



An Extended Guide · No. 1639

Fuel Storage and Your Local Fire Code

How much you can
keep, and who to ask

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

BillsHomeTech.com · (330) 200-8042 · Atwater, Ohio

Free & printable — share it with someone who needs it



Book a visit —
billshometech.com/book

! Read this first — carbon monoxide is the real danger

A running generator's exhaust contains carbon monoxide — an invisible, odorless gas that can kill in minutes. Never run a generator indoors, in a garage, in a shed, or on a porch, not even with the door open and a fan going. Run it outside only, well away from the house — the safety agencies say at least 20 feet — with the exhaust pointed away from every window, door, and vent. Put battery-backup carbon-monoxide alarms on each floor and outside the bedrooms. If an alarm sounds, or anyone feels dizzy, sick, or sleepy, get everyone into fresh air first and ask questions later. How much fuel is safe to keep at a home is not a one-size-fits-all number — it is set by the people who show up when something goes wrong, so this guide's whole job is helping you ask them the right question.

Let's talk about your local fire code

This is one guide in the whole set where I won't hand you a number — and I'll explain why that's the honest, safer answer.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I get asked 'how much fuel am I allowed to keep?' more than almost any other question in this whole category, and the true answer is always the same: it depends on where you live, and the people who know for certain are your local fire department.

This guide won't leave you empty-handed, though. We'll cover what a fire code and an AHJ actually are, exactly how to ask, why these rules exist, and the other everyday rules — an HOA or a landlord's own limits — that can apply right alongside them.

★ There's no silly question here

If you're not sure who to call or what to ask about fuel storage limits, that's exactly the kind of thing I'm glad to help you sort out. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you'll know exactly who to ask about fuel storage limits.

- ❑ How much fuel you may store at home is set by your local fire code and the AHJ (authority having jurisdiction), not by me or the internet.
- ❑ The limit varies by town, county, and sometimes by container type — there's no single number that fits everywhere.
- ❑ A quick, friendly call to your local fire department gets you the real answer for your address.
- ❑ Approved, labeled containers are usually part of what the rules assume — see our safe gasoline storage guide.
- ❑ An HOA, landlord, or condo association may have its own rules on top of the fire code — check those too.
- ❑ Whatever the number turns out to be, a modest, rotated supply is the safer habit either way.

✓ One phone call settles it

This entire guide leads to one simple action: a short, friendly call to your local fire department. Everything else here just explains why that call is worth making.

Why I won't give you a number here

It would be easy to print a figure on this page. It would also very likely be wrong for your address.

Fuel storage limits are set locally, and they genuinely differ from one town or county to the next, sometimes by quite a bit. A figure that's accurate for one reader could be well over, or needlessly under, the real limit for another.

So rather than guess, or repeat a number I found somewhere online, I'd rather point you to the people who actually set the rule for your specific address. That's not a dodge — it's the genuinely correct answer.

✓ The honest answer is 'ask locally'

Anyone who hands you a specific gallon figure without knowing your address is guessing. Your local fire department isn't.

What 'fire code' and 'AHJ' actually mean

Two terms worth understanding, in plain English, before you make the call.

A fire code is the set of local rules covering fire safety, including how much of certain materials, like fuel, may be stored at a home. The AHJ, or authority having jurisdiction, is simply whoever enforces that code where you live — often the local fire department, sometimes a fire marshal's office or a building department.

You don't need to know which office handles it before you call. Your local fire department can either answer directly or point you to whichever office actually does.

✓ You don't need the exact title

Just call your local fire department's non-emergency line and ask. They'll either answer you directly or send you to the right office.

Why the limit varies from place to place

It can feel strange that there's no single national answer. Here's why that's actually reasonable.

Communities adopt and adjust their own fire codes based on local conditions — how close homes sit together, what kind of housing is common, and decisions made by local officials over time. That's exactly why a figure that applies to a friend across the county, or a number you read on a website, may not apply to you.

This isn't a reason to be frustrated — it's a reason to ask locally rather than trust a general answer. The call is quick, and it settles the question for good.

