BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

An Extended Guide · No. 1254

Storing Fuel Safely at Home

Gas cans, stabilizer, and rotation

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Hello, and welcome

If you keep a generator for Ohio's storms, you also keep a little fuel on hand — and that fuel deserves a few simple, safe habits so it sits quietly in the corner until the day you need it. This guide walks through every one of them, in plain English.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. I've spent more than 30 years helping folks get comfortable with their technology — patiently, in plain language, and at their own pace. Think of this guide as me sitting at your kitchen table, walking through it with you one step at a time.

In these pages we'll cover the right cans to use, how much to keep, the safest place to store it, how to keep gasoline from going stale with a little stabilizer and some rotation, how to fill a can without a scare, how to store propane cylinders, and what to do with fuel that's gone old. It's all common sense once someone shows you — and none of it is hard.

You do not have to read this all at once, and you certainly don't have to memorize it. Skip to whatever you need, keep it handy, and know that a real person is only a phone call away.

> **★ How to use this guide**
> Each page stands on its own. Read one, take what's useful, and come back for the next when you're ready. If a step ever feels fuzzy, that's on my writing — not on you — and you can always call me at (330) 200-8042.

Why storing fuel deserves a little care

Keeping a can of gas is nothing to be afraid of — but it is one of those jobs where a few simple habits keep everyone safe, because gasoline is more particular than it looks.

Here's the key thing most folks don't realize: with gasoline, it's the **vapors** that catch fire, not really the liquid itself. A can of gas is always giving off a little vapor, and that vapor is **heavier than air**, so it doesn't drift up and away — it sinks and spreads low, creeping along the floor until it finds something to light it. That something might be a pilot light on a water heater clear across the garage.

That one fact explains almost every rule in this guide. It's why **where** you store the fuel matters as much as how much you keep or what can it's in. It's why we keep it far from any flame or spark, and out of the living space entirely. Once you picture those low, sneaky vapors, the habits all make sense.

The good news is the flip side. Treated with the same everyday respect you already give the stove or the grill, stored fuel sits perfectly safely for months at a stretch. Propane is a bit different but asks for the same care, and we'll cover it too. None of this is about worry — it's about a handful of easy habits that let you stop thinking about it.

> **! It's the vapors that matter**
> Gasoline vapor is heavier than air and travels low along the floor, so it can reach a flame or spark well across a room — a furnace, a water heater's pilot, a sparking motor. That's why where you store fuel, and how far it sits from any ignition source, is the whole heart of storing it safely.

The right can for the job

The first rule is the easiest of all: keep gasoline only in a container that was made and approved for it.

An **approved gas can** is built for the job — it seals tightly, vents the way it should, and has a proper spout for pouring without slopping. You'll find them wherever mowers and fuel are sold. Many are color-coded by fuel, with red the usual color for gasoline, and it's worth marking yours plainly so no one ever has to wonder what's inside.

Just as important is what **never** to use. A milk jug, a water bottle, a glass jar, an old antifreeze container, an open bucket — please, never any of these. They aren't made to hold fuel: they can weaken and leak, they don't seal against those vapors, they can build static, and worst of all, no one can tell at a glance that they hold gasoline. A clear jug of gasoline on a shelf is exactly the kind of thing a child or a guest could mistake for something harmless.

A couple of small habits round it out. Keep the cap on snug whenever the can isn't in use, and don't fill a can right to the very top — leave a little air space, because fuel expands as it warms and a brim-full can can weep or bulge. And if a can ever cracks, rusts, or stops sealing, retire it; a fresh one costs little and a good seal is what keeps the vapors in and the moisture out.

> **✔ Label it, and keep it sealed**
> Take a marker and write GASOLINE right on the can, big and plain. A clearly labeled, tightly sealed, purpose-built can is half of safe storage all by itself — and it means nobody in the house ever has to guess what's in the corner of the shed.

How much should you keep on hand?

The right amount is enough to see you through, but not so much that it becomes a hazard or goes stale before you can ever burn it.

Start with what you'd actually use. For most homes that's a storm's worth of running the generator plus a little for the mower — a couple of cans, not a barrel. Keeping a sensible, modest supply is safer in every way: less fuel means less to go wrong, and a small supply you keep fresh is far more useful than a big one that sits and turns to varnish.

