



Standard Specification for Cautionary Labeling of Portable Gasoline, Kerosene, and Diesel Containers for Consumer Use¹

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INTRODUCTION

On Oct. 24, 1979, at the request of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, ASTM convened a meeting of interested parties to discuss the merits of the development of a voluntary standard covering portable containers for petroleum products. As a result of this meeting ASTM Task Group F15.10 was formed at an organizational meeting held on Jan. 24, 1980.

During the early stages of its deliberations the task group concluded that the scope of its work should be limited to gasoline containers in view of the unique properties of the fluid, the broad consumer use of such containers and the impracticality of adequately addressing a broader scope on any timely basis. Further, the task group concluded that, in as much as consumer misuse is a major safety consideration, a standard specification for cautionary labeling should be its first order of business.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification establishes nationally recognized requirements for the cautionary information to be placed on the label of portable gasoline, kerosene, and diesel containers for consumer use. It is not the intent of this specification to include any other labeling requirements, such as those set forth in Federal Hazardous Substances Act (FHSA) or other applicable regulations and standards.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

[E926 Practice for the Cautionary Labeling of Portable Kerosene Containers for Consumer Use \(Withdrawn 1988\)](#)³

[F926 Specification for Cautionary Labeling of Portable Kerosene and Diesel Containers for Consumer Use \(Withdrawn 2014\)](#)³

2.2 Federal Document:⁴

[CFR 1500 Federal Hazardous Substances Act](#)

2.3 Other Document:

[NKHA-A1 Standard for Marking of Kerosene Storage Containers](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *portable diesel container, n*—a vessel designed to be carried by hand and to be used to transport diesel fuel from distribution points to use points.

3.1.2 *portable gasoline container, n*—a vessel designed to be carried by hand and to be used to transport gasoline from distribution points to use points.

3.1.3 *portable kerosene container, n*—a vessel designed to be carried by hand and to be used to transport kerosene fuel from distribution points to use points.

4. Requirements

4.1 The lettering shall be of a block style and shall be of a style consistent with the requirements listed in CFR 1500.

4.2 The information required is for a single panel or label, or both. If, because of size restrictions, the information must be divided, the main panel shall contain language consistent with the requirements of CFR 1500.

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F15 on Consumer Products and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F15.10 on Standards for Flammable Liquid Containers.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

⁴ *Code of Federal Regulations*, available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

NOTE 1—If the information is divided, it would be a good practice to have the statement “Harmful or Fatal if swallowed” and “If swallowed, do not induce vomiting, call physician immediately” together.

4.3 The following information shall appear on all portable gasoline, kerosene, or diesel containers:

DANGER
GASOLINE
EXTREMELY FLAMMABLE
VAPORS CAN EXPLODE
HARMFUL OR FATAL IF SWALLOWED
Or
DANGER
KEROSENE
COMBUSTIBLE
VAPORS CAN EXPLODE
HARMFUL OR FATAL IF SWALLOWED
DO NOT USE THIS CONTAINER FOR
GASOLINE OR OTHER FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS
Or
DANGER
DIESEL
COMBUSTIBLE
VAPORS CAN EXPLODE
HARMFUL OR FATAL IF SWALLOWED
DO NOT USE THIS CONTAINER FOR
GASOLINE OR OTHER FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS

If swallowed, do not induce vomiting, call physician immediately

Keep out of reach of children

Avoid prolonged breathing of vapors

Do not siphon by mouth

Do not store in vehicle or living space

Store and use in well-ventilated area

Vapors can be ignited by a spark or flame source many feet away

Keep away from flame, pilot lights, stoves, heaters, electric motors, and other sources of ignition

Keep container closed

4.4 Additional information for the proper use or function of the container may also appear.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Information on the wording of the warning labels which appear on the containers will help to ensure that proper information concerning methods of handling gasoline, kerosene, and diesel fuels is being presented to the consumer. This information can be imparted most effectively by the use of the same terms on labels provided by all manufacturers.

6. Keywords

6.1 diesel containers; fuel storage; gasoline containers; kerosene containers; portable fuel containers

APPENDIX

(Nonmandatory Information)

X1. STATEMENT OF RATIONALE FOR ELIMINATING SPECIFICATION **F926** AND COMBINING REQUIREMENTS WITH SPECIFICATION **F839**

X1.1 The purpose of this specification is to address labeling for identification and safe use and storage of all portable fuel containers, gasoline, kerosene and diesel, for consumer use. The objective is to establish nationally recognized colors and a compilation of language for each fuel that signal to the user what is in the container and how to transport, store, and dispense it safely. The English language only is considered.

X1.2 Broad acceptance to date of the color blue was persuasive to the task group in selecting it as the signal color for kerosene, as the color red is for gasoline and the colour yellow is for diesel.. (This is included in 4.1 of Practice **ES9** rather than in this specification.)

X1.2.1 Objectives of the label text included the following:

X1.2.1.1 Being consistent with FHSA labeling requirements,

X1.2.1.2 Signaling the degree of toxicity by use of the word “danger,”

X1.2.1.3 Signaling the contents—kerosene—as having a flash point above 80°F by use of the word “combustible” as opposed to the words “flammable” or “extremely flammable” for other petroleum distillates—such as gasoline—which have lower flash points,

X1.2.1.4 Cautioning against dangers of substantial personal injury or substantial illness from ingestion or prolonged breathing of vapors and providing instruction not to induce vomiting but to call a physician immediately,

X1.2.1.5 Warning not to use the kerosene or diesel container for gasoline or other flammable liquids, and

X1.2.1.6 Admonitory instructions about safe handling and storage.

X1.3 The task group used Practice **ES9** as a basis for the kerosene container labeling practice and adapted it to reflect the lesser hazard of kerosene in terms of flammability. Special emphasis was given to warning against misuse of the kerosene or diesel container by inadvertently putting gasoline in it, then subsequently using the contents to fuel a kerosene burning appliance, and lighting off the appliance.

X1.4 The type size and precise sequence of signal words, warnings, and instructions were thoroughly debated with respect to order of appearance, grouping of instructions where more than one label or panel is involved, and possible use of a warning symbol near the fill opening to caution against putting gasoline in the container.

X1.4.1 NKHA's use of a cautionary symbol near the fill opening (as included in *NKHA-AI Standard for Marking of Kerosene Storage Containers*) was not deemed persuasive by the task group because investigation by a sub-group in 1980 in connection with gasoline containers has not discovered a

symbol of that type which has universal perception or broad usage. The subcommittee at that time recommended against adoption of a hazard symbol for gasoline containers. Also, the task group recognized that the blue container color was itself a symbol.

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