Gasoline Degradation

John Collins. USCGAux, Sector Boston ADSO-PE

If you don't use your boat for a while, the gasoline degrades. Gasoline with ethanol in it has a limited life. The ethanol portion of the fuel attracts water from the environment and absorbs it. At some point, the fuel will absorb more water than its ability to hold and the water and ethanol drops out of solution and sinks to the bottom of the tank. The formerly homogenous fuel blend is now a combination of poor quality gasoline on top and water and ethanol on the bottom.

You need a fuel stabilizer to prevent the separation. Ethanol is very corrosive, as is the water it attracts. You should use an ethanol stabilizer fuel treatment that uses a non-alcoholic stabilization ingredient.

This also applies to your lawn mower, chain saw, or any other gasoline powered device. You probably noticed that you get less out of the ethanol/gasoline. This is because ethanol has only about two thirds the energy as gasoline has.

27 May 2025