There's also the matter of the rules, and here I want to be careful not to hand you a number that isn't right for your town. Fire codes set limits on how much fuel a home may store and in what containers, and on top of that your city, your township, an HOA, or a landlord may have their own rules. The limits genuinely vary from place to place, so please **check your local rules** rather than guess. A quick call to your local fire department is the surest way to learn what applies where you live.

One more reason to lean modest: gasoline has a shelf life. A giant stockpile you never rotate isn't a safety net — it's a fire load in the corner that won't even start your generator when the time comes. Keep what you'll realistically use over a season, keep it fresh, and top it up as you go.

> **! Check your local limits before you stock up**
> Many places cap how much gasoline you may keep at home and how it must be contained, and those limits differ from town to town. I won't give you a gallon figure here because the right one depends on where you live — a quick call to your fire department settles it. When in doubt, keep less and rotate it faithfully.

The safest place to keep it

Of all the choices, where you store the fuel is the biggest one for your safety — bigger than how much you keep or which can it's in.

The ideal home for your fuel is a **detached shed or a detached garage**, set apart from the house — somewhere cool, dry, and ventilated, out of the direct sun. Detached is the key word: a separate building means that if fuel ever did leak or catch, it isn't happening under the same roof where your family sleeps. A shady, breezy corner where the temperature stays fairly steady is just what you're after.

Wherever you land on, it must be **out of the living space**. Not a kitchen pantry, not a hall closet, not a spare bedroom, and — despite how common it is — not the basement. Living space means people, warmth, and often an ignition source or two, which is precisely the combination those heavy vapors are looking for. Fuel and the rooms you live in simply don't belong together.

And keep it **up and out of reach** of children and pets. A shelf they can't get to, or a cabinet that latches, keeps curious hands away from something that looks a bit like a juice jug to a little one. If your storage spot is anywhere a child might wander, a simple lock is well worth it.

> **! Never in the living space**
> Fuel belongs out of the home's living areas — ideally a detached building, never a closet, spare room, or basement. Those heavy vapors seep and settle, and it only takes one flame or spark to turn a small leak into a fire. Detached, cool, ventilated, and out of reach is the whole idea.

Keeping it far from anything that could light it

Because it's the vapors that catch, the golden rule of the storage spot is simple: distance from any flame, spark, or hot surface.

Look hard at whatever room you're considering and hunt down the ignition sources. In a typical garage or basement that means the **furnace**, the **water heater**, the clothes **dryer**, a **space heater**, a workshop grinder that throws sparks, the car's hot engine and exhaust, and electrical panels or motors that can arc. Any one of them can be the spark those low-lying vapors are drifting toward.

The one that catches the most people is a gas **water heater** or furnace with a standing **pilot light**. That's an open flame sitting low, near the floor — exactly where heavier-than-air gasoline vapor pools. If your garage or utility room holds a water heater or a furnace with a pilot, that room is not the place for gas cans, full stop. This is a big reason a detached shed wins out.

Heat matters too, even without a flame. Keep fuel out of direct sun and away from anything that gets hot, since warmth builds pressure and coaxes out more vapor. A cool, shaded, steady spot keeps the fuel calm and the vapors to a minimum — one more vote for that detached, ventilated corner.

> **! The water heater is the one to watch**
> A gas water heater or furnace pilot is an open flame close to the floor — right where heavy gasoline vapor settles. Never store fuel in the same room as one. If that's the only spot you have, the fuel needs to go somewhere else entirely, like a detached shed well clear of the appliances.

Why gasoline goes bad: ethanol and moisture

Gasoline isn't forever. Left to sit, it goes stale and can gum up a small engine — and today's blends make that happen faster than you might expect.

Most gasoline from the pump has some **ethanol** in it — often up to about ten percent, the blend usually labeled E10. Ethanol has a thirsty habit: it **draws in moisture** from the air. Over a few weeks a partly used can of E10 can pull in enough water to separate and turn gummy, especially through the damp swings of an Ohio garage.

