

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Gasoline

It's that time of year where anticipated sunny days will become more common. Which also means, the grass will be growing faster and more opportunity for outdoor recreation. To fuel machines for these activities at home or work, we need gasoline.

Following a few safety precautions, while handling this highly flammable liquid, can avoid ruining a beautiful day.

- Before re-fueling, always turn an engine off. For some small engines & gas powered equipment let it cool down first, hot surfaces can ignite gasoline vapor.
- A fuel container should be filled only 95% full. The remaining air space allows room for the gasoline to expand if it warms up later. Otherwise, expansion could force liquid gasoline out of the container or distort the container.
- Place portable fuel container on the ground during filling, and keep the metal nozzle spout in contact with the container to prevent build up and discharge of static electricity. Never fill a container in the bed of a pickup or in the trunk of a car.
- Restrain the container during transport so it cannot tip over or slide around while you are driving.
- Keep the dispenser nozzle in contact with the fuel tank fill tube. Failure to do so can result in the possible buildup of a static electrical charge and may ignite the gasoline.
- Gasoline should only be used for its intended purpose – as a motor fuel. Never use gasoline in kerosene heaters or lamps, or to clean parts.
- If you get gasoline on your skin, wash with soapy water right away to avoid potential skin irritations.

## Storage:

- Gasoline must be stored in an approved fuel container with the lid closed tightly.
- Don't store more fuel than the minimum amount needed.
- Store gasoline in a detached shed or garage that is well ventilated. Do not store gasoline in the living area of a house.
- Store gasoline at room temperature, away from potential ignition sources (gas pilot lights or flames, electric motors, stoves and heaters, for example) and from combustibles (i.e., paper, rags and cardboard).
- Never leave a portable gasoline container in direct sunlight.

## Is it safe to use my cell phone at the gas station?

According to the Federal Communications Commission, there is no documented incident where the use of a cell phone was found to cause a fire at a gas station. The causes, where this was initially suspected, ended up being static electricity. To avoid static electricity buildup:

- ✓ Upon exiting vehicle and before handling the nozzle or fuel door, always touch a metal part of the vehicle such as the door or hood.
- ✓ Do not get back into your vehicle during refueling. If you cannot avoid getting back into the vehicle, upon exiting always touch a metal part of the vehicle away from the fill point before handling the nozzle.

Getting gas is boring, but you really do need to be aware of your surroundings so you can respond to any issues with the pump, watch out for all the moving cars, or know when to leave quickly if you spot an idiot smoking a cigarette at a neighboring pump ... real life example. So using your cell phone at a gas station won't make you burst into flames, but that doesn't mean it's a good idea.

For more info contact – Leslie Woolington  
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Sources:

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