



Image: Getty

Oct 01, 2021 17:28 BST

RAC sets out the law on storing fuel at home

And how can I can eke out extra miles from my tank? RAC gives top tips for fuel-efficient driving

With reports of drivers filling containers and even plastic bottles during the worst of the fuel delivery crisis, the RAC is today informing drivers of the law around storing fuel at home.

While the law says you can store up to 30 litres of petrol at home without a

licence, that doesn't mean you should in the current situation. Stockpiling fuel at home when fuel deliveries are disrupted only makes it more difficult for others to get the petrol or diesel they need and homeowners may be putting themselves and others at risk from fire.

What does the law say?

An individual is allowed to store up to 30 litres of petrol without a special licence. There is, however, no specific legal requirement on the storage of diesel in your home.

How should petrol be stored?

Petrol must be stored in the right container: always use proper container that is designed for use with petrol, and make sure it has a tight-fitting cap. You're allowed to store up to 10 litres in a plastic container, up to 20 litres in a metal 'jerry' can and up to 30 litres in a demountable fuel tank, such as from a small boat. Storing petrol is a fire risk, so keep it in a secure outbuilding – like a shed or garage – that is away from any sources of ignition and is cool and well ventilated. Never store it outside or inside your house, and of course keep it well out of the reach of children and pets. While diesel is not flammable like petrol, it can still pose a danger, so it's advisable to follow the same steps.

How long can I keep fuel for?

Petrol has a shelf-life of around six months if stored in a sealed container at 20 degrees – or just three months if kept at 30 degrees. The more it's exposed to heat, the more quickly it will go off. If the petrol is contaminated in any way, the quality will start to fall away sooner.

The RAC's view:

RAC fuel spokesman Simon Williams said: "Just because it's legal to store up to 30 litres of petrol at home, doesn't mean it's the right thing to do when so many drivers have been struggling to get the fuel they need to go to work and carry out their important daily tasks. Those who need to should follow the law carefully to keep themselves, their families and neighbours safe. Petrol should always be kept in the proper containers in an outbuilding and

never left outside.”

Find more tips from the RAC at: www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/know-how/does-fuel-go-off-old-fuel-and-fuel-storage-questions-answered

With drivers having to go from forecourt to forecourt looking for petrol and diesel, driving fuel efficiently has suddenly become much more important. Fortunately, there's also lots you can do to get as much out of a single tank of petrol or diesel as possible. Try these tips:

Drive with a light right foot

The way you drive has the biggest impact on how much fuel you use. Accelerate and brake gently, and in a manual car drive in the highest gear possible (while staying within the speed limit of course). This keeps the engine's revs down and saves fuel.

Try to maintain momentum

Slowing down (and stopping) and then having to build speed back up again wastes fuel, so as far as you can anticipate what's happening up ahead and adjust your speed smoothly using the gears. For instance, if you can see traffic lights ahead are red then approach more slowly and you may not need to stop at all. Good for your mpg, and you've kept moving!

Combine your journeys

Cold starts increase your car's fuel consumption, whereas a warm engine is a much more efficient one, so try to make one round trip rather than lots of separate ones where you're switching off and then back on again.

More tips on fuel efficient driving can found: www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/how-to/fuel-saving-tips

The RAC's view

RAC fuel spokesman Simon Williams said: “The recent events have thrown into sharp focus just how dependent many of us are on our cars, whether that’s getting to and from work, shopping, attending urgent medical appointments or going to see friends and family. While we all hope not to see a return to the worst of the forecourt delivery problem but if we do, it’s worth knowing what to do to conserve as much fuel as possible – and even in normal times, driving more efficiently can save drivers money.”

The press office email address is press.enquiries@rac.co.uk and media centre is at media.rac.co.uk. **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the [RAC contacts page](#) to find the right contact.

About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to nearly 13 million UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance and repair. The RAC is also at the forefront in helping drivers make the switch to electric vehicles and leads in the development of new solutions for businesses and OEMs, partnering with the best in the motoring and mobility space.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

Contacts



Press office team

Press Contact

For journalist enquiries only

Emails monitored during normal office hours

press.office@rac.co.uk

ISDN number on request