Here's why that matters for your generator. The gum and varnish that stale fuel leaves behind clog the tiny passages inside a small **carburetor** — the delicate fuel parts on a generator engine. When those passages gum up, the engine won't start, or it starts and stumbles. Stale fuel is far and away the number-one reason a generator that sat all year refuses to run on the night of the storm.

There are two good defenses. The first is simply **fresh fuel**: buy gas close to when you'll use it rather than hoarding it for months. The second, for fuel that truly must sit a long while, is to consider **ethanol-free** gasoline, which some stations and marinas sell and which stores far better — but check your generator's manual first for what it recommends. And for anything in between, there's stabilizer, which is the very next page.

> **✔ Fresh is your best friend**
> The simplest cure for stale fuel is to not let it get old — buy what you'll use soon and keep it turning over. For fuel that has to wait, ethanol-free gas or a dose of stabilizer keeps it healthy. Your generator's manual will tell you what it likes.

Fuel stabilizer: cheap insurance

If fuel is going to sit for more than about a month, a splash of fuel stabilizer keeps it fresh far longer — it's some of the cheapest peace of mind you can buy.

Stabilizer is a liquid additive you pour right into the gas — into the can, or into the generator's tank. It slows the chemical staling and helps guard against that moisture trouble, so treated fuel stays usable for many months instead of a few weeks. A small bottle is inexpensive and treats a lot of fuel, and you'll find it wherever mowers and gas cans are sold.

The trick is to add it while the fuel is still **fresh**. Stabilizer protects good gas; it can't rescue gas that's already turned. So pour it in the day you fill the can, follow the amount printed on the bottle, and if you're treating the generator's tank, run the engine a few minutes afterward so the treated fuel works its way all through the carburetor, not just the tank.

A simple rule of thumb: for anything that will sit more than about **thirty days**, stabilize it. And for a generator that waits patiently all season for a storm that may or may not come, always stabilize — that's exactly the fuel most likely to go stale and let you down. Treated, fresh, and rotated, your fuel will be ready when you are.

> **✔ Treat it fresh, right away**
> Stabilizer only protects fuel that's still good, so add it the day you fill the can, not months later when you remember. Fresh gas plus stabilizer plus a little rotation is the whole recipe for fuel that starts your generator every time.

Rotate your fuel: oldest first

The habit that keeps everything fresh is wonderfully simple — use the oldest fuel first, then refill. Never let a can sit forgotten in the corner for years.

Think of it just like the milk in the refrigerator: **first in, first out**. Pour the older can into the mower, the car, or the generator during a monthly test run, and then buy fresh to refill it. Done that way, your supply is always gently turning over, and no fuel ever gets a chance to grow old and gummy while it waits.

The little trick that makes rotation effortless is to **label each can with the date** you filled it. A strip of masking tape and a marker is all it takes. Then you never have to sniff a can and wonder how old it is — you can see it at a glance. Many folks keep two cans on purpose and simply make a rule of always emptying the older one first.

Tie the whole thing to a rhythm you already keep — the first of the month, or the day you mow — so the fuel never quietly ages past its prime. Even stabilized gas doesn't last forever, so the goal is a supply that's always moving: a little out, a little fresh in, dates on the cans, oldest always first.

> **✔ Date every can**
> A marker and ten seconds. Write the day you filled it right on the side, and first-in, first-out becomes automatic — no guessing, no forgotten cans, and always fresh fuel ready for the generator when the lights go out.

Filling the can safely

Interestingly, most fuel scares happen not in storage but in the handling — right at the gas station, filling the can. A few habits keep it completely uneventful.

The most important one surprises people: always set the can **on the ground** to fill it — never in the bed of a truck, never on a tailgate, and never on a plastic bed liner or a carpeted trunk. Here's why. A can sitting on a liner or carpet can build up a **static charge** as fuel flows in, and the tiny spark when the metal nozzle nears it can ignite the vapors. Set flat on the ground, that charge safely drains away and there's nothing to spark. This one is a genuine, well-documented cause of fires, and it's completely avoidable.

A few more at the pump: keep the **nozzle touching the rim** of the can as you pour, which helps bleed off static; fill slowly to avoid splashing; and don't top it off — leave that little air space for expansion. No smoking, no pumping while the vehicle's engine runs, and keep the phone in your pocket.

