

Store More Emergency Fuel for Less Money and Time. Here's How.

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With inflation, [cyber-attacks](#), and gas prices going way up, building your emergency fuel supply has never been more urgent.

The problem is there's a lot of upkeep and expense that goes into long-term fuel storage. Between the nearly constant rotating and treatment (not to mention the challenges of finding a good place to keep it), plenty of people give up on the project altogether.

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Warning! Old Gas Can Ruin Your Engine.



As gas ages it evaporates and degrades. It loses volatility and produces gum that sticks to your engine.

First things first: the fuel we use in our cars is very different than the crude oil it's made from. To become usable gasoline, it's put through an elaborate refining process. Impurities like sulfur are removed. Lubricants and detergents are added.

The resulting fuel is a highly precise mixture that modern engines are specifically built for.

But all that extra stuff can start to evaporate and degrade pretty quickly. When this happens, stored gasoline essentially turns into a different substance—one that your engine is not made to run on. It loses its volatility. It takes on impurities. It even begins producing gum that sticks to the walls of your fuel system and ruins your engine.

This is why preppers regularly cycle their fuel supply. It can be a costly exercise—but you can cut that cost with a few of these key tips:

1. Variety Is Key

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One of the best ways to save money and time on fuel storage is to add variety to your supply.

Unleaded isn't the only useful power source in a disaster. There are [other types of fuel](#) to consider stocking up on that will last longer, cost less, and take up less space.

Kerosine

Many preppers swear by kerosine as the ultimate backup power source for light. There's a reason it was the lantern fuel of choice throughout the nineteenth century. It's cheap, easy to make, and burns bright and clean.

When gas is sold out and batteries are dead, a big supply of kerosine will be worth its weight in gold.

Propane

Propane can do everything from cook a meal to power a car. You'd be well-served to purchase one or two propane-powered appliances (like a camp stove, for starters) and stock them away in your long-term supply.

White Gas

White gas should be one of your first choices for bugging out. Be careful storing and using it though—it's extremely flammable. However, it's also extremely efficient and burns well at high elevations.

Rubbing Alcohol

Isopropyl alcohol can be a great fuel for portable stoves. A simple alcohol-powered penny can stove boils water in ten minutes. It's safe, clean, and lasts a long time.

It's also one of the most important first-aid items you can buy. It disinfects lacerations very effectively, which can literally save your life in an emergency.

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Paraffin wax and oil are cheap, long-lasting fuel sources for creating light.

Paraffin Oil (or Wax)

This is another great [stand-in light source](#) that will save you from having to stockpile quite as much expensive, unleaded gasoline. Just take a block of paraffin wax, drill a small hole, place in a plant-fiber (like cotton), light it, and voilà—you've got a candle that will burn for hours.

Diesel

We've seen it before and we'll see it again: during a disaster, unleaded gasoline is one of the first resources to run dry.

Diesel rarely has that problem, which is one of the many reasons you should consider purchasing a diesel/propane dual fuel generator. Sure, it's more expensive, but it will save you in a pinch.

2. Know the Shelf Life of the Types of Fuels You Store

Don't make the mistake of assuming that all fuels have the same shelf life—quite the opposite! Fuels vary in shelf stability. Under optimal conditions, here's how long they will last:

Unleaded Gas – Three to six months (untreated)

Diesel – One year

Kerosine – Five years

Propane – Gas lasts indefinitely. The tank lasts about 30 years.

White Gas – Five to seven years...some say decades.

Rubbing Alcohol – Two to three years

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Metal gas cans protect fuel more effectively, for a better shelf life and savings over the long haul.

Sure, those plastic cans the at big box store are cheap, but we recommend springing for something a little better if you're able.

Metal cans last a very long time and are more protective than plastic. That alone can add life to your fuel supply.

Whatever can you pick up, make sure it's large enough. If you plan on using to store generator fuel, go for a five-gallon can. Find something with a pour spout, spring-loaded valve or lid, flame arresters, and cap locks.

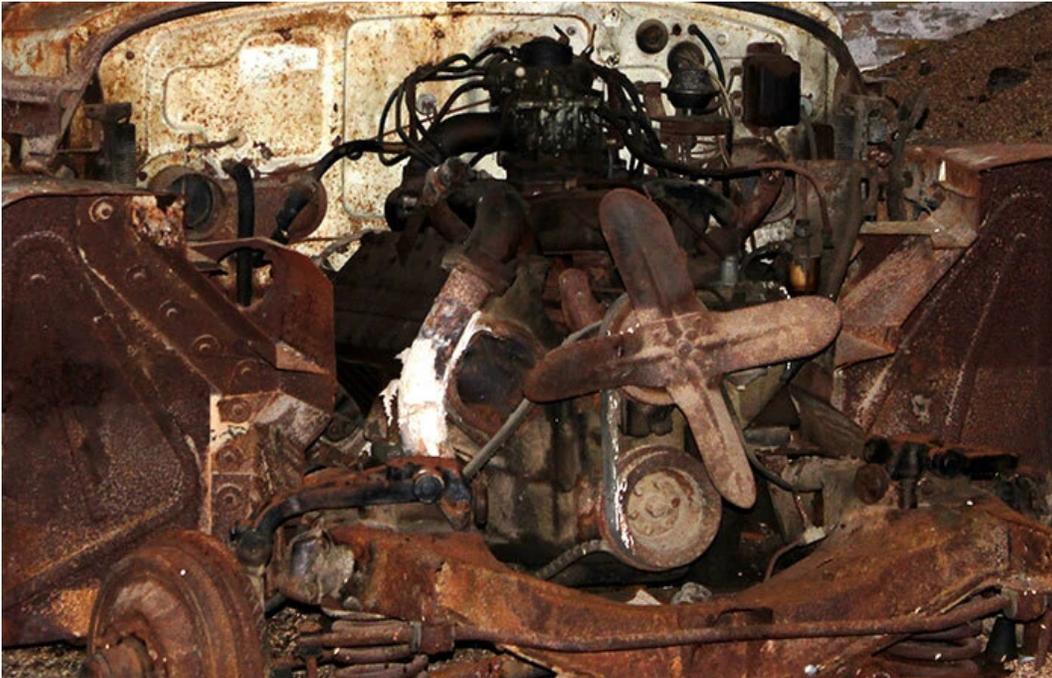
A word of warning: do not fill any gas container while it's in a vehicle, [including a pickup bed](#)—this can spark a vehicle fire.

4. Keep it Cool and Away from Water

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Water in your gasoline can destroy your engine over time.

Storing gas in proper conditions is one of the best ways to extend shelf life. Keeping it at room temperature prevents heat cycles that form condensation in your container and contaminate your fuel with water.

Needless to say, water isn't great for a car engine. It's not good for storage cans either—it will rust and corrode them in no time at all.

In fact, keep gas cans away from all forms of water. Store them well clear of water lines, sprinklers, leaky roofs and windows, water heaters, stacks of bottled water, etc.

5. Know Your Additives

You knew this was coming... Yes, additives are an important element of long-term fuel storage, but not all of them are created equal.

First, we should distinguish between [performance and storage fuel stabilizers](#). Performance stabilizers will do well enough at keeping fuel fresh, but they're designed to break down impurities and get your engine performing efficiently.

Storage stabilizers, on the other hand, are made to keep fuel fresh just sitting on the shelf. These are the best additives for your emergency supply. Just make sure to check that they're compatible with your engine type—either diesel or gasoline.

What do you do to extend the life of your fuel supply? Any tips or tricks to share? Let us know in the comments below!

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