✓ Local conditions, local answers

Your neighbor's limit and your own may genuinely differ depending on the specifics of each property. Asking directly removes the guesswork.

How to actually ask — the phone call itself

This call is easier than most people expect, and fire departments answer this question often.

Call your local fire department's non-emergency line, explain that you're asking about residential fuel storage limits, and give them your address and a general sense of what you're storing. They'll take it from there.

- Use the non-emergency line, not 911.
- Give your address, since the answer can depend on it.
- Describe generally what you're thinking of storing — gasoline, propane, or both — and roughly how much.
- Ask whether container type or storage location makes a difference to the limit.

★ Happy to help you prepare for the call

If you'd like help thinking through what to ask, or what to describe about your setup, I'm glad to walk through it with you first. Call (330) 200-8042.

What they'll likely want to know

A little preparation makes the call quicker for both of you.

Fire departments field this question regularly, so they'll usually just ask a few straightforward things to give you an accurate answer.

- Your address, since local rules can vary by jurisdiction.
- Roughly what you're storing — gasoline, propane, diesel, or a mix.
- Roughly how much you're thinking of keeping.
- Whether it would be stored indoors, in an attached garage, or in a detached building.

✓ You don't need exact figures ready

A general sense of your setup is plenty to start the conversation — you don't need to have precise numbers memorized before you call.

Why these limits exist in the first place

Knowing the reasoning makes the rule feel sensible instead of arbitrary.

A larger amount of stored fuel is a larger fire load — more material that could feed a fire if one ever started nearby. Storage limits exist to keep that fire load at a level that's manageable, both for your own household and for the firefighters who might someday need to respond.

These rules also protect the people who show up to help: knowing roughly how much fuel might be present at a property helps firefighters respond safely. The limit isn't arbitrary bureaucracy — it's built around real safety for everyone involved.

! The rule protects more than just you

Fuel storage limits exist for your household's safety and for the safety of anyone who might ever need to respond to your property in an emergency.

Approved, labeled containers still matter to the rules

The quantity question isn't the only one worth asking — how you store it matters too.

Fire codes generally assume fuel is kept in approved, labeled containers built for the purpose, not improvised jugs or bottles. Our safe gasoline storage guide covers exactly what an approved container looks like and why it matters — it's worth reading alongside this one.

When you call your fire department, it's reasonable to ask whether container type affects the limit, since in some places it does. Either way, an approved container is the right choice regardless of the exact quantity rule.

✓ Container and quantity, two related questions

Ask about both when you call — how much, and whether the type of container makes a difference.

HOA, landlord, and condo rules — a separate layer

The fire code isn't necessarily the only rule that applies to you.

A homeowners' association, a condo association, or a landlord may have its own rules about fuel storage, sometimes stricter than the fire code itself. These are separate from, and in addition to, whatever your local fire code allows — meeting the fire code doesn't automatically mean you're meeting your HOA's or landlord's rules too.

If either applies to you, it's worth a quick check of your HOA's governing documents or a conversation with your landlord, right alongside the call to your fire department.

! Two sets of rules, not one

Following the fire code doesn't guarantee you're following your HOA's or landlord's rules. Check both before you store more than a modest amount.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Which rules apply to you, and how many layers of them, often depends on where you live.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town or a close-in suburb, you're likely dealing with a city or county fire code, and quite possibly a homeowners' association on top of it, especially on a tighter lot.

- Call your local fire department for the code limit at your address.
- Check your HOA's governing documents or ask your association directly about any additional rules.
- A tighter lot often means less realistic room for a large reserve anyway — the rules and practical space tend to agree.
- If you rent, your landlord's rules matter here too — ask before you assume.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, farm and agricultural situations can genuinely vary, and it's tempting to assume rural properties are exempt from fire code limits. Don't assume — ask.

- Call your local fire department or county AHJ even if you're on a large rural or farm property — the answer may differ from town, but it's still worth confirming.
- Longer distances to a station can tempt a bigger reserve — ask about the limit before you build one up.
- A dealer supplying propane or diesel in bulk can often help confirm what's typical and allowed for your setup too.
- More outbuildings can mean more places fuel could be stored — ask whether that changes anything about the limit.