Getting it home matters too. Wipe up any spill and let it evaporate before you drive off, carry the can **upright** with the cap tight and secured so it can't tip, and take it out of the vehicle promptly once you're home — a full can baking in a hot trunk is exactly what we don't want. Straight from the pump to its cool storage spot is the goal.

> **! Can on the ground, every time**
> Filling a can in the truck bed or on a tailgate is a known cause of static fires. Set it on the ground, keep the nozzle touching the can, fill slowly, don't top off, no smoking, and wipe up spills. Do that and the riskiest part of owning fuel becomes completely routine.

If you live in town: city and suburb

Here in town — in Kent, Ravenna, Streetsboro, Aurora — folks often have less room to store fuel and more rules to mind, so the watchword is keep a little and rotate it faithfully.

Space is the first squeeze. Many homes in town have only an attached garage and no detached shed, which means the ideal storage spot may not exist. If that's you, keep the amount you store genuinely modest — a can or two — in a good sealed can, placed as far as you can manage from the furnace, the water heater, and any pilot light, and rotate it hard so nothing sits long.

The second thing is the rules. Apartments and many rentals flatly forbid storing gasoline, and condos, HOAs, and leases often limit it. Please check your own lease or association rules before you keep fuel at home. If you can't store it safely and within the rules, that's important information — it may point you toward keeping less or toward a different kind of backup altogether.

One more town reality: if your only option is an attached garage that also holds the water heater or furnace, that's the very spot those heavy vapors like least. Keep only a small amount, sealed tight, as far from the appliances as the space allows — and give real thought to whether a quiet battery power station, which needs no stored fuel at all, suits your home better.

> **! Apartments, condos, and balconies**
> If you're in an apartment or condo, storing gasoline is often against the rules and rarely safe — and a balcony or an indoor unit is no place for a fuel can or a propane cylinder. In that case a battery power station that charges from the wall is usually the safer, simpler tool. I'm glad to help you weigh it.

If you're in the country on a well

Out in the townships — Atwater, Rootstown, Deerfield, Palmyra — you usually have more room and a longer drive to the gas station, so many folks keep more fuel on hand. That extra supply just calls for extra discipline.

The reasons to stock more are real. You've likely got a mower, maybe a tractor, and often a bigger generator — many country homes want one large enough to run the **well pump**, since when the power's out, so is the water, and a bigger generator drinks more fuel. Add the longer haul to town, and keeping a good supply simply makes sense.

But more fuel means more responsibility, not less. A larger stockpile that sits and goes stale is both a fire load and useless when the storm finally comes. So the discipline has to be tighter out here: stabilize every can, date every can, and rotate hard through the mower and the equipment so the whole supply keeps turning over and staying fresh.

And mind **where** all that fuel lives. A barn or pole building is convenient, but barns carry their own ignitions — dust, hay, animals, stock-tank and shop heaters — and they burn fast and hot. Keep fuel in a dedicated, ventilated spot well clear of the barn and clear of the house, never tucked in with the hay or beside a heater. The more you store, the more that separation matters.

> **★ More fuel, more discipline**
> Country homes often keep a healthy supply for the generator, the tractor, and the mower — that's sensible. Just keep it in a detached spot well away from the barn and the house, stabilize and date every can, and rotate it hard. If you'd like a hand setting up a safe, storm-ready fuel corner, that's just my kind of visit. Call (330) 200-8042.

Storing propane cylinders safely

If your generator or grill runs on propane, the storage rules are a little different — and in one way simpler, since propane keeps for years without going stale.

The golden rules for a propane cylinder are short and firm: store it **upright**, with the valve up; store it **outdoors**, in a shaded, ventilated spot; and keep it away from heat and any ignition source. Never bring a propane cylinder **indoors**, and never keep it in a closed garage or a basement — not the spare tank, not even in the dead of winter.

The reason is the way propane behaves. A cylinder is built to vent a little gas through a safety valve if it warms up and the pressure climbs. Outdoors, that trace of gas simply disperses into the air and does no harm. Indoors or in a closed garage, it has nowhere to go — propane is heavier than air, so it pools low and becomes a serious hazard. Keeping cylinders outside, upright, and shaded keeps all of that a non-issue.

