

11. Appendix: Frequently asked questions

Q: Do I need a berm and double walled tanks?

A: No. According to the guidelines set out by the AFC, only one extra barrier of containment is necessary. A double walled tank has the secondary containment built in the construction of the tank.

Q: How long can you store fuel?

A: There is no single answer to this. For all fuels, it depends upon the condition under which it is stored. Generally, gasoline is recommended to be used within a month of purchase. To maximize the storage, keep the tank nearly full (to minimize air contact and to allow for expansion) and in a cool environment (slowing down the rate of oxidation). Under these conditions, gasoline would be expected to remain of good quality for at least 6 months. Installing double walled tanks and/or using fuel stabilizer will help extend the storage life of gasoline. Diesel fuel, kept clean, cool and dry, can be expected to last longer, from 6-12 months. Periodic filtrations and addition of fuel stabilizers and biocides can also accomplish storage for longer periods.

Q: Are all farms exempt from the fire code?

A: Fuel storage used solely for agricultural purposes is exempt from the code. However, fuel storage used for other commercial activities (including operating a school bus, grader, construction equipment, etc.) would not be exempt.

Q: What are the requirements for the storage of propane tanks?

A: According to the fire code, propane tanks and cylinders should be stored no less than 6 metres away from petroleum tanks. In addition to this, propane cylinders and tanks are not permitted within the secondary containment area of the petroleum tanks. The distance between a propane cylinder and the centre of the containment wall must be no less than 3 metres and no less than 6 metres for propane tanks.

Q: What are the requirements for the storage of Jerry cans?

A: Jerry cans (or other small container storage) must be ULC or CSA approved. Jerry cans used for fuel storage should be kept at a minimum and should not be stored in a dwelling. If stored in a building, the maximum amount of gasoline allowed (according to the fire code) is 30 litres, and the maximum amount of diesel is 150 litres. However, if stored together, the quantities allowed are derived from the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Gasoline}}{30 \text{ litres}} + \frac{\text{Diesel}}{150 \text{ litres}} \leq 1$$

For example, if the amount of gasoline stored was 20 litres, the allowable volume of diesel storage would be 50 litres. A suggestion for storage of Jerry cans would be to use secondary containment. This could be as simple as placing the Jerry cans into a plastic or rubber tub to prevent minor spills or leaks from contaminating other areas during storage or transport.