★ Not sure who to call?

Tell me a bit about your property and what you're hoping to store, and I'll help you figure out who to ask and what to say. Call (330) 200-8042.

Renting? Your landlord's rules matter too

If you rent your home, there's a second conversation worth having.

A landlord may have their own rules about what can be stored on the property, in a garage, or in a shed, separate from whatever the local fire code allows. It's worth asking directly, especially before storing anything beyond a small, modest amount.

This is also a considerate thing to do for your household and your neighbors in a multi-unit building, where fuel storage affects more than just your own space.

✓ A quick, reasonable question

Most landlords appreciate being asked rather than finding out after the fact. It's a short conversation that heads off a bigger one later.

Farm and agricultural situations — still ask

It's a common assumption that farm properties play by different rules. Sometimes they do — but don't assume.

Agricultural fuel storage situations can genuinely vary by area, and some jurisdictions do treat farm use differently. The only way to know for certain is to ask your local fire department or AHJ directly, describing your actual setup, rather than assuming a farm exemption applies to you.

This matters especially if you're storing diesel or larger quantities for equipment — our diesel storage guide covers the everyday habits, but the quantity question still goes back to your local AHJ.

✓ Don't assume an exemption — confirm it

If you've heard that farm properties are treated differently where you live, confirm it with your AHJ rather than assuming it applies to your situation exactly as described.

Building or reworking a shed? Ask before, not after

This is the easiest moment to get the rules right, because nothing is built yet.

If you're planning a new shed, or reworking your garage with fuel storage in mind, that's the ideal time to call your fire department and ask about limits and any location requirements. It's far easier to plan a compliant, sensible spot from the start than to rearrange things later.

This is also a natural moment to think about how much you'd actually keep, tying back to our guide on how much fuel to keep and how to rotate it — a modest, well-planned space rarely needs to be large.

✓ Ask at the planning stage

A five-minute call before you build saves a much bigger headache after the shed is already standing.

If you think you might already be over the limit

This is a more common question than you'd think, and it's nothing to panic about.

If you're not sure whether your current setup is within the local limit, the right step is the same one as always: call your local fire department and ask. Fire departments generally would rather help a homeowner reach a safe, compliant setup than see something go wrong later — asking is a good-faith step, not a confession.

If it turns out you're storing more than the limit allows, our guide on how much fuel to keep and how to rotate it can help you bring your supply down to a modest, manageable amount.

★ I'm glad to help you sort it out

If you'd like a second set of eyes on your current setup before or after that call, I'm happy to help. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

Whatever the number, keep it modest

Here's the reassuring part: you don't have to know the exact limit to already be doing the safe thing.

Our guide on how much fuel to keep and how to rotate it, and our guide on where you should never store fuel, both point toward the same habit regardless of what your local limit turns out to be: a modest, rotated, well-placed supply. That habit is safer whether your local limit is generous or strict.

Think of the fire code call as confirmation and peace of mind, not as the only thing standing between you and a hazard. Good habits and a known limit work together.

✓ Good habits work at any limit

A modest, rotated supply is the safer choice no matter what number your fire department gives you.

Questions worth asking

Whether you're calling your fire department or asking me, these get you real answers.

Q: Who do I actually call about fuel storage limits?

Your local fire department's non-emergency line. They can answer directly or point you to whichever office enforces the fire code where you live.

Q: Is the limit the same for gasoline and propane?

Not necessarily — ask about each fuel you're storing specifically, since the rules can treat them differently.

Q: Does it matter if my fuel is in an attached garage versus a detached shed?

It can. Mention where you're thinking of storing it when you call, since location sometimes affects the limit.

Q: What if my HOA and the fire code seem to disagree?

Follow whichever is stricter. Both sets of rules apply to you at the same time.

✓ There's no silly question

Fire code questions can feel intimidating, but fire departments answer them all the time and are glad to help. Ask until you're confident.

