

How-to

# How to Store Hand Sanitizer to Avoid Fire Hazards

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## Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer Storage

As businesses make plans to reopen, owners are forced to consider safety issues that wouldn't normally arise, including how to store, transport and safely use increased amounts of sanitizer, or alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR). The CDC recommends using hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. While it is important to consult your sanitizer's Safety Data Sheet (SDS), most ABHRs are considered a Class IB or Class IC flammable—meaning a flame or ignition source could cause it to catch fire. Without safe storage, even a few gallons of hand sanitizer pose a fire risk.

Or sometimes less. In a Chicago suburb in June of 2020, *a small bottle of hand sanitizer left on the dashboard of a car ignited*. According to the local fire department, sun shining through the windshield onto the bottle caused the fire. The vehicle owner stated she had been refilling the bottle with hand sanitizer supplied by her employer. The ABHR solution was strong – 80 percent alcohol.

To keep your employees and facilities safe, hand sanitizer needs to be stored, transported, used and disposed in accordance with the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) standards and NFPA 30 Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code. Justrite offers a range of solutions to help you comply with those standards. Not only have our products been designed to meet NFPA and OSHA standards, but they have been tested by National Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTL)— including FM Approvals, a laboratory registered under OSHA's NRTL program— and have proven to be effective for storing flammable materials safely.

## Use Indoor Storage Cabinets for Hand Sanitizer Storage – Small Containers through 55-Gallon Drums

Designed to safely store flammable liquids indoors, *safety cabinets* provide heat resistance to protect from fires. Justrite Sure-Grip® EX safety cabinets are available in an assortment of sizes and styles to accommodate a variety of storage options, from cabinets with shelving to hold safety cans and point-of-use containers to cabinets with drum rollers designed for convenient *storage and handling of drums*.

Many factors such as occupancy, building construction, sprinkler systems, and more can affect the maximum allowable quantity (MAQ) of a flammable liquid that is permitted in a facility. Always reference your local building and fire codes and consult your local fire department or AHJ for interpretation of the code and consensus before bringing a flammable liquid into your facility.

**RELATED ARTICLE:** *Proper Chemical Storage in Flammable Safety Cabinets*

## Use Outdoor Bulk Storage Lockers for Hand Sanitizer Storage – IBCs or Drums

*Outdoor storage lockers* offer safe storage of bulk quantities of flammable liquids such as hand sanitizer, without building or constructing a storage room. Designed for outdoors, safety storage lockers provide a suitable solution that also protect containers from weather and offer secondary containment

exceeding EPA requirements.



Justrite storage lockers are available in non-combustible, 2-, and 4-hour fire-rated construction. The choice of construction is impacted by many factors, such as site constraints, distance between lockers, distance to property lines, and more. Always reference your local building and fire codes and consult your local fire department or AHJ for interpretation of the code and consensus before specifying your outdoor storage locker for hand sanitizer storage.

#### **RELATED ARTICLE: *Flammable Safety Cabinets vs. Outdoor Storage Lockers***

Don't forget! Always ground or bond between containers when handling flammable liquids to help prevent a static spark from igniting the flammable vapors. Use ***antistatic wires*** to help eliminate static discharge.

### **Contact Justrite for Your Hand Sanitizer Storage Needs**

Justrite's experts can help you think through the process of handling alcohol-based hand sanitizer from the time pallets are dropped off at your site to the time it's in place for individual use. ***Contact Justrite*** for help finding the products you need to pass inspections and keep your facility safe.

Custom bulk storage options, indoor buildings, and temporary rental buildings are also available from ***U.S. Chemical Storage***. Justrite can also help with ***safe storage of bulk ethanol alcohol*** and other chemicals used for making hand sanitizers (ABHRs).

***Previously Featured on Justrite's Workplace Safety Articles and News.***

#### **Resources:**

- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.106 Flammable Liquids, Section (e)(2)(ii)(b)
- NFPA 30 Flammable and Combustible Liquids Code, Sec. 9.6 Maximum Allowable Quantities (MAQs) per Control Area
- NFPA 1 Fire Code, Sec. 66.9.6 Maximum Allowable Quantities (MAQs) per Control Area
- International Fire Code, Chapter 50: Hazardous Materials— General Provision
- NBC News Chicago. *Hand Sanitizer Causes Vehicle Fire in Suburban Waukegan*

