

DOES GASOLINE GO BAD?

Well, it certainly degrades like most other things on this earth. The problem is that environmental factors (like heat, oxygen levels, and humidity) dramatically affect the changes, so no one can give you a hard and fast rule about it.

Additionally, gasoline is engineered differently in winter and summer, in warmer and colder climates. And the amount of ethanol affects the mix because it naturally bonds with the water in the air, degrading the consistency as it ages and potentially corroding the engine system it's cycling through.

And we should mention one more fact. Not only is gasoline a fire hazard, so are its fumes and whatever residual particles remain on shop rags and the like.

The better question might be this: How can we safely store the gasoline most of us keep at our homes?

First, store as little gasoline as possible. Keeping enough to fill your lawn equipment for mowing next week is safer than planning for potential emergencies over the next six months. Whenever possible, it's best to store in a detached garage or shed.

Second, store only in containers created for that purpose and keep them tightly sealed. Store outside of direct sunlight and other heat sources like a hot water heater or furnace. Also, store away from ignition sources like pilot lights as gasoline vapors are heavier than air and travel along the floor.

And how do you safely wash your clothes that have gasoline on them?

First, you must get the smell out. You can do this by hanging them outside for at least twenty-four hours OR let them sit in a tub of vinegar water for a couple of hours.

Once the smell is completely gone, wash the clothes:

- *By themselves,*
- *In the hottest water temperature that's safe for fabric,*
- *At the highest water level your machine allows,*
- *With a little more detergent than you'd normally use,*
- *And, an additional ¼ cup of ammonia*

CARRIE