

Gasoline Safety

Gasoline has only one function: to fuel an engine. Misuse of gasoline is dangerous, sometimes leading to tragedy. Thousands of people each year are injured and killed in gasoline related accidents. Gasoline has a flash point of - 45 degrees. Flash point refers to the temperature at which a substance will produce a vapor that can ignite.

In contrast, charcoal lighter fluid gives off flammable vapors at 160 degrees, well above normal outdoor temperatures. The higher the flash point is above room temperature, the lower the risk of ignition.

Gasoline is often used inappropriately for a variety of purposes, both at home and work. Gasoline is used for general and auto parts cleaning instead of proper solvents. Gasoline was never designed to be a de-greaser, tar remover, or paint thinner. There are products that are specifically designed to do those jobs. Starting a fire, whether in a fireplace or a backyard grill with gasoline can lead to an explosion.

There are some precautions we can take when we use gasoline to reduce the risk of a catastrophe. When filling containers with gasoline, always use only approved safety containers. Allow two inches of space at the top of the can to allow for vapor expansion. Always fill containers and power equipment outside where there is adequate ventilation to allow for the dispersal of flammable vapors. Only fuel engines when they are cool. The heat of the engine can ignite gasoline vapors. And never use a cellular phone while fueling a vehicle.

If you must store gasoline, please do it safely. Use only approved safety cans, never glass or plastic bottles. Keep the container tightly sealed at all times. Always store in a well-ventilated area, away from all sources of ignition. Store in a place inaccessible to children.

Remember, gasoline, kerosene, and lantern fuel, charcoal lighter fluid and diesel fuel can be dangerous. Take caution before the accident occurs.

