



Introduction

The risk of an incendive spark igniting petrol vapours during the filling of small containers at petrol filling stations is a conceivable phenomenon that site operators should be aware of. This note advises site operators on the control measures that they and their staff should take to avoid static discharge when small containers are being filled.

Site operators may wish to include this Information Note in their programme of staff training.

Generation of Static Electricity

There are three likely means that could generate a charge of static electricity:-

- 1) The flow of petrol when the container is being filled.
- 2) Friction when the container is slid across the floor of a van or pick-up.
- 3) In the case of a pick-up (open backed vehicle), the impact of dust in the airflow around the container when the vehicle is moving.

Control Measures

Small Containers (< 5 litres)

- 1) The container must be either metal or (approved) plastic.
- 2) The container should be placed on the forecourt when being filled.
- 3) Funnels should not be used; the pump nozzle should be inserted into the container.
- 4) The nozzle should be in contact with the container and inserted at least 10 cm into the fill opening.
- 5) The container should be filled slowly and spillages should be avoided. The pump nozzle should remain in contact with the container for the duration of the filling operation.
- 6) The person filling the container should stand on the forecourt and follow the site safety procedures for the dispensing of petroleum spirit.

Large Containers (< 23 litres)

- 1) The container must be metal and purposely made for keeping petrol.
- 2) The container should be placed on the forecourt when being filled.
- 5) The container should be filled slowly and spillages should be avoided.
- 6) The pump nozzle should remain in contact with the container for the duration of the filling operation.
- 7) The person filling the container should stand on the forecourt and follow the site safety procedures for the dispensing of petroleum spirit.

Whenever containers are to be filled, the site supervisor should first ensure that the containers are of the correct size and type and the measures detailed above are followed before commissioning the pump.

NB: The above control measures do not apply when containers are being filled with diesel.