A few good habits finish it off: keep the valve closed and capped when the cylinder isn't in use, don't stash a spare right up against the appliance that's running, set cylinders on a pad or block rather than wet ground to slow rust, and keep an eye on the tank's date, since cylinders need periodic recertification. There's more on running a propane or dual-fuel unit elsewhere in this series.

> **! Propane lives outdoors, standing up**
> Never bring a propane cylinder into the house or a closed garage, even to keep it from the cold — the cold doesn't hurt it. Upright, outside, shaded, away from heat and flame, valve closed when it's idle. That's the entire rule, and it never bends for weather.

The safety talk: carbon monoxide

Storing the fuel safely is half the picture. The other half comes when you actually burn it — and running the generator brings its own unbending rule, the most important one in any power guide.

Every generator that burns gasoline or propane makes carbon monoxide, or "CO" — a gas you cannot see or smell. It is the one real danger with a generator, and it is completely avoidable. More people are hurt by running a generator in the wrong place than by anything else, so please read this page twice.

Outside only — no exceptions

Never run a generator indoors, and that includes the garage, the basement, a shed, a carport, or a covered porch — even with the door up or a window open. CO pools and seeps into the house. The only safe place is outdoors, in the open air.

At least 20 feet away, exhaust pointed away

Set the generator at least 20 feet from the house, and turn it so the exhaust blows **away** from any door, window, or vent. Don't tuck it against the wall to hide it or keep it dry — give it room to breathe and let the fumes drift off.

Alarms are your safety net

Put working carbon-monoxide alarms on every level of your home and near the bedrooms, and use ones with a battery backup so they work when the power is out. Test them now, before storm season, not during it.

Fuel storage through an Ohio winter

Our winters add a wrinkle or two — the cold, the damp, and above all the temptation to bring things inside where it's warm. Let's handle each.

Start with the temptation, because it's the important one: please **don't** move gas cans or propane cylinders into the house, the basement, or a heated utility room to "keep them from freezing." They don't need it. Gasoline doesn't freeze in Ohio's cold, and propane is perfectly happy outdoors all winter. Bringing fuel into a warm, enclosed, lived-in space is the very hazard we've spent this whole guide avoiding. Cold storage is safe storage.

Next, moisture. Big temperature swings — freezing nights, milder days — can cause water to **condense** inside a partly empty can or tank, and with ethanol fuel that's the same water trouble come round again. Keeping your cans reasonably full of stabilized fuel and sealed tight leaves less room for damp air, and a steady, cool spot beats one that lurches from freezing to hot.

Finally, think about getting to it. Winter is exactly when the ice and wind knock the power out, so keep your fuel where you can actually reach it after a storm and keep the path to it clear of snow. And do the season a favor: make sure everything is fresh and stabilized **before** the cold sets in, so on the worst night you're not out there wrestling with an old can in the dark.

> **✔ Cold is fine; warm and enclosed is not**
> Leave your fuel in its cool, detached spot all winter long. The cold won't hurt gasoline or propane one bit, and it keeps the fuel right where it belongs — far from the furnace and far from the family. Stabilize before the season and keep the path shoveled.

What to do with old or stale gas

Sooner or later a can gets away from you and the gas is past its prime. Here's how to tell, and how to get rid of it the right way.

You can often spot tired fuel by its looks and smell. Fresh gasoline is clear or lightly tinted with a sharp, familiar smell; **stale** gas tends to go darker — amber or orange — and takes on a sour, varnish-like odor. If you see water or a layer of gunk settled at the bottom of the can, that fuel has drawn moisture and is done. When in doubt, don't trust questionable fuel in the generator you're counting on.

How bad it is guides what you do. Fuel that's only slightly old can sometimes be used up by mixing a little of it into a lot of fresh gas in a less fussy engine, like the car or the mower — but never pour doubtful gas into your standby generator, which is precisely the machine you can't afford to have stumble. Fuel that's clearly degraded, dark, or watered should simply be disposed of.

And disposal has one firm rule: **never dump it**. Don't pour gasoline on the ground, down a drain, into a storm sewer, or in the household trash — it's hazardous, it harms the groundwater, and it's against the law. Instead, keep the old fuel in an approved, labeled can and take it to a **household hazardous-waste** collection site or event. Portage County and most areas run them; a quick call tells you where and when.

