



# RECOMMENDED HOME FUEL STORAGE LIMITS



## Fuel Storage Concerns

Over the past 20 years, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), State Environmental agencies, and local fire departments have required motor fuel dispensers (gas stations, etc.) throughout the nation, to spend Millions of dollars to control leakage of motor fuels into the environment from their underground and above ground fuel storage tanks. South Davis Metro Fire is concerned about having hundreds of homeowners through the fire service area with relatively uncontrolled fuel storage capacities on their personal property.

Therefore, we **strongly recommend that you reduce your home fuel storage capacities to no more than 5 gallons of flammable liquids (gasoline or Coleman White gas), 25 gallons of combustible liquids (diesel, kerosene & lamp oil), 25 gallons of LPG (propane) in portable DOT cylinders.** Heating fuels do not have an indefinite shelf-life; and in fact, many heating/cooking appliance manufacturers recommend that you consume all said fuels within 6 months of purchase.

Your voluntary cooperation in complying with these important Life Safety guidelines is greatly appreciated by the Public Safety community (Health, Fire & Police) at large. These guidelines are truly intended to save your life, and preserve your property. Please contact the SDMF Fire Marshal's office for further clarification on these or any other issues.

## Common Questions & Answers

**Q: Can I store emergency fuel containers inside my home, basement, and/or attached garage?**

**A:** No. We ask that you only store emergency fuel containers in a detached garage or shed to minimize fire hazard. 2 or 3 1-gallon DOT rated containers for gasoline and 2-cycle fuel for general lawn maintenance in allowed in your attached garage.

**Q: Can I store as many containers as I want in my garden shed or unattached garage?**

**A:** No. Depending on the type of fuel (gasoline, kerosene, diesel, propane), you are allowed to store limited quantities of each type of fuel, in certain kinds and sizes of containers. See the guidelines for each type of fuel on the following pages.

**Q: What authority does the fire department have to tell me what I can & cannot do in my home?**

**A:** The legal authority comes from fire prevention related portions of the International Fire Code and State, County and local city ordinances. This really is a life safety issue.

## **Gasoline & Coleman White Gas**

Maximum residential storage of flammable liquids (gasoline & white gas) shall be limited to 25 gallons; preferably stored in an unattached garage or shed. Of this 25-gallon total, no more than 10 gallons can be stored in an attached garage; and absolutely no flammable liquid storage is allowed in basements. Empty containers shall be counted as full when calculating total storage capacity.

Flammable liquid storage containers shall be of an approved type. Most of these containers are labeled as approved for flammable liquid use, and indicate the standards they are designed to meet (DOT, ASTM, NFPA 30, etc.) Always use approved or original retail containers. (Do not use glass jars or milk jugs)

If you decide to store more than 5 gallons of flammable liquids at your home, you need at least one 2A10BC rated fire extinguisher, located no closer than 10 feet, and no further away than 50 feet. Control of sources of ignition is mandatory! All transfer and dispensing of flammable liquids requires careful attention be paid to eliminating static spark discharge, and ignition of flammable vapors. Open flames and high temperature devices must be controlled and approved for use with flammable liquids. Smoking is prohibited in the storage area.

Flammable & Combustible liquids in the fuel tanks of motor vehicles (gasoline, diesel and 2-cycle blends) are exempt, and therefore not considered as a part of your total home fuel storage quantities.

## **Diesel, Kerosene & Lamp Oil**

Maximum residential storage of combustible liquids (Diesel, Kerosene & Lamp Oil) shall be limited to 60 gallons outside the residence; no more than 25 gal in an detached garage and no more than 10 gallons can be stored in an attached garage; and absolutely no combustible liquid storage is allowed in basements.

Combustible liquid storage containers shall be of an approved type. Most of these containers are labeled as approved for flammable liquid use, and indicate the standards they are designed to meet (DOT, ASTM, NFPA 30, etc.) Always use approved or original retail containers. (No used glass jars or milk jugs)

If you decide to store more than 25 gallons of combustible liquids at your home, you need at least two 20 BC rated fire extinguishers, located no closer than 10 feet, and no further away than 50 feet.

All transfer and dispensing of combustible liquids requires careful attention be paid to eliminating static spark discharge, and ignition of flammable vapors. Open flames and high temperature devices must be controlled and approved for use with flammable/combustible liquids. Smoking is prohibited in the storage area.

Portable kerosene heating appliances shall be (UL) listed, and shall be limited to a fuel tank capacity of 2 gallons. However, the International Fire Code specifically prohibits the use of these unvented heating appliances in occupied living spaces. If you decide to use these devices, closely follow the manufacturer's instructions for use, always maintain adequate separation from combustible surfaces, maintain good ventilation in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, and use a battery powered carbon monoxide detector to detect dangerous conditions.

## **Propane & Butane**

Residential Propane storage issues are more complex than those for flammable & combustible liquids. If you want a permanent LP-Gas system and tank installed, The International Fire Code allows you up to 2,000 gallons water capacity in heavily populated areas, provided you obtain a permit from the fire department, comply with relevant installation codes, and hire a state licensed contractor to perform the work and supply the equipment and product. Please contact any state licensed propane supplier, under "Gas-Propane" in the yellow pages or on the internet, for more information regarding permanent propane gas installations.

For portable DOT tank storage, you are allowed up to 25 gallons total capacity. You could have up to five 5-gallon (20 lb.) portable appliance cylinders (the size usually found on barbecue grills-DOT 4BA240); or one 23-gallon (100 lb.) cylinder (DOT 4bw240), in storage at your home, in an unattached garage or shed. But, if you want to store propane and flammable/combustible liquids together, they should be separated by at least 10 feet.

You are only allowed to store up to two (2) of the small portable 1-pound disposable propane cylinders inside your home or attached garage (NFPA 58). All other propane cylinder storage must be outside your home in an unattached garage or shed.

Propane cylinders attached to heating and/or cooking appliances, as well as those mounted on trailers, motor homes, and campers, do not count towards your total storage capacity.

For any additional questions please contact South Davis Metro Fire  
801-677-2400  
[www.sdmetrofire.org](http://www.sdmetrofire.org)