

Lawn Mower Spits Gas Out of Fuel Cap: Reasons and Fixes

What causes fuel to sputter from a lawn mower's gas cap and can the issue be fixed?

One of the most common reasons gas spews from a lawn mower's cap is overfilling the fuel tank. This issue can be easily remedied by emptying the excess gas out of the tank. Other reasons fuel can eject from the gas cap include problems with the cap itself as well as more serious internal lawn mower problems.

Read on to find out if your specific fuel issue can be fixed quickly and cheaply or if it's a sign of more serious hidden damage.

Fuel Cap Leaks Caused by Overfilling the Tank

Every lawn mower comes with a manual that tells you how much gas you can put into your tank. Pay close attention to what your user manual says as well as any raised or printed indicators on or in the fuel tank if you don't you can run into mower problems.

Lawn mowers, like any gas-powered tool, have extra space in their fuel tanks because liquids expand when they're [heated](#). If you overfill your tank, the gas will expand causing immense pressure that becomes so great that it pushes gasoline out of the vent in the fuel cap.

If you check your fuel level and it's above the fill line and you have fuel escaping from the cap, your problem is most likely due to an [overfill](#).

To fix your problem you will have to:

- Turn your mower off
- Let the fuel in the tank cool down
- Place a bucket or gas can under the fuel line
- Unhook the fuel line from the gas tank
- Drain the excess gas from the tank until levels fall under the fill line
- Reattach the fuel line
- Move the excess gas to a safe place
- Start the mower up again

If no more gas erupts from the cap like an expensive fountain, you're all set to mow your lawn! Your issue was too much fuel in the tank all along!

Fuel Cap Leaks Caused by a Dirty Vent

Another reason gas is streaming out through your fuel cap could be the state of the cap itself. If you've had your cap for a while, it could have built up dirt and grime in and around the vent. The best way to see if a dirty gas cap is at fault is by testing and cleaning it.

To test your cap you'll want to follow these [measures](#):

- Make sure you have a good amount of fuel in your tank
- Make sure the cap is screwed on securely
- Turn your mower off
- Let the fuel in the tank cool down
- Place a bucket or gas can under the fuel line
- Unhook the fuel line from the gas tank
- Drain all of the gas from the tank
- Unscrew the cap and check the tank

If there's gas still trapped in the fuel tank, your vented cap is not working correctly. The reason the gas doesn't empty all the way is a vacuum gets created due to the blocked up cap. Air can't replace the fuel, so it stays suspended. Thankfully, cleaning a cap isn't difficult.

You can clean your lawn mower cap with:

- A spare cloth
- Brushes with stiff bristles
- Water and heavy duty cleaner*
- A combination of all three

***Note: Let the cap soak in the water and cleaner mixture for a while. Then only after the cap is cleaned and dried can you put it back on your lawn mower.**

After you've tested and cleaned your cap you can screw it on and get back to using your mower.

Fuel Cap Leaks Caused by a Broken Cap

If you always fill your gas tank according to your manual and keep your gas cap clean, then your problem may lie with the integrity of the fuel cap.

The best way to check if you have a bad gas cap is by examining it closely. Do it have:

- A crumbling seal?
- Cracks in the cap?
- Only a plastic pin on the underside of your cap? (Tecumseh Brand)
- Problems with tightening the cap?

- A smell of gas coming from your mower?
- No clicking sound when you screw the cap into the fuel tank?

If you encounter any of above issues, then your cap is due to be replaced. Check your owner's manual to find information on the correct cap to use or tell your local mechanic the make and model of your lawn mower.

Warning: Do not continue twisting your gas cap on your mower after you've heard the click sound. Doing so will damage the cap.

Remember, even if your fuel cap is new it can still have problems from the manufacturer so double check the above signs even with caps straight out of the box.

Fuel Cap Leaks Caused by Lawn Mower Body Issues

If after reading the following sections you still can't solve your fuel cap issues, you may have more serious problems with your lawn mower. The fuel-spewing issues can occur due to an increase in vibration when using the mower.

Usually a mower will have some degree of vibrations naturally, the problem occurs when the motion is exacerbated by things such as:

- Loose bolts or [mounts](#)
- Broken parts
- Unbalanced [blades](#)
- A bent crankshaft

These parts can range from cheap to really expensive to fix, but don't let the price fool you. You cannot keep running your mower without fixing any of these issues. Allowing your mower to vibrate excessively while you use it can further damage it and you can put yourself at risk of bodily harm since parts can dislodge from the mower.

Loose bolts and mounts are easy to fix if you have a socket wrench, so you can tighten those at home. You can also fix unbalanced blades yourself as long as they're not bent.

To fix your blade problem, check and make sure the blades are screwed onto your mower tightly and correctly. If the issue is not with how the blade is installed, you will have to do the following to fix it:

- Make sure your lawn mower is off
- Unplug your spark plug
- Take the blade off
- Hang your blade off a nail on your wall
- Sharpen the side of the blade that hangs lower on the nail

- Reinstall your blade
- Plug your spark plug back in
- Turn your mower on

This should immediately fix the vibration issue.

If you're experiencing issues with other broken parts of the mower like the crank shaft, contact a mechanic. Crankshafts are hard to fix if you don't have the right tools.

Can You Use Your Mower Without a Fuel Cap?

After reading all of the above you might be wondering, can you use your mower without the fuel cap? It definitely seems like a quick solve to most of the pressure issues we've talked about! While some people say you can run your mower without a gas cap, we do not recommend it.

If you run your mower capless, you're more likely to spill gas as it sloshes around in the tank and it might go undetected as you mow. This can cause [fires](#) that could destroy your lawn and spread to other houses.

Gas caps also keep sediment out of your gas tank. [Sediment](#) in the tank can keep your lawn mower from starting or even damage the insides.

Lastly, but not least of all, gas caps keep harmful fumes from escaping into the atmosphere or even from getting into your lungs as you mow.

Overall it's just best not risk it.

Conclusion

Gas spewing from a lawn mower's fuel cap is never a good thing. You waste fuel, you can't use your mower for its intended purpose, and you can put yourself, your mower, and others in danger. If you still have gas streaming from your fuel cap after reading and following this guide, call a professional mechanic for help.

Sources

[Kinetic Particle Theory](#)

[Lawnmower Fuel Cap Venting Test](#)

[How To Clean A Gas Cap Vent \(Step-by-Step Guide\)](#)

[Fuel is Spraying Out of the Fuel Tank](#)

[Lawn Mower Troubleshooting: Why is My Lawn Mower Vibrating Excessively?](#)

[Beware Dangers of Lawn Mower Fires](#)

[What to Do When Sediment Is in the Gas Tank](#)