> **! Never dump fuel**
> Old gas doesn't go on the ground, down a drain, or in the trash. Keep it in a marked can and take it to a household hazardous-waste drop-off. One phone call to the county finds you the nearest site or the next collection day — easy, and it keeps it out of the water we all share.

A few fire-safety habits worth keeping

With the fuel stored sensibly, a small handful of extra habits rounds out your peace of mind — none of them any trouble at all.

Keep a **fire extinguisher** handy. One rated for flammable liquids — a common ABC or B type will do — belongs both where you store the fuel and where you refuel the generator. Mount it where you can grab it fast, glance at its little pressure gauge now and then to be sure it's charged, and take a minute to read how it works before you ever need it, not during.

Mind spills and rags. Wipe up any spill right away and let the spot dry out in the open air. Don't ball up fuel-soaked rags in a pile or seal them in a closed can — on rare but real occasions they can build their own heat as they dry. Spread them outside to dry fully, then dispose of them properly. And keep the storage area itself clear of clutter, cardboard, and dry leaves that would happily feed a fire.

Keep the **ignition sources away**, the same theme as ever: no smoking anywhere near the fuel, no open flames, and don't run the generator or park a hot engine right up against the cans. Give yourself a little clear, open room to set the can down and pour. Sensible spacing and a tidy corner do most of the work.

> **! A small extinguisher is cheap peace of mind**
> Keep an extinguisher rated for flammable liquids by both your stored fuel and your generator, keep the area clear and free of clutter, and wipe up every spill. These are small habits, but together they turn a corner of stored fuel into something you simply don't have to worry about.

Common questions, plainly answered

A few things folks often wonder about storing fuel — set gently to rest.

Q: How long does gasoline really last?

Fresh, untreated gas is best used within a few months; with stabilizer it keeps considerably longer. Rather than count the days, just rotate it and keep it fresh — then you never have to wonder whether it'll start the generator.

Q: Can't I just keep a can in the basement or a closet?

Please don't. Fuel belongs out of the living space, ideally a detached shed, and away from heat and pilot lights. The basement usually holds the furnace and water heater — some of the worst company gasoline vapors could keep.

Q: Is a little rust or a small crack in the can okay?

No — retire a cracked, rusty, or leaking can and get a fresh one. A good seal is what keeps the vapors in and the moisture out, and a new approved can costs very little. It's not worth the risk.

Q: Do I really need stabilizer if I use the gas often?

If you turn your fuel over every few weeks, fresh gas may be plenty on its own. But for anything that sits — and above all a standby generator waiting on a storm — stabilizer is cheap insurance against a no-start.

Putting it together: a simple fuel station

Let's turn all of this into one tidy corner you set up once and then barely have to think about again.

First, the **spot**. Pick a shelf or a low cabinet in a detached shed, or in a garage well away from any furnace or water heater — somewhere cool, shaded, and ventilated, and up out of the reach of children and pets. That single good choice does most of the safety work for you.

Next, what **lives** there. Two approved, dated gas cans work nicely, so you can always empty the older one first; add a bottle of stabilizer, a funnel, a clean rag for spills, and a small extinguisher rated for flammable liquids. Propane cylinders don't join this shelf — they stand upright just outside, in the shade.

Last, the **routine**, and it's an easy one. When you fill up, date the can and add stabilizer while the fuel's fresh. Use the oldest can first and refill it. Glance at the extinguisher gauge now and then. And before storm season, make sure everything's fresh, stabilized, and easy to reach. That's the whole system — a safe corner and a fresh supply, always ready.

> **★ I'm glad to help you set it up**
> If you'd like a second set of eyes on where your fuel should live and how to keep your generator storm-ready, that's exactly the kind of visit I enjoy. We'll pick a safe spot, sort your cans and stabilizer, and make sure you're set before the next storm. Just call (330) 200-8042.

