

**Wheels:** Bert W. writes by e-mail: "I bought a new mower 14 years ago, and have used it since. I usually keep a 2.5 gallon can of gas for it in the carport. When that gas can starts to get low, I fill another 2.5 gallon can and keep it there also to use once the first one is empty. I do this even if it's right before winter. I just end up using the can I bought at the end of fall that next summer. I have heard that this can cause the gas to turn to varnish or gel. My fuel still looks clear with a very slight yellowish tint and smells perfectly like gasoline. However, the other day, my mower kept stalling under medium loads. Then, after an hour, it wouldn't run longer than 7 seconds. I sprayed carburetor cleaner spray into the carburetor, which kept it going, for a half a can's worth. After that, I used carburetor cleaner spray to clean out all the passages again. Now the mower runs like it's trying to kill someone, which is fantastic. I have a few questions:

- 1) For the mower fuel, should I use Sta-Bil, or some other brand name of fuel stabilizer to prevent it from turning to varnish/gel over a winter and clogging things again? Do I use this in the gas can and also in the fuel remaining in the mower for the winter, letting it run a bit after I add it to flow it through the system before storage? Or does this not help and draining it (throwing all late-fall fuel away) is the only solution?
- 2) I also have a 1998 Trans Am which sits most of the winters, during which I run it for 30 minutes once a month, but the fuel mostly sits in it too. Does this mean that the fuel in it is likely varnishing and clogging its system up as well? Should I add Sta-Bil to it also? Would it hurt to do that during every fill up, since I drive it so very little?
- 3) In both cases, will adding Sta-bil hurt the fuel system or engines in any way? Will it impair the performance in any way, or change how things run? Is it okay to run that Trans Am with the Sta-Bil in it all the time? Thanks for all your help!"

**Halderman:** Thanks for writing and you have many questions.

- 1). I use Sta-Bil brand gas stabilizer in the fuel I use for my lawn and garden equipment and I add it to each can. Having the stabilizer in the gas at all times, helps insure that I should not have a fuel-related issues. If you have some fuel left over after the mowing season, simply use in your car to use it up.
- 2.) I suggest that you use a fuel stabilizer in any vehicle that is not driven a lot or may at times be stored. Sometimes the weather can change and there may not be time to prepare a vehicle for long-term storage, so this is why I use it all the time.
- 3). Using a gas stabilizer will not hurt the system unless you use too much, use old stabilizer, or add to old gasoline. The shelf life of gasoline is 90 days and it can be used for six months or maybe longer if a stabilizer is added. Fuel stabilizer should be used within a year of opening it. Always follow the instructions on the container for best results.

