

Propane Safety for Users of Small Cylinders in Outdoor Portable Commercial Applications

Propane is a safe, versatile, environmentally friendly fuel when properly used. Wherever they are being used, small propane cylinders are a convenient and economical way to provide fuel for those outdoor appliances. But, it's important to remember that small propane cylinders must be used, stored, and handled properly. The purpose of this bulletin is to give commercial users of outdoor portable appliances using small cylinders tips to handle propane safely.

CODE REQUIREMENTS

General

- ▶ In some jurisdictions, the maximum individual capacity of gas containers used in connection with portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall not exceed 20 pounds.
- ▶ Code requires a consumer warning label be affixed to refillable cylinders of propane distributed for consumer use that are utilized with outdoor cooking appliances, portable lamps, camp stoves, and heaters. Take the time to become familiar with the contents of this label.
- ▶ Replacement of propane cylinders in portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances shall not be conducted while the public is present.

Transporting Cylinders

- ▶ Always transport propane cylinders in their upright position.
- ▶ When moving cylinders, always turn the valve off and close securely with an appropriate plug or cap.
- ▶ Put the cylinder in a well-ventilated area of your vehicle, such as a truck bed. Remove immediately when you arrive at your destination. Never leave a filled propane cylinder inside a hot vehicle. Heat causes propane to expand, which could lead to a gas leak.

Using and Storing Cylinders

- ▶ Keep propane cylinders outside. Never keep them indoors or in an enclosed area, such as a garage, shed, or basement.
- ▶ Keep spare propane cylinders away from flammable materials and sources of ignition that could cause a fire.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ▶ Know propane's smell – ask your propane supplier to conduct a sniff test to ensure employees working with propane are familiar with the unique odor.
- ▶ Know what to do if you smell gas – ensure employees know what to do if they suspect a gas leak. Organizations that utilize portable propane cylinders in the performance of their work must have a plan for handling and responding to leaks. A fire extinguisher should be placed within easy access of where propane is used or stored. If you smell gas:
 - Immediately put out all smoking materials and other open flames.
 - If you can do so safely, turn off the cylinder valve. To close the valve, turn it to the right (clockwise).
 - Immediately leave the area and call 911 or your local fire department.
 - Before you restart the appliance, have a qualified service technician inspect your cylinder and appliance.
- ▶ Learn about your propane system – ensure employees know where shut-off valves and other important safety devices are located.

SPECIAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Whenever a cylinder is installed or the portable appliance is moved, test the cylinder connection and hose for leaks using a non-corrosive liquid leak detector solution or an electronic gas detector. Repair any leaks and retest.
- ▶ Maintenance is important. All equipment using propane must be maintained to operate safely, properly, and efficiently.
- ▶ Be cautious when moving an appliance. Moving could damage the connector and cause a serious gas leak.
- ▶ **DO NOT** try to install, modify, or repair valves, regulators, connectors, controls, or other equipment and cylinder/container parts. Doing so creates the risk of a gas leak that could result in serious injury or death.
- ▶ **NEVER** use a damaged cylinder. All cylinders should be inspected before they are connected to the appliance.



contact your propane supplier

Consult with your propane supplier or your Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to help with compliance and training, or if you have any questions.



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