



MSU DAWG TRACKS

Flammable liquids are used at most all our departments and stations. Identify the ones in your work area and ensure safety precautions are understood.

What is a flammable liquid? A flammable liquid as defined by the International Fire Code is “a liquid having a closed cup **flashpoint of 100° or below**”.

When you see a flammables **symbol** or the word “FLAMMABLE” on a can, jug, tank, or drum you must keep sparks and other forms of ignition away from that container.

FLAMMABLE SYMBOLS



A fact that may surprise some people is that flammable liquids themselves do not burn; their **vapors burn**. This is why it is vitally important to keep the tops on flammable liquid containers. An apparently empty flammable container (full of vapors) is potentially more dangerous than a full container of flammable liquid.

It has been said that **1 gallon of vaporized gasoline can explode with the same force as 20 sticks of dynamite**. Because flammable liquids obviously are so hazardous, precautions must be taken to keep them protected, if not isolated, from exposure to fire.

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Precautions for flammable liquids:

- Avoid accumulation of vapors and to control sources of ignition including open flames, electrical equipment & sources of static electricity.
- Never re-fuel running or hot equipment such as generators, weed eaters, or chainsaws.
- In laboratories, when working with open containers, use a fume hood to control the accumulation of flammable vapor.
- Store, use, and transport flammable liquids only in approved containers.
- Use UL approved flammable storage cabinets for smaller containers and aerosols.
- Do not use regular refrigerators for flammable that must be kept cool; only use UL listed explosion proof refrigerators.
- On drums install grounding/bonding wires and a safety drum vent - designed to automatically prevent pressure from building up inside the drum if it is exposed to heat. It also prevents a vacuum from forming if the drum is subjected to sudden cooling.
- Always inspect your work area for gas jugs, lacquer thinner cans or any flammable items before welding, cutting or grinding.

Sources:

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ThyssenKrupp Elevator Toolbox Talks
<http://www.ehstoday.com/environment/hazardous-waste/safe-handling-flammable-liquids-0309>