

National Council, Boy Scouts of America



Policy on the Storage, Handling, and Use of Chemical Fuels and Equipment

Purpose

This policy directs Boy Scouts of America members how to safely store, handle, and use chemical fuels and equipment. Safety and environmental awareness concerns have persuaded many campers to move away from traditional outdoor campfires in favor of chemical-fueled equipment for cooking, heating, and lighting. Be aware that chemical fuels and equipment create very different hazards than traditional wood, charcoal, and other solid fuels; this policy defines how to address those hazards.

Before any chemical fuels or chemical-fueled equipment is used, an adult knowledgeable about chemical fuels and equipment, including regulatory requirements should resolve any hazards not specifically addressed within this policy.

Definitions

Chemical Fuels—Liquid, gaseous, or gelled fuels.

Approved Chemical-Fueled Equipment—Commercially manufactured equipment, including stoves, grills, burners, heaters, and lanterns that are designed to be used with chemical fuels.

Prohibited Chemical-Fueled Equipment—Equipment that is handcrafted, homemade, modified, or installed beyond the manufacturer's stated design limitations or use. Examples include alcohol-burning "can" stoves, smudge pots, improperly installed heaters, and propane burners with their regulators removed.

Recommended Chemical Fuels—White gas (Coleman fuel); kerosene; liquefied petroleum gas fuels, includ-

ing propane, butane, and isobutane; vegetable oil fuels; biodiesel fuel; and commercially prepared gelled-alcohol fuel in original containers.

Chemical Fuels not Recommended—Unleaded gasoline; liquid alcohol fuels, including isopropyl alcohol, denatured ethyl alcohol, and ethanol; and other flammable chemicals that are not in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for chemical-fueled equipment.

Storing, Handling, and Using Chemical Fuels and Equipment

An adult knowledgeable about chemical fuels and equipment should always supervise youth involved in the storage, handling, and use of chemical fuels and equipment.

Operate and maintain chemical-fueled equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions and in facilities or areas only where and when permitted.

Using liquid fuels for starting any type of fire—including lighting damp wood, charcoal, and ceremonial campfires or displays—is prohibited.

No flames in tents. This includes burning any solid, liquid, gel, or gas fuel; including tents or teepees that feature or support stoves or fires; and any chemical-fueled equipment or catalytic heaters.

Store chemical fuels in their original containers or in containers designed for immediate use. Securely store any spare fuel away from sources of ignition, buildings, and tents.

During transport and storage, properly secure chemical fuel containers in an upright, vertical position.