How I can help

Storing fuel safely is mostly plain common sense once someone walks you through it — and if you'd like a hand setting up a safe, storm-ready spot, or just want a friendly second opinion, that's the sort of neighborly help I'm always glad to give.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech right here in Portage County. I'm a tech-help person, not a power company and not a pushy salesman — I help folks pick the right gear, set it up, and feel confident using it. With generators, that means helping you choose a unit that fits your home and your budget, showing you how to run it safely, and getting your internet, TV, and devices happily back on once the power's flowing.

The one part I hand to a licensed electrician is connecting a generator to your home's wiring — a transfer switch for the furnace or a 240-volt well pump. That's their trade, not mine, and I'll coordinate it for you. Choosing a unit, setting up safe fuel storage, teaching safe habits, and getting your electronics back on are all right in my wheelhouse.

Three easy ways to get help

- **An in-home visit** — a flat $99 first visit. I come to you, here in Portage County, and every visit is 30-day come-back-free.
- **Remote help** — a flat $49 screen-share, up to two hours, for the things I can sort out without coming over (it's free for Support Plan members).
- **A Support Plan** — $39 a month for folks who'd like me on call all year.

Your fuel-storage checklist

Tear this page out and tape it inside the shed or cabinet door. A quick glance keeps you safe and storm-ready — the whole guide in eight lines.

- ❑ Fuel is in approved, sealed, clearly labeled cans — never milk jugs or open containers.
- ❑ Cans are dated, and you use the oldest first, then refill.
- ❑ Fresh fuel, with stabilizer added for anything sitting more than about a month.
- ❑ Stored cool, dry, and ventilated in a detached spot — never in the living space.
- ❑ Well away from the furnace, water heater, pilot lights, and any spark; up out of children's reach.
- ❑ Propane cylinders upright, outdoors, and shaded — never indoors or a closed garage.
- ❑ A flammable-liquids extinguisher nearby, and the area clear of clutter and spills.
- ❑ You know where to take old fuel (household hazardous waste) — and never dump it.

Eight checkmarks, and you've done everything this guide asks. That's all it takes to keep a safe corner of fuel that's ready the moment the storm rolls in.

The short version

If you remember nothing else from this guide, remember these:

- Keep gasoline only in approved, sealed, clearly labeled cans — never a milk jug or open container.
- Store it cool and detached, out of the living space and well away from any furnace, water heater, pilot light, or spark, and up out of children's reach. Check your local limits on how much you may keep.
- Gas goes stale — use fresh fuel, add stabilizer for anything over about a month, and rotate oldest-first with the date on every can.
- Fill cans on the ground (never a truck bed), no smoking, wipe spills; store propane upright and outdoors only; and never dump old fuel — take it to household hazardous waste.
- When you run the generator on that fuel, it goes outside only, at least 20 feet from the house — and I'm just a phone call away.

Storing Fuel Safely at a Glance

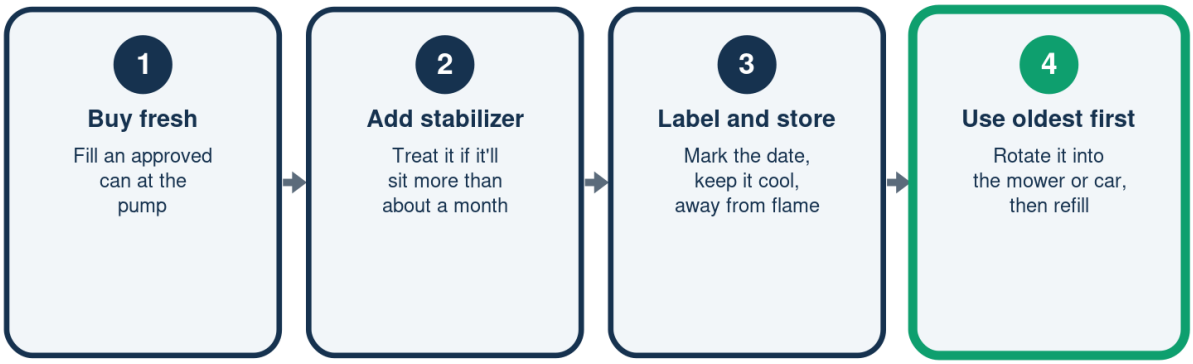
The do's and the don'ts

	Do this	Not this
Container	An approved gas can	Never a milk jug
Where to keep it	A cool detached shed	Not in living space
Keep away from	Furnace, pilots, sparks	A gas water heater
Staying fresh	Stabilize and rotate	Old, gummy gas
At the pump	Set can on the ground	Not in a truck bed

Approved cans, a cool detached spot far from any flame, fresh fuel, and care at the pump.

