



## **GASOLINE SAFETY**

Storing extra gasoline around the home or carrying an emergency supply in the car as a hedge against run-outs can be hazardous and perhaps even illegal.

The National Safety Council recommends “as little gasoline as possible” be stored--only a gallon or two for the power mower, for example. Although some insurance companies may overlook a small supply, they say a larger quantity--usually any more than 5 gallons--could imperil insurance coverage.

If you must store gasoline, use only heavy-gauge metal “safety” cans designed for that purpose or approved plastic containers, which are listed by Underwriters Laboratories, Incorporated, or approved by the Factory Mutual System. Metal screw and pour cap designs, or the metal spring-loaded, pressure-venting type cans are generally acceptable. The cans also should be painted red and be labeled as gasoline storage containers.

Gasoline should never be stored in glass containers of any type, or in plastic bleach bottles and other non-approved containers which have thin walls and are easily ruptured.

Although most states do not prohibit motorists from carrying small amounts of gasoline in cars or keeping limited quantities (never more than 5 gallons) in the home, transportation and storage of gasoline can be hazardous. A rear-end collision could cause a gasoline container in the trunk compartment of an automobile to rupture even though a car’s fuel tank is not damaged.

The vapors from just a few ounces of gasoline spilled in a car’s trunk can be ignited by a faulty electrical connection. Citizens band and other radio transmitters located in the trunk compartment also pose a hazard when fuel vapors are present.

Even an empty gasoline can is potentially dangerous because vapors still can be present in an explosive mixture with air. Gasoline vapors are heavy and tend to collect in low places. A closed utility room or shed could become a “bomb” if vapors are ignited by a spark or pilot light. Vapors from a spilled container can flow down ditches and drains and act as a fuse leading flames back to a home or storage area.

### **In the Car**

Secure the container. The inexpensive, thin-walled can available in some discount stores is vulnerable to puncture if it tips or is struck by some other object in the trunk.

Spring-loaded, pressure-venting cans should NOT be used in cars, because they are designed to release vapors when pressure exceeds a predetermined level.

Do not regularly carry spare gasoline in the car. The safest precaution against running out of gasoline is to keep the car’s fuel tank at least half full.

### **At Home**

Never use gasoline as a cleaner, a charcoal fire starter, or a solvent.

Never fill a hot lawn mower. Engine heat could ignite vapors.

Never store gasoline in glass containers. Especially avoid soft drink bottles which are attractive to children

Spilled gasoline should be immediately cleaned up with absorbent material such as “oil dry” and disposed of according to the absorbent’s labeling. Do not try to vacuum up a gasoline spill with an electrically powered vacuum cleaner.

Store gasoline for the power mower outside of the home and living area, out of the reach of children, and in a shaded cool, dry location.

Keeping your car in top mechanical condition and practicing driving habits that conserve gasoline are the safest means of assuring an adequate gasoline supply.

For further information on BP fuels, contact:

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