

Fuel Storage

Do your survival plans include long term fuel storage? **If not...they should.** Why? Because fuel provides **options**...and when it comes to survival, **options are like gold.**

There are five primary fuels to consider storing:

1. Firewood
2. Gasoline
3. Diesel Fuel
4. Kerosene
5. Propane

And these fuels are necessary for:

- Creating heat (*food/warmth*)
- Running a standard generator or appliances (*electricity*)
- Motor transportation

OK you get it...sounds easy, right? Just chop down a few trees and you got firewood. Just head down to your local gas station and fill up some plastic fuel cans...right? Not so fast....

Firewood

Firewood is probably the most common form of fuel to store for long term survival. Why? Firewood is often abundant (*location dependent*); it's relatively inexpensive, it's not complicated to store, and there are no laws on how much you can store. Firewood is also great for creating heat and cooking foods without electricity or chemicals.

Different woods have different burn properties.

Softwoods are poor burners. They burn too quickly with low heat output. They leave a lot of ash and are pungent burners. They tend to deteriorate faster than hardwoods.

Hardwoods have better burning properties. They burn slowly, with high heat output. They keep better in storage, and they produce less pungent smoke.

Firewood needs to be seasoned to get the most benefit from it. Seasoning firewood consists of chopping it, splitting it to useable sizes and then storing it in a dry location for at least six months (*a year is better*) before use. While there are worse things you can do than burning pre-seasoned firewood, it's still something to be avoided. Why? Firewood that is not properly seasoned won't burn well (*low heat output*) and will create more creosote buildup in chimneys. Creosote build-up causes chimney fires.

Long Term Gasoline Storage: The Most Popular Fuel

What happens when gas stations have no electricity to pump? Or what if the gas stations are overrun with extremely long lines due to panic and go empty within hours? You should have enough long term gasoline storage to get to a safe location or enough gasoline to run a generator for 72 hours if you are staying put.

Gasoline left alone, won't keep...it has a very short shelf life. As it ages, it will deteriorate over time and eventually become useless. Essentially it's one of the most difficult fuels to store long term. So you have two options...you can either learn how to store gasoline long term (*keep it from deteriorating*) or come up with a regular fuel rotation system.

How to Store Gasoline Long Term

Depending upon how your gas is stored, gas will typically last up to a year before it starts to become highly unusable. However, there are products that can be added to the gasoline to increase the shelf life. Gasoline stabilizer additives are designed to prevent natural deterioration of its ignition properties. Just add the stabilizer to your gasoline within a year, mix well and you're ready for another year. It generally needs to be done **every year...not just once.**

Or Just Rotate Your Gasoline

If you would rather not deal with additives, you could also rotate long term gasoline storage. Just pour the gas from the container into your car and use as normal, and then refill your storage containers with fresh gas from your local station. To ensure you stay clear of any ill deterioration effects, it's probably best to rotate your gasoline storage every six months.

How Much Gasoline Should You Store?

This depends on a variety of personal factors, but in general, store 25% more than it takes to get to your location. So for example, if your location is 300 miles away...you'd ideally have about 25 gallons of fuel stored (*assuming 15 mpg*). This will allow you to easily get to your location **without being dependent upon any gas stations**. Or if you are staying put, store enough fuel to run a generator for 72 hours.

A Few More Gasoline Long Term Fuel Storage Tips

There may be some local legal restrictions on how much gasoline you can legally store in one location at any given time. Before you start storing, you'll need to find gasoline approved containers to keep the fuel in. Since gas (*and its vapors*) are highly flammable, it needs to be stored out of the extreme elements such as direct sunlight, extreme moisture, and extreme temperatures.

- Store gasoline separate from your living quarters such as an unattached shed. Keep it out of reach of children.
- Make certain your long term fuel storage location is at least 50 feet away from any ignition sources (*i.e. pilot lights*).
Note: gasoline vapor is heavier than air and can travel along the floor to ignition sources.
- To prevent gas vapor leak, ensure your approved containers are properly sealed at all time.

Diesel Fuel

You'll want to store diesel fuel instead of gasoline if your vehicle of choice is diesel powered. Diesel Fuel typically won't last more than 6 months. You can extend its life by adding additives (*similar to gasoline*). In general, diesel fuel is less dangerous to store than gasoline due to it being less prone to accidental ignition.

Kerosene

Kerosene is an ideal fuel to store because of its versatility. It can be used for lighting, heating, and cooking. Kerosene is considered a non-volatile fuel, meaning it won't explode (*unlike gasoline*), which is always a plus. It can also be stored for many years without significant degradation. Kerosene is very dense in energy and holds almost 50% more energy than propane. Since Kerosene is readily available under normal circumstances, you won't have any problems locating it and purchasing large amounts of it at reasonable prices

Propane

Propane can be stored in propane storage tanks in either large or small quantities. There are different sizes of propane storage tanks available so you would need to check with the supplier to see what sizes are available, as well as what sizes are permitted to be stored in your area.

Some localities allow for mass long term fuel storage of propane, but it can be challenging to find tanks large enough. As with Kerosene, propane can be stored safely for a long term without deteriorating and also is very versatile in uses. It can be used for stoves, lights, heaters, and even your refrigerator.

So Which Fuels Are The Best Long Term Fuel Storage?

It all depends upon your families' survival plan. Gasoline is important to get to your chosen location using your gas powered vehicle. Same goes for diesel fuel and diesel-powered cars and trucks. If you are staying put, then you may want to plan for using the less volatile fuels such as kerosene and/or propane. Either of these can be configured to power ovens, stoves, heaters, lights, etc. if properly planned for. I believe everyone should store as much firewood as possible.

Charcoal is another fuel that is easy to store and can last for a long time. It is recommended that charcoal be stored in a cool, dry place.