

Safety Note 71

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PETROLEUM – Transportation, Storage & Use.

Summary			
This Safety Note summarises the best practice for transportation, storage and the use of petrol.			
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Introduction

Petroleum is a dangerous substance; it is an extremely flammable liquid and can give off vapour at room temperature which can easily be ignited, even at low concentrations (1.4% mixture with air). If not handled safely it has the potential to cause a serious fire and/or explosion and presents a risk to human health and also to the environment.

Staff and students are advised to follow the guidance in this Safety Note when they transport, store or use petrol on campus or any other location in connection with their work activities.

Petrol Containers

Petrol may only be stored in a container designed for the sole purpose for the storage of petrol. See [HSE Portable petrol storage containers Guidance](#)

Using a petrol station

Petrol filling stations will have their own company policy on the types and numbers of containers that are allowed to be filled often restricted to one or two 5L plastic / 10L metal containers. University staff/students are advised to comply with the filling station requirements.

The risk assessment for work using petrol should include the filling activity at the petrol station. All users must follow petrol station safety instructions when filling the vehicle petrol tank or portable container. Containers must be placed on the ground when filling.

Transportation of petrol

The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2009 ([CDG 2009](#)) sets out limits to how much petrol can be transported by individuals.

It is recommended the maximum amount of petrol carried within portable containers in a university vehicle is 20 litres.

Petrol cans must be stowed correctly to avoid spillage, damage or loss from the vehicle, for example secured in the boot of a car or the load carrying area of a van or pick up. Petrol stored in an open back vehicle must not be left unattended to prevent theft.

The vehicle being used to transport petrol must carry 1 x 2kg Dry powder fire extinguisher. Arrangements must be made for visual inspections of the fire extinguishers weekly and an annual service. A spill kit must also be carried.

The driver of the vehicle must have received general training to include:

- What to do in an emergency
- How to use the fire extinguisher
- Fire precautions to be taken when carrying or handling petrol

Storage of petrol

The Dangerous Substances & Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002 (DSEAR) requires risks from the indoor storage of petrol to be controlled by elimination or by reducing the quantities in the workplace to a minimum and providing mitigation to protect against foreseeable incidents.

It is recognised that for practical purposes where petrol is used, there is likely to be a need for a limited quantity to be stored in the vehicle and/or working area. It is the responsibility of the manager when carrying out their risk assessment required under DSEAR to justify the need to store quantities of petrol within a vehicle or working area.

Further information regarding the storage of flammable liquids and internal storage cabinets can be found within the university [Safety Code of Practice 24 - DSEAR](#)

Using petrol safely

The use of petrol is subject to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) - see University [Safety Code of Practice 28 - COSHH](#)

Training

Users should receive training including but not limited to:

- Dealing with potential emergencies, including the use of firefighting equipment, and spillage procedures.
- The use of protective clothing, such as footwear, gloves and goggles, and when to wear them.
- The need to know not to smoke, eat or drink when handling petrol.
- The need to wash properly with plenty of soap and water after finishing work, or at any time when skin becomes contaminated with petrol.
- The correct methods of handling and lifting.

Useful Information

- [HSE Storing Petrol Safely](#)
- [HSE Staying safe while storing and using petrol](#)