



Is Your Plastic Gasoline Storage Container Safe?

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During April of this year, the Union County Extension Office received two used gasoline storage containers from a resident in Union County. The two containers had about 17 to 23 holes drilled along the upper seams of the containers. The holes appeared as if they were drilled with a 1/16 inch bit. The point of a ball point pen fits the size of the holes. A close examination of the holes revealed that they were drilled by beetles that have the size of half a rice grain. They were dark brown and some were embedded in the holes. Specimens of the beetles were sent to the Insect Identification Laboratory in Gainesville. They were identified as the Asian Ambrosia Beetle. (*Cnestus mutilates*). This beetle was first reported in Mississippi, then later in Texas and Louisiana. A scientific note reported they are capable of boring completely through plastic gasoline storage containers. This allows gasoline to leak from the holes. This can lead to a fire hazard. More information is needed on the biology of this beetle. Meanwhile, residents should examine their plastic gasoline storage containers carefully to ensure they do not contain holes.

The photo below shows the holes in a plastic gasoline storage container

