

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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## Preventing Flammable Liquids & Gasoline



Most of our research farms have various types of flammable liquids, which consists of gasoline, propane, probably some paint solvents and maybe degreasers. These products are all a part of a farming operation, and for the most part, are necessary for their use or they probably wouldn't be in their inventory. Nevertheless, there are precautions that we should take to avoid fires. Fires alone are serious enough, but there is always the possibility of personal injuries or the possibility of death. There is always the possibility of the loss of equipment or property to consider as well.

Following are some precautionary tips for storing fuels and liquids. If practiced they can help to avoid an incident related to the above circumstances:

- ✓ Above ground fuel storage tanks should be located at least 50 feet from buildings and 100 feet from public use borderlines.
- ✓ Built in protective features that will prohibit children from being able to draw fuel from the facilities or tanks. Keep portable fuel cans out of reach of kids and warn them strongly against matches or lighters around fuel containers or facilities.
- ✓ Fuel tanks and pumps should be located so that farm equipment can't bump against them. Installing bumpers to protect the tanks are a cheap investment to help protect the tanks and pumps.
- ✓ Gasoline tanks should be vented to minimize vapor loss and to discharge vapors from any source of ignition. The venting system should meet the National Fire Protection Association's NFPA 54 National Fuel Gas Code.
- ✓ When using portable fuel containers, be sure that these containers are labeled with the contents. Gasoline cans should be red in color and diesel should be green. Both of these fuels should be stored in cool, well-ventilated locations away from living quarters and ignition sources.
- ✓ On all portable tanks, read the instructions on the labels and pay special attention to comments about flammability and other safety precautions.
- ✓ Store flammable products in their original containers in a cool place, out of the sun and with good ventilation. Dispose or store used cleaning rags in a metal container.
- ✓ Refrain from using grinders, welders, or other types of spark-producing tools around flammable materials or where vapors are present.
- ✓ Do not use gasoline, benzene, naphtha, and similar products for cleaning or degreasing agents. There are other agents available for this such as vegetable oil or and some synthetic base solutions.
- ✓ Refueling the engine -Turn the engine off and allow it to cool down. Move anyone away and ask them to extinguish all smoking materials. The "cooling down" period is very important if you have a mower with the tank located at the rear; and if you were to have a rear fuel spill; and it could come in contact with the engine.
- ✓ When filling a portable tank or an equipment tank, please be sure to release the cap very slowly, allowing the pressure to dissipate. This is particularly true if you are using gasoline and the equipment is located at the rear of the tractor and above the tank. In hot weather like we are accustomed to, pressure can build up in the tank. If the cap vent is clogged up, fuel can escape when the top is removed. Always use a standard cap to help avoid the gasoline backing up and releasing when you open the cap. Always try to keep the vent-cap open.
- ✓ Large propane tanks should be at least 50 feet from the nearest building and 20 or more from above ground tanks. Household "bottled gas" tanks should be at least 3 feet from a window or door and 6 feet from a lightning rod. Children should never be allowed to play around fuel tanks.
- ✓ Provide and maintain a solid base for propane tanks to avoid them settling, tipping or breaking the connections. If the tanks are in a flood zone, be sure to anchor them securely.
- ✓ Make regular checks for propane leaks and check the gauges to protect them from dirt and weather elements. If you smell gas, turn the valve off, open the windows and doors to ventilate the area, turn off all electrical equipment, clear the building and call a repairman to find and correct the problem.
- ✓ Make sure that electrical equipment is grounded and keep switches, motors, and connections in good condition to reduce the chance of sparking or arcing.

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**<> THE SAFE WAY IS THE RIGHT WAY**

**ALERT TODAY!! ALIVE TOMORROW!!**