For additional information concerning fuel tank capacity please visit


Or

https://www.nist.gov/

The material in this brochure is for informational purposes only. It is meant to give you general information and not specific legal advice.
You fill up your "empty" fuel tank at the gas station and the pump charges you for more gallons than the tank's rated capacity. Are you being deliberately overcharged? NIST's (National Institute of Standards and Technology) weight and measures experts explains why this may happen even at reputable gas stations.

Drivers might find that a vehicle's fuel tank capacity rating includes only the usable portion of the tank's liquid capacity (shown in the diagram on the back of this brochure) or both the usable and unusable portion of the tank's liquid capacity.

The unusable volume is the portion of the fuel tank's liquid capacity that lies at the bottom of the tank out of reach of the fuel pump.

The usable volume is the portion of the fuel tank's liquid capacity that can be delivered through the filler pipe into the tank when the vehicle is level (and when the unusable volume is also in the tank).

The vehicle's fuel tank capacity does not include the vapor headspace (that portion of the tank compartment at a level above the filler pipe neck) or the volume of the filler pipe.

Sometimes drivers ignore the pump nozzle's automatic shut-off and continue to hold the nozzle operating the lever open in an attempt to deliver additional fuel. When this happens, the additional fuel begins to fill the vapor headspace and the filler pipe that are not considered part of the tank's rated capacity, thus resulting in a delivery of fuel greater than the fuel tank capacity rating stated in the owner's manual.

Similarly, the lanes that surround the service station pumps may not be level and fuel may shift into the vapor space thus allowing more fuel to be delivered into the tank.