

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has quietly decided to loosen stringent fuel-tank safety regulations written after the 1996 fuel-tank explosion that destroyed flight TWA 800 off the coast of New York state.

The FAA proposes to relax the safeguards for preventing sparks inside the fuel tank during a lightning strike, standards the agency now calls "impractical" and Boeing says its soon-to-fly 787 Dreamliner cannot meet.

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