, Del. -- People who may need extra help at Delaware's gasoline pumps will soon have an easier time, according to an Associated Press report.

Beginning today, self-service gas stations must begin to have their fuel dispensers equipped with a call button to be used by people with disabilities. The button operates a wireless door bell, letting station personnel know someone needs assistance at the pump.

The state general assembly passed legislation (HB 83) requiring that stations be 50% compliant within a year and 100% compliant within three years.

Station operators who already use the system say it provides good customer service.

A recent *Chicago Tribune* article said that a provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act requires gas stations to pump fuel, at the self-serve price, for disabled drivers when more than one attendant is on duty. But the Justice Department's refueling-assistance policy doesn't set specific standards for gas stations, nor does it spell out how disabled drivers should go about requesting help.

The upshot is most major oil companies and station owners either ignore the federal mandate, which is sporadically enforced, or they come up with solutions that don't work, according to advocates for disabled people.

Many stations post small stickers displaying a figure in a white wheelchair on a blue background—the universal symbol for disabled access. Signs are also often posted instructing disabled drivers to honk their horns for service. Some stations have attendant call buttons on the refueling equipment, but disabled drivers are unable to reach or manipulate the buttons unless they carry a golf club or a pool cue in their cars, said the report.

Inclusion Solutions, a Chicago company created to come up with practical solutions on a range of challenges facing the disabled community, markets the Fuel Call system to station owners, the report said. For about \$1,000, the stations receive communications tools, including Fuel Call signage to let disabled drivers know service is available. Other features include an ADA-accessible touchpad on the fuel-pump island that disabled drivers can ring for assistance.

Fuel Call kits are outfitted at 50 U.S. stations, mostly in Wisconsin and Florida.



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