



Southport Model Engineering Club (S.M.E.C)

Safety Notice

Control of Model Locomotive's Fuel Containers; Flammable Liquids and Gases

Applicable To All Gauges

Note: The term “Flammable Liquids” applies to any flammable liquid or flammable gases used for the operation of model locomotives. Examples: Methylated Spirit, Isopropanol, Bio Ethanol, Paraffin, Petrol, Butane and Propane Gases.

Purpose of Safety Notice

We have been advised by the Gauge 1 society of a most frightful accident that occurred at a Gauge 1 running event, due to a substantial quantity of Methylated Spirit being mistakenly applied to a small fire and igniting, causing serious burns – the worst in their history to our knowledge. SMEC members are asked to carefully read this Safety Notice, which has been prepared and approved by your whole Committee; and to take every care in handling inflammable liquids and gases at all times.

All liquid fuels to be dyed

In previous years Methylated Spirit was sold through the decorating trade and hardware stores and was coloured purple as a deterrent to drinking alcohol. Recently, clear Methylated Spirit has become available and also alternative fuels, Isopropanol and Bio Ethanol, which are sold uncoloured. The addition of a dye highlights that the liquid is fuel and not to be mistaken as water. Gentian/Methyl Violet or food colouring may be used.

Maximum quantity brought onto club premises

Many people have brought fuel to meetings in retail 5ltr containers. This quantity is unnecessary for a day's running. To reduce risk, the **maximum** quantity to be brought onto club premises is 1ltr. Decanting fuel from a larger quantity to the recommended quantity should be done at home.

Fuel Containers

To enable identification of fuel, it is recommended that original, labelled, retail containers be used. These are officially approved for transport and storage and will have the recognized hazard markings.

Fuels placed in a secure storage area

Keeping fuels away from trackside reduces the possibility of contact with open flames, and reduces the chance of being erroneously grabbed in haste. A table for the fuels, away from the steaming bay and track, is considered adequate and recommended. Fuel should not be stored under the track where a liquid fire could drip down onto a plastic bottle or container and ignite it.

Filling of locomotive fuel tanks

Wherever possible, the locomotive fuel tank should be removed from the engine and filled at a location remote from open flames – especially away from engines that are already lit. The refilling should be from a container of no more than 500 ml, which can include a syringe, or bottle with spout or funnel, to limit spillage. Fuel must not be left in syringes but must be emptied back into container that can be closed once filling has been completed.

Equipment for fire fighting

Means of extinguishing fires must be provided. Water has proved effective in extinguishing small alcohol fires, and spray bottles or other bulk water containers must be provided at locomotive fueling areas. For larger fires; a fire extinguisher is located in the truck store and a fire blanket in the signal box.

Public and Club Events

These are subject to risk assessments and controls that may be imposed and agreed with the event organizer, and issued by the event operational overseer.