Keeping Your Fuel Fresh

From the pump to the tank, in order



Fresh fuel, treated and dated, used oldest-first — that's the whole rhythm.

Gasoline and Propane: Storing Each

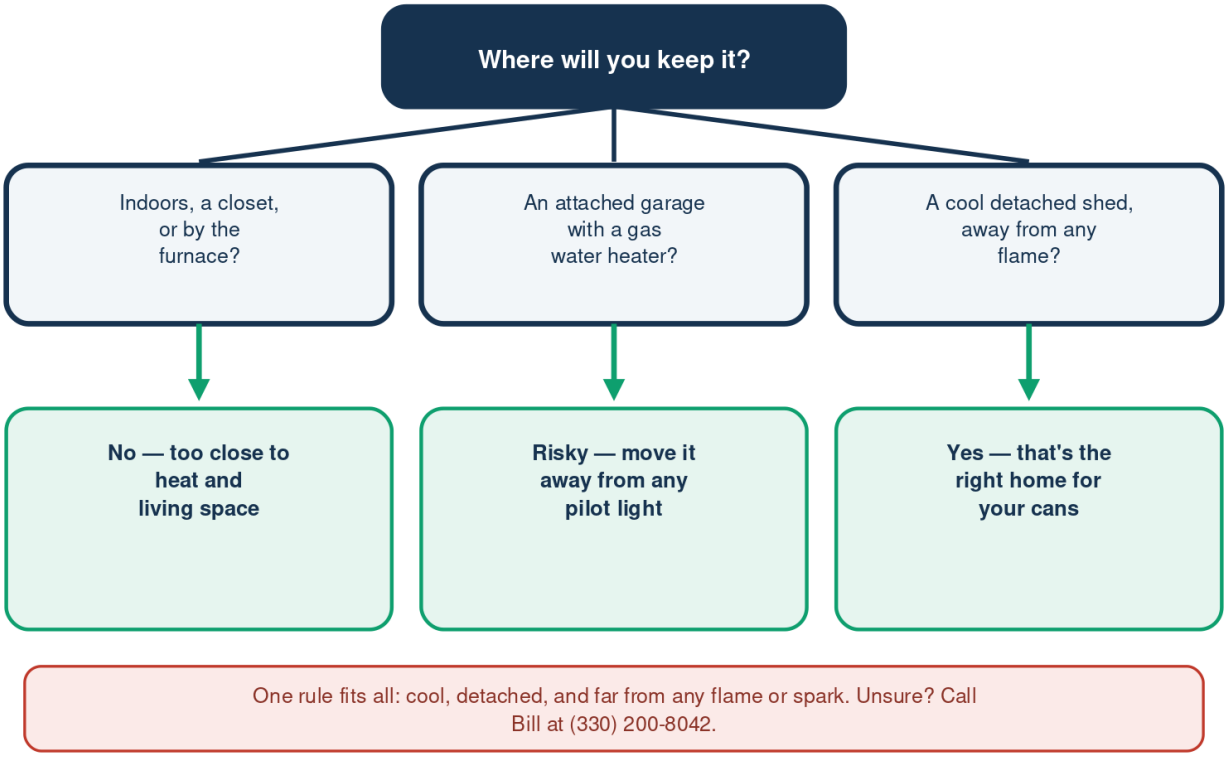
Two fuels, two sets of habits

	Gasoline	Propane
Container	An approved gas can	A steel cylinder
Where	Cool detached shed	Upright, outdoors
Shelf life	Months, goes stale	Years, stays good
Stabilizer?	Yes, over a month	No, not needed
Indoors?	No, keep it out	Never indoors

Gasoline needs freshening and rotating; propane keeps for years but lives outdoors.

Can I Store My Fuel Here?

Three spots, three answers



One rule fits all: cool, detached, and far from any flame or spark. Unsure? Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

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

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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

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