

# Don't spill the fuel when you fill up

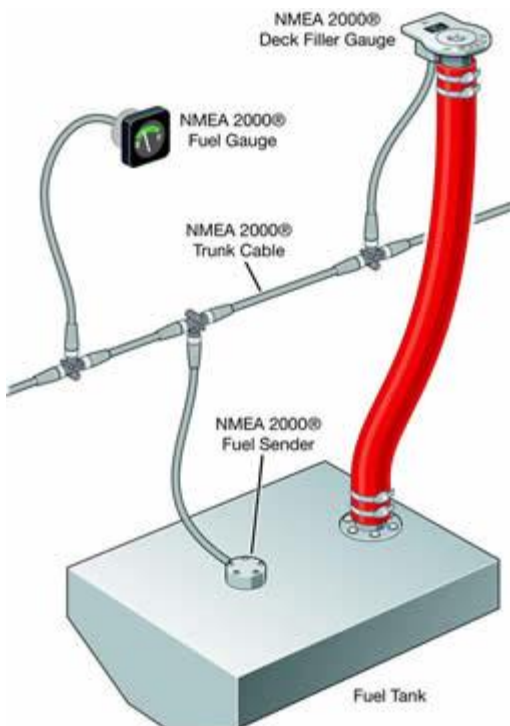
This months article comes from Pat Manley, author of *Simple Boat Maintenance*

Diesel fuel has a wretched tendency to froth when you fill the tank and if you are keen to fill up to the brim fuel will inevitably froth over the deck, if not into the water. I was always taught to pour some washing up liquid round the filler neck and the fuel vent to help disperse any spillage. However it's much better to prevent the spillage in the first place.

There are several ways of doing this. Firstly you can stop filling as soon as you hear any bubbling noise from the vent or filler. This is not always foolproof, as diesel has a dastardly way of defeating your plans because the frothing continues to expand after you have shut off the filler nozzle.

## Step 1 Decide which method to use

Another option is to fit a fuel filler neck incorporating a fuel contents gauge as supplied by Offshore Systems - see picture left.



Many instruments and engine control systems now use NMEA2000 to carry signals wherever needed, so if you have NMEA2000 on your boat and a NMEA tank sender, you can easily fit the '3210-F NMEA2000 Deck filler Gauge' which costs £119



Finally you can fit a Vetus 'Splash-Stop' to your fuel filler neck, which has a 2 litre reservoir to catch any frothing fuel. I've just fitted one to my own Westerly yacht and this proved to be a simple and quick operation - see picture left.

Or if you're really green, you could fit both!

## Step 2 Getting to Work



I was fortunate in that my Westerly had a pretty large lazarette with plenty of room under the filler neck. All I needed to do was to cut about 150 mm off the end of the filler pipe, divide the vent pipe into two lengths and attach the Splash-Stop. I found it easier to remove the complete filler pipe and the vent pipe from the boat to carry out the work. Again, on the Westerly, access to the tank and pipes was delightfully easy, but you may not find your boat so co-operative. I did the measuring (twice) cut the pipes and assembled them to the Splash-Stop. I then fitted the Splash-Stop to the filler neck by inserting it into the rubber 'anti-splash sleeve' and tightening its Jubilee clip. All the pipes were then reattached and the job was done.

A fitting bracket was supplied but there was really no easy way of utilising it, but as the unit was attached directly to the filler neck and the short length of heavy filler pipe supported it well, I was quite happy with the result. The Splash-Stop suits 38 mm and 50 mm pipe sizes and costs about £50 from Vetus stockists [www.Vetus.co.uk](http://www.Vetus.co.uk) or 023 8045 4507