



## Syracuse Fire Department

### Emergency Home Fuel Storage Limits and Guidelines

The information in this brochure is only intended to provide homeowners with general guidelines concerning emergency fuel storage at residential locations. Please consult your local officials for definitive answers to any questions you might have after you review the following recommendations. The guidelines below are based on the 2012 edition International Fire Code which has been adopted into State and City Code.

#### **COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:**

- Q. Can I store emergency fuel containers inside my home and/or attached garage?
- A. No. Generally speaking, we ask that you only store emergency fuel containers in a detached shed or garage to minimize the fire hazards and ignition sources. Two or three (1) one gallon DOT rated containers for gasoline and other fuel used for lawn mowers and weed whackers are permissible in your attached garages and carports.
- Q. Can I store as many containers as I want in my shed or unattached garage?
- A. No. Depending on the type of fuel (gasoline, kerosene, diesel, propane) you are only allowed to store limited quantities of each type of fuel in certain kinds of sizes of containers. See guidelines below for fuel type and storage recommendations.
- Q. What authority does the fire department have to tell me what I can and cannot do in my own home?
- A. The legal authority comes from fire prevention related portions of the Utah State Code and local/city and community ordinances. This is really a life safety (your life safety) issue.

#### **HOME STORAGE OF FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS (Gasoline & Coleman White Gas)**

Maximum residential storage of flammable liquids (gasoline & white gas) shall be limited to 30 gallons – preferably stored in an unattached garage or shed. Of this 30 gallons total, no more than 10 gallons can be stored in an attached garage, and absolutely no flammable liquid storage is allowed in a basement. (2012 IFC 5704.3.4.2.7)

Empty containers shall be counted as full when calculating storage capacity. (2012 IFC 5704.3.3.4)

Flammable liquid storage containers shall be of an approved type. (2012 IFC 5704.3.1) Most of these containers are labeled as approved for flammable liquid use and indicates the standards they are designed to meet. (DOT, ASTM, NFPA 30, etc.) Always use an approved or original retail container (NO MILK JUGS).

If you decide to store flammable liquids at your home, you need at least one 2A20BC rated fire extinguisher located no closer than 10 feet to any flammable liquid and no further away than 50 feet. (2012 IFC 5704.3.7.5.2)

Control of sources of ignition is mandatory! All transfer and dispensing of flammable liquids requires that special 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 and smoking is prohibited in the storage area. (2012 IFC 5704.2.4)

Flammable and combustible liquids in the fuel tanks of motor vehicles (gasoline, diesel, and 2-cycle blends) are exempt; therefore these amounts will not be considered as part of your total home fuel storage quantities. (2012 IFC 5704.3.3.1)

### **HOME STORAGE OF COMBUSTIBLE LIQUIDS (Diesel, Kerosene and Lamp Oil)**

Maximum residential storage of combustible liquids (Diesel, Kerosene and Lamp Oil) shall be limited to 60 gallons – preferably stored in an unattached garage or shed. Of this 60 gallon total, no more than 25 gallons can be stored in an attached garage and absolutely no combustible liquid storage is allowed in basements. (2012 IFC 105.6.16.3 – Table 5704.3.5, NFPA 30)

Combustible liquid storage containers shall be of an approved type (2012 IFC 5704.3.1). 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 MILK JUGS.)

If you decide to store combustible liquids at your home, you need at least one (1) 2A20BC rated fire extinguisher located no closer than 10 feet to any combustible liquid and no further away than 50 feet (2012 IFC 5704.3.7.5.2).

Control of sources of ignition is mandatory! All transfer and dispensing of combustible liquids requires that 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 and smoking is prohibited in the storage area. (2012 IFC 5704.2.4).

### **HOME STORAGE OF FLAMMABLE LP-GASES (Propane and Butane)**

Residential propane storage issues are more complex than those for flammable and combustible liquids. If you want a permanent LP – gases system and tank installed in heavily populated areas, you must obtain a permit and comply with relevant installation codes. In addition, you will need to hire a state licensed contractor to perform the work and supply the equipment and product. However, some cities have passed local ordinances that restrict total LP-Gas capacity where natural gas service is readily available. Please contact any state licensed propane supplier, under “Gas-Propane” in the yellow pages, for more information regarding permanent propane gas installations. (2012 IFC 6104.2)

For portable DOT Tank storage, you are allowed up to 25 gallons total capacity. You may have up to five, five gallon (20 lb) portable appliance cylinder sized usually found on barbeque grills (DOT 4BA240), or one 23 gallon (100 lb) cylinder (DOT4BW240) in storage at your home, 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 two (2) of the small portable (1 lb.) disposable propane cylinders inside your home or attached garage. (NFPA 58.5-34). All other propane cylinder storage must be outside your home in 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.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT FUEL STORAGE CONCERNS**

Over the past 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. Naturally, we are now concerned about having hundreds of homeowners throughout the country 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 five (5) gallons of flammable liquids (gasoline or Coleman white gas); 25 gallons of combustible liquids (diesel or kerosene); and 5 gallons of flammable gas (propane) in portable DOT cylinders. Heating fuels do not have an indefinite shelf-life. 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 and Police). These guidelines are truly intended to save your life, and preserve your property. Please contact the Syracuse Fire Department for further clarification of these or any other issues at (801) 614.9614.