A simple fire-code checklist

Walk through this before you store more than a couple of containers.

- ☐ I've called my local fire department and asked about the limit at my address.
- ☐ I asked separately about gasoline and propane, if I store both.
- ☐ I checked whether my HOA, condo association, or landlord has its own rules too.
- ☐ My containers are approved and labeled, as the rules generally assume.
- ☐ I'm keeping a modest, rotated supply regardless of the exact number.
- ☐ I know to ask again if I plan to build a shed or store significantly more in the future.

★ I'll help you sort out who to ask

If you're not sure where to start, that's an easy thing to figure out together. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

Fire load, explained plainly one more time

This whole guide comes back to one idea, worth repeating clearly.

Every gallon of stored fuel adds to what firefighters call the fire load — how much material could feed a fire if something ever went wrong. A modest, well-stored supply keeps that fire load small and manageable. A large, uncontrolled one raises the stakes for your household and for anyone who might respond in an emergency.

Combined with the safe-storage habits covered throughout this guide set — approved containers, safe locations, distance from any flame — knowing and respecting your local limit rounds out a genuinely safe setup.

! Less fuel, less risk, every time

Whatever your local limit turns out to be, a smaller, well-kept supply is always the safer choice within it.

Common Questions

The fire-code questions I hear most often, answered plainly.

Q: Why can't you just tell me the number for Portage County?

Even within one county, rules can vary by township or municipality, and they can change over time. Your local fire department has the current, accurate answer for your specific address.

Q: Will calling the fire department get me in trouble?

No — asking is a normal, welcomed question. Fire departments would much rather help you get it right than respond to a problem later.

Q: Does the limit change if I have a permit or a special setup?

Possibly — that's exactly the kind of detail to ask about directly, since it can vary by situation and location.

Q: Is there a single national fuel-storage limit I can just look up?

No — fire codes are set and enforced locally, which is exactly why this guide points you to your own fire department rather than a general figure.

★ Still have a question on your mind?

That's what I'm here for. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and I'll help you figure out who to ask and what to say.

How this fits with the rest

Knowing your limit is one piece of safe fuel storage — here's how the pieces connect.

This guide focused on who to ask and why the answer varies by place. For the modest, rotated habit that works no matter the exact number, see our guide on how much fuel to keep and how to rotate it, and for the container and location side, our safe gasoline storage guide and our guide on where you should never store fuel.

If a storm is what's prompting you to think about quantity right now, our storm fuel-prep guide covers getting ready without over-buying, and it points back here whenever the fire code is the real question.

★ One call covers all of it

You don't have to sort out which guide answers which question. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, describe your setup, and I'll help you figure out what's worth asking your fire department.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made figuring out your local fuel storage rules feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

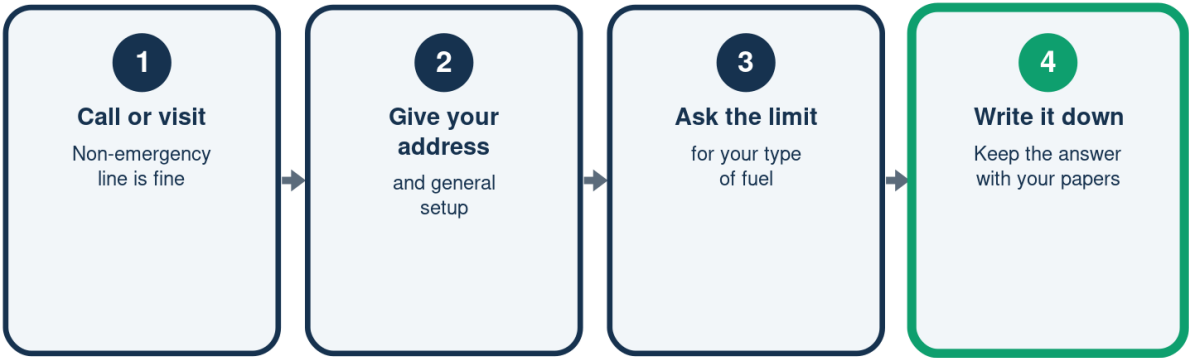
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I don't do the licensed electrical or gas work myself — for that I'll help you line up a trustworthy local pro.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

How to Ask Your Fire Department

A friendly call settles the real number for your address



A friendly, five-minute call settles the question for good.

