

## **Best Practices for storage of petroleum products at WORK SITES.**

### **Position Statement for Park Personnel**

#### **Glacier National Park**

(December 2007)

Petroleum products, such as motor oil, grease guns, gasoline, and their containers do not provide bears with a food reward but are potential bear attractants. While there are no known incidents of bears seeking out or consuming petroleum products in GNP, there are cases of bears being attracted to and consuming petroleum products in localities near GNP. As with other attractants, petroleum products are likely to be more of an issue in areas where there are seriously food conditioned bears; wild bears with no history of food conditioning are less likely to be attracted to petroleum products. That petroleum is not a problem in GNP is likely due to a successful bear management program that has prevented or significantly minimized food conditioning among bears, and perhaps also to the low availability of petroleum products in GNP, compared to areas outside the park.

The potential for petroleum products to attract bears may increase with the ongoing rehabilitation of the GTSR and the anticipated increase in availability of petroleum products. Minimizing the accessibility of petroleum products to bears will further reduce the chances of bears being attracted to developed areas and work sites and will help prevent costly equipment damage and fuel spills as a result of bears or other animals biting into petroleum containers, hoses, and the like.

Glacier National Park does not currently have guidelines for minimizing the accessibility of petroleum products to bears at work sites. The compliance documents for the GTSR rehabilitation project require that all attractants, including petroleum products, be stored or disposed of in such a way that they are not available to bears. To better explain this specification, achieve a more comprehensive approach toward bear attractants, and provide for a responsible and realistic solution that is workable for contractors and park personnel alike, the following storage recommendations have been developed as Best Practices for reducing the attractant potential of petroleum without compromising safety, efficiency, and common sense.

## **Petroleum Product Storage Recommended Best Practices**

The following Best Practices for the storage of petroleum products have been developed as measures to be undertaken whenever possible to minimize their attractant potential:

- 1) Store petroleum products that are left unattended at job sites or staging areas during weekends, days off, or overnight (i.e. when no work activity is occurring) in bear resistant containers.
  - Acceptable containers include but are not limited to: storage trailers or tool sheds, truck-bed tool boxes, steel drums, generators, vehicle and heavy equipment fuel tanks.
  - During weekends or days off, secure service truck grease and fuel hoses in the same manner that they are stored when the truck is in transit.
- 2) Do not store liquid petroleum products in containers without lids, caps, or the like, such as buckets, tin cans, etc.
- 3) While in the park, do not dispose of empty petroleum product containers in non-bear proof trash receptacles.
- 4) If possible, store petroleum products that will be unattended during the workday in truck-bed tool boxes or other secure areas.
  - If secure storage is not available for petroleum products that will be unattended during the workday, then such items may be left in the open beds of trucks or trailers.
  - Containers of highly volatile fluids (like gasoline) are exceptions and for safety reasons should NOT be stored in an enclosed environment. These items are best left in the open beds of pick-up trucks or open trailers.
  - It is not recommended that petroleum products of any kind be stored inside the passenger compartment of vehicles.
- 5) Wherever possible, backcountry workers such as trail and fire crews should avoid leaving petroleum products unattended and accessible to wildlife overnight.
- 6) Gasoline, oil, and other petroleum products should not be left unattended outside of vehicles or on the ground where animals can access them, puncture the containers, and cause the contents to leak onto the ground.
  - Petroleum products left on the ground in reasonably close proximity to workers do not present a concern.

Mention of petroleum products as a potential bear attractant will be included in the Waterton-Glacier Guide and other relevant material that is given to park visitors. Visitors will be encouraged to store petroleum products in such a way that their attractant potential is minimized (store motor oil and white gas in tool boxes, if possible; store gasoline in industry approved containers; try not to leave petroleum products unattended, especially overnight; try not to leave petroleum products unattended on the ground).