

Filling Gas Cans Safely¹

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Vehicle fires sometimes occur while people are filling metal gas cans placed on plastic surfaces. This type of fire usually involves a gas can in the back of a pick-up truck with a plastic bed liner.

Gasoline tends to carry a static electric charge. When pouring gasoline into a can, this charge can build up on the can. If the can is sitting on concrete or the ground, the static charge can safely flow away. But when the can is sitting on plastic, such as the plastic bed liner in a truck, the static charge can not escape because the plastic is an insulator, that is, it does not conduct electricity. A spark can occur between the can and the fuel nozzle and ignite the gasoline.

When the spark occurs in the flammable vapor space near the open mouth of the gas can, a fire occurs.

Use only gas cans approved by OSHA and follow these precautions:

- Use only an approved container.
- Don't fill any container while it's inside a vehicle.



- Always place the container you're filling on the ground and away from other customers and traffic.
- Keep the nozzle in contact with the can while you're filling it.
- Never use a latch-open device to fill a portable container.
- Don't smoke.
- While transporting containers, tie them in place.

For More Information

For more information about tractor safety, visit the Florida AgSafe Web site: <www.flagsafe.ufl.edu>; or the National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD): <www.cdc.gov/nasd>.

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This publication is a part of the Safer Tractor Operator series. A complete list of publications in this series is given below. All are available at your county Extension office, at the EDIS Web site, <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>>, and at the Florida AgSafe Web site.

- Safer Tractor Operations: Introduction <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE241>>
- Getting Started on the Right Foot: Dangers of Bypass Starting <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE173>>
- Filling Gas Cans Safely <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE174>>
- Lighting and Marking Farm Equipment for Road Travel -- Summary of ASAE Standard S279.10 <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE175>>
- Road Safety for Tractors <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE176>>
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE177>>
- Avoid the Invisible Hazard: Know About Soil Shear Lines (ABE305) <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE178>>
- Shortcuts Are Shortsighted! or Invest Seconds, Save Lives <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE179>>
- Ready or Not? Get Ready with a Tractor Operator Checklist <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE180>>
- Yee-Haa! Formula for a Successful Tractor Rodeo <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE181>>
- Hand-me-down Hazards: Dangers of Used Equipment <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE182>>
- Safety Tips for Tractor Loading and Towing <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE183>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Agricultural Employers <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE195>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Privately Owned and Operated Farms and Ranches <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE196>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Acreages and Homeowners <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE197>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Landscape Maintenance and Horticultural Industries <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE198>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Emergency and Rescue Personnel <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE199>>
- Safer Tractor Operations for Farm Workers and Employees <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE200>>