Fire Code vs. Other Rules That May Apply

Two layers can apply to you at the same time

	Fire code/AHJ	HOA or landlord
Sets	Quantity limit	Community rules
Who to ask	Fire department	HOA or landlord
Applies to	Everyone nearby	Your property

Both layers can apply to you at once -- check both.

Town vs. Rural Fire-Code Questions

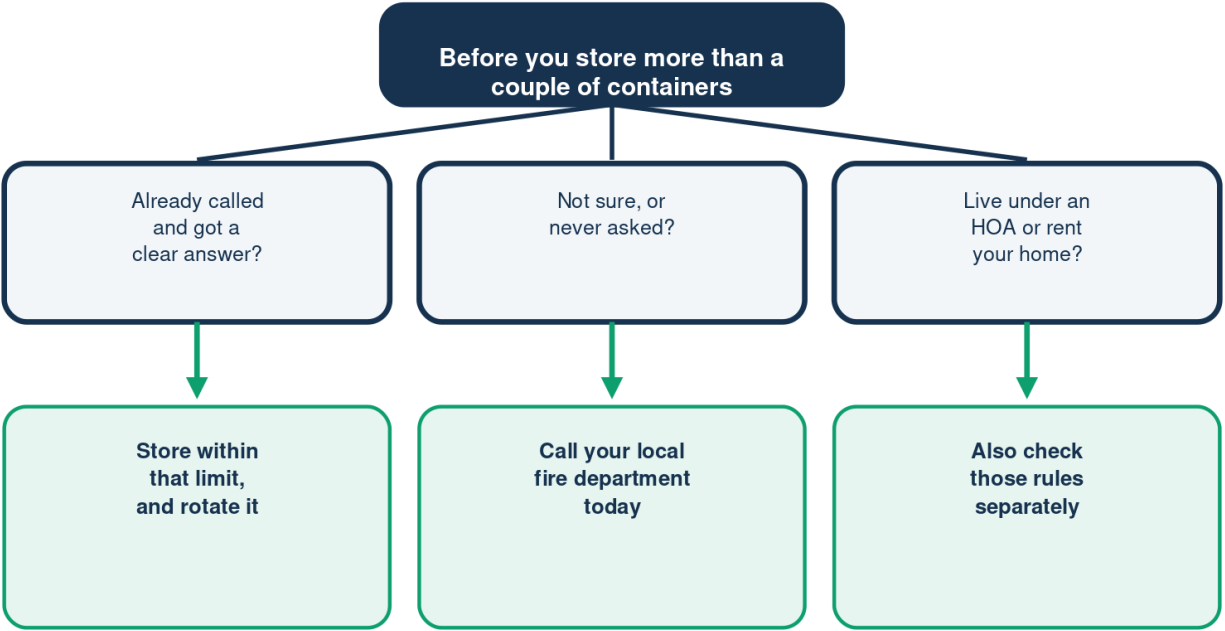
The rules differ by place -- asking never changes

	Town/suburb	Rural/farm
Likely layers	City code, HOA	County code
Lot size	Tighter	More room
Who to ask	Local fire dept	Local fire dept
Distance factor	Neighbors close	Longer distances

The rules differ by place -- asking is the one step that never changes.

Do You Know Your Local Limit?

Before you store more than a couple of containers



When in doubt, keep it modest and ask before you build up a supply.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
Friendly, in-home tech help -- I come to you.

BILL'S PROMISE

If you are not 100% happy with a visit, I will
make it right -- or refund it. No awkwardness,
no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

— Bill

Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



Book a visit —
billshometech.com/book

Use of these guides is subject to our Terms of Use (billshometech.com/terms-of-use).

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

For general information only — not professional advice. Use at your own risk. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech