

# SNOW TEST

In the April 2002 issue of SnowTech we previewed a product called the Fitch Fuel Catalyst. This product looks like a small plastic basket or cage with some large metallic pellets trapped inside. The instructions were to drop this thing (whole) into your gas tank and the metal pellets would keep the fuel fresh, or restore it if bad. They don't melt or anything, they're just supposed to react with the fuel. Our first thought was whether we could take these claims seriously.

The box of Fuel Catalyst cages sat on the shelf for a while. Then it came time to fire up some lawn mowers, tillers and weed wackers. Most of us have experienced what happens on occasion when you don't run fuel stabilizer through power equipment. Ask any shop that services mowers and the like, they'll tell you how much work they get as seasons change and people try to start their small engines that have had old gas sitting in the carbs and gas tanks forming varnish, and worse yet, the "greenie grungies" - that green bacteria crap that magically appears in the carbs. (Yes, bacteria does grow in gasoline!)

Anyway, back to getting all of the mowers running. Some of the small engines we all have don't get used every thirty days, and some sit for months on end without use. After cussing at the idiot who failed to run stabilized fuel through a couple of units, we remembered the box of Fitch fuel things. We needed to test them, but still didn't really know what we were getting into, but we felt pretty safe testing them on some lesser equipment. We started to drop one of these cages into each and every lawn mower, tiller, snow blower, weed wacker, and small engine we had. And when you're talking about five different family's equipment, that's a bunch. Next, we dropped one into every gas can is use. That way, any gas that sits in a can for a while will be "treated" with these fuel catalysts.

Gasoline is a constantly changing formula. When you pull up to the pump, any pump, you really don't know for sure what you're getting. You hope it is fresh, and full of octane, so it'll burn clean and makes lots of power without detonating or gumming up the innards of your motor. We really don't take issue with the fuel quality of what comes out of the pump, but there is always the chance of getting old gas. More

# Fitch Fuel Catalyst

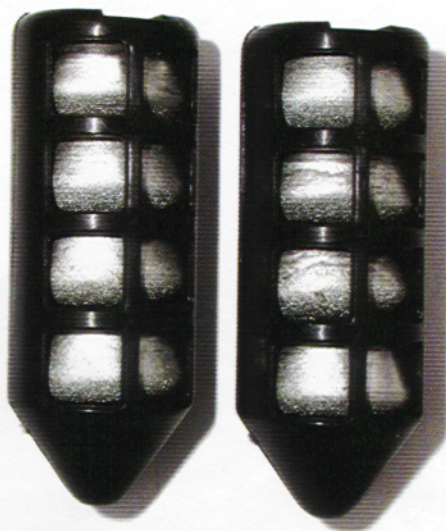
likely is the gas that sits in a can or in a machine for a couple of months, or from one season to the next - and this is where the trouble starts. Gasoline is subject to attack by oxygen and micro-organisms like bacteria. The oxygen attach and growth of micro-organisms contributes to a reduction in the number of high-quality fuel molecules. As this process continues and the gas is burned, the result can be poor performance, and fuel system problems. This is really what we are all after; avoiding fuel system service. Fighting an engine because of old fuel gummed up the carbs is expensive and a drag.

The Fitch Fuel Catalyst supposedly helps keep the fuel fresh, and even claims some restoration of poor gas to a fresher state. We're not boiling the stuff and finding out what molecules are doing what, but we can tell you we're so far impressed with what we've experienced. The dirt bikes are maybe the best indicator so far; on a good warm day, the air-cooled four strokes used to ping when you'd really reef on them and load them hard. The gas we've been pouring into these bikes comes from a can with a Fitch cage in it, and it really seems to make a difference - they run clean and don't ping at all.

So far all the mowers, trimmers and tillers have performed flawlessly over the summer. Some of the staff has even commented the fuel "smells" better (what are they doing smelling the gas?). We started to poke around and ask some people who actually buy and use the things what their experiences were, and the word is pretty consistent; fuel problems seem to go away. Gas seems to stay fresher, longer. No gum, no greenies, no problems.

An e-mail showed up the other day with some data about a series of tests conducted by researchers from the Departments of Chemistry and Biology at the University of Connecticut. They measured the influence the Fitch Fuel Catalyst has on growth of a strain of bacteria that commonly appears in gasoline. The test showed the virtual elimination of bacteria attributable to the introduction of the FFC into the fuel sample. (Where was this stuff a few years back when Polaris had so much trouble with the green bacteria forming in fuel sitting in float bowls for extended periods of time?)

We normally don't place much credibility



in weird things like this, but so far we've been impressed with the Fitch Fuel Catalyst. Now this fall, one is getting dropped into the gas tank of all dirt bikes, ATVs, personal watercraft, and tractors. The boss has even dropped them in the 30 gallon tank of his precious salmon boat before putting it in storage for the winter. This after having to spend \$500 and missing two fishing trips this summer because the carbs were junked up. Next spring, we'll drop one into every snowmobile too.

The true test is going to be next spring when we fire up all of these engines again. Not a drop of liquid fuel stabilizer went into them this fall. Only the Fitch Fuel Catalyst. (Are we asking for trouble?) If they all fire up, with clean carbs, and run good, without having that stinky, smelly gas in the float bowls, then we'll really think we're smart.

These things are sold for just about every kind of gasoline-powered engine made. To learn more, visit them on the web @ [www.fitchfuelcatalyst.com](http://www.fitchfuelcatalyst.com). Available through several vendors, including High Performance Engineering (218-451-5268). Most any dealer can get them from Parts Unlimited (a major distributor). The retail price of \$49.95 for a set of two seems high at first, but once you figure the future service it could eliminate, and you only have to drop them in the tank ONCE, you begin to recognize the value of such a product. The logic is sound, but does it really work? So far, so good. We'll keep you posted.

