

Kilkenny County Council



Fire & Rescue Service

Report: Petroleum Station Refuelling – Safety
Announcement

Date: May 2005

Collated by: _____

Killian John Hennessy Assistant Fire Officer

Approved by: _____

Ciaran Cormican Chief Fire Officer

You should know that:

- Mobile Phones can ignite fuel or fumes.

- Mobile phones that light up when switched on or when they ring release enough energy to provide a spark for ignition.

- Mobile phones should not be used in filling stations, or when fueling lawn mowers, boat! etc.

- Mobile phones should not be used, or should be turned off, around other materials that generate flammable or explosive fumes or dust, (i.e. solvents, chemicals, gases, grain dust, etc.)

To sum it up, here are the **Four Rules for Safe Refueling**

- 1) Turn off engine,
- 2) Do not smoke,
- 3) Do not use your mobile phone - leave it inside the vehicle or turn it off,
- 4) Do not re-enter your vehicle during refueling.

The Petroleum Equipment Institute is working on a campaign to try and make people aware of fires as a result of "**static electricity**" at vending pumps. They have researched **150 cases of these fires.**

Their results were very surprising, highlighted points are as follows:

- 1) Out of 150 cases, almost all of them were women.
- 2) Almost all cases involved the person getting back in their vehicle while the vending nozzle was still pumping fuel. When finished, they went back to pull the nozzle out and the fire started, possibly as a result of static electricity.
- 3) Most had on rubber-soled shoes.
- 4) Most men never get back in their vehicle until completely finished. This is why they are seldom involved in these types of fires.
- 5) Do not ever use mobile phones when pumping petroleum product.
- 6) It is the vapors that come out of the fuel that cause the fire, when connected with static electric charges.
- 7) There were 29 fires where the vehicle was re-entered and the nozzle was touched during refueling from a variety of makes and models. Some resulted in extensive damage to the vehicle, to the station, and to the customer.
- 8) Seventeen fires occurred before, during or immediately after the petrol cap was removed and before fueling began.

The Petroleum Equipment Institute stresses to NEVER get back into your vehicle while filling it with fuel.

If you absolutely HAVE to get in your vehicle while the fuel is pumping, make sure you get out, close the door **TOUCHING THE METAL**, before you ever pull the vending nozzle out. This way the static electric charge from your body will be discharged before you ever remove the vending nozzle.

As was mentioned earlier, The Petroleum Equipment Institute, along with several other international companies are trying to make the public aware of this danger. You can find out more information by going to <http://www.pei.org/>. Once here, click in the center of the screen where it says "Stop Static".

I ask you to please send this information to ALL your family and friends, especially those who have kids in the car with them while refueling. If this were to happen to them, they may not be able to get the children out in time. Thank you for taking the time to read this safety announcement and for circulating it to your friends and colleagues.

The above list of salient points is not exhaustive. If you have any outstanding questions please do not hesitate in contacting either *Killian John Hennessy, Assistant Fire Officer, telephone 056 -7794400* or others at the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Remember , if in doubt ask.

For your information, **Section 18(2) of the Fire Services Acts, 1981 and amendments** is quoted as follows: -

“It shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section applies to –

- (a) Take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises,**
- (b) Provide reasonable fire safety measures for such premises and prepare and provide appropriate fire safety procedures for ensuring the safety of persons on such premises,**
- (c) Ensure that the fire safety measures and procedures referred to in paragraph (b) are applied at all times, and**
- (d) Ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire whether such outbreak has occurred or not.”**

A person convicted of an offence under the above may be liable to a maximum fine of €12,697.38 and/or imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years.

If you have any outstanding questions please do not hesitate in contacting either *Fire Station Headquarters* on telephone number 056 – 7794400, **Remember, if in doubt ask.**

Yours faithfully,

**For and on Behalf of
Kilkenny County Council Fire and Rescue Service**

Ciaran Cormican
Chief Fire Officer