

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

# CANNED FUEL SOURCES



## Disposal Requirements for Chafing Fuel Cans

### What is Chafing Fuel?

Chafing fuel consists of small cans of fuel used as a heat source to keep food warm in chafing dishes, typically at catered events or buffets. These fuels are designed to produce a steady, cleaner-burning flame that is more suitable for indoor use.

### Fuels and Burning Mechanisms

Common fuels used are diethylene or ethylene glycol, methanol and ethanol in a liquid or gel form that burn the fuel using wicks, gels or a combination pad and gel.

Each fuel type and burning mechanism have advantages depending on the use, environment and safety considerations.

All fuel cans, regardless of fuel type and burning mechanism, require proper disposal.



*Sterno brand liquid fuel can with wick design.*



Administrative Operations

### Fuel Can Handling and Disposal

When using canned fuels always follow manufacturer and event safety procedures.

To ensure safe storage, handling and disposal:

- Always keep the can caps. Capped cans are required to store or dispose of cans with remaining fuel.
- When storing always follow manufacturer storage directions.
- Fully spent fuel cans, cans that will not light and sustain a flame, can be discarded in the trash.
- Cans with unspent fuel (liquid or gel) must be disposed of as hazardous waste.

To dispose of unspent fuel cans, ensure the caps are secure and request a pickup by EHS.

Submit pickup requests online.  
<https://ehsa.it.purdue.edu/ehsa/>



*Sterno and Fancy Heat brand gel burning fuel cans.*