

Flammable/Combustible Liquid Storage Safety Guidelines

A flammable/combustible is any substance that is easily ignited, burns intensely, or has a rapid rate of flame spread. For regulatory convenience, flammable and combustible liquids are defined together as any liquid with a flash point below 140° F. Based on criteria from [OSHA](#) and [NFPA](#), some key flammable/combustible liquid storage requirements are listed below.

- Minimize the amount flammable liquids that are in use, being stored, and that are generated as wastes.
- Flammable/combustible liquid storage containers shall be as small as possible and comply with NFPA criteria.
- Glass containers shall not be stored on the floor, unless protected with secondary containment.
- Storage of flammable liquids greater than 10 gallons, including the working inventory, within an area must be in an approved and labeled flammable storage cabinet.
- Flammable storage cabinets must be listed by Factory Mutual, Underwriters Laboratory or other equivalent testing agency.
- The flammable storage cabinets should be labeled: Flammables - Keep Fire Away.
- Incompatible materials (e.g., oxidizers) shall not be stored adjacent to flammables. Secondary containment bins are recommended for helping to isolate incompatible chemicals.
- Flammable storage cabinets should not be stored near doors, hallways, common egress points, near hot work locations (welding, burning, cutting areas), or near other potential ignition sources.
- The flammable storage cabinets should not be altered.
- Additional requirements and limitations on the use and storage of flammables/combustibles may be necessary, e.g., material-specific requirements for highly hazardous materials. The Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) shall be reviewed by the owner/user of the materials for additional safety requirements and precautions.
- Flammable/combustible solids are handled in the same manner as liquid flammables/combustibles.

Information for this document was obtained from the [Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute](#) and other sources.

More information about safety is available from the Safe-Wise Consulting [Online Resource Library](#).