



PROPANE EXCHANGE

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DATES TO REMEMBER

March 27, 2012	Spring Membership Mtg Marriott Hotel Charleston, WV
April 14-16, 2012	NPGA Southeastern Convention Atlanta, GA
June 4-6, 2012	Propane Days Washington, DC
June 18-19, 2012	Summer Mtg and Bobtail Rodeo Stonewall Resort Roanoke, WV
Sept 24-25, 2012	Fall Membership Mtg Glade Springs Resort Daniels, WV

Membership Does Not Cost...It Pays



Looking Out for Your Business

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP

It has been a challenging year in the propane industry. And the economic situation has not helped. But the West Virginia Propane Gas Association has worked hard to provide you with tools and resources to assist you.

WVPGA has provided such programs as "Who's running your business?", Marketer Technology Training focusing on building gallons in the home, and "Handling your company's legal exposure." Four times a year, you get a safety bulletin which includes a quiz to use for safety meetings. A monthly/bi-monthly newsletter comes out which includes industry news, timely marketing materials, and legal cases from which to learn.

We know that regulations can have a major impact on your business. That is why WVPGA has introduced HB 3071, The Fire Prevention & Consumer Safety Act in the state legislature. When passed, this bill will prohibit the alteration or modification of propane equipment by anyone except a certified propane installer such as a propane marketer. State Director Dean Halde-man continues to bring our issues to members of Congress via Propane Days.

But this does not happen without your investment. Once a year, WVPGA asks you to financially support the organization by paying your membership dues. Membership invoices have gone out and your prompt payment insures that we are able to have an office, plan timely and effective training courses and be represented in Charleston with people who work on your behalf.

Please renew your membership today. And refer another company. **Thank you for YOUR support.**

DOE Prohibits Cell Phone Usage for HAZMAT Drivers



Programs That Will Strengthen Your Business in 2012

It is even more important to make sure your business and your employees are knowledgeable in 2012. That is why the upcoming membership meetings are focusing on the following:

Spring Meeting: Critical Business Indicators and Making Them Work for You.

Summer Meeting: Bobtail Rodeo and Autogas Presentation from PERC.

Fall Meeting: Propane Issues and How They Effect You by NPGA's Chairman.

Dates and locations are listed on page 1. Save these dates on your 2012 calendar today.

Beginning January 3, 2012, a new regulation from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) restricts drivers of commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) from using hand-held mobile phones while driving. DOT's final rule, published December 5, 2011, amends both the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (49 CFR 390, 392) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration's (PHMSA) Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR 177.804).

This ruling follows on the heels of a previous 2010 DOT decision to mitigate risks associated with 'distracted driving' by banning commercial drivers from texting while driving. The new restrictions on using hand-held mobile phones applies to both intrastate and interstate drivers as PHMSA's jurisdiction applies to all motor carriers operating CMVs hauling hazardous materials requiring a DOT placard.



DOT's rule is important to propane marketers because dispatchers typically communicate with cargo tank drivers in the field by cell phone. The bottom line for compliance is that if the phone is mobile and must be held in the driver's hand when used, then its usage is prohibited when operating (driving) a CMV on a public highway or street.

The prohibition includes periods when the CMV is stationary at traffic lights, stop signs or heavy traffic, etc. However, a CMV driver may still use a hand-held mobile phone as long as he/she is pulled over on the side of a public highway or street where the vehicle may safely remain stationary.

Additionally, hands-free cell phones such as a speaker-phone are still permitted to be used while driving. Drivers waiting in line at a terminal with engines idling are permitted to use hand-held mobile phones as long as the CMV is stationary.

Under emergency conditions, hand-held mobile phone use by HAZMAT drivers operating a CMV on a public highway or street is permitted. Two way radio communication such as with a Two-Way Radio/CB is unaffected by the new rule and still permitted as the DOT lacks jurisdiction to regulate such devices.

Drivers who violate the new policy can be fined up to \$2,750 for each offense, while companies that allow their drivers to use hand-held mobile phones while driving could be fined up to \$11,000. For more information contact NPGA's Bob Elliott at 202-355-1321

To see the Energy Pod and try it out, visit www.wvpropanegas.org, look at the upper left and click on "The Propane Interactive Training Module"

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PropaneEnergyPod

The Propane Energy Pod is a model for new construction that addresses the top five areas of energy use in a home—space heating, water heating, cooking, clothes drying, and fireplaces—as part of a whole-home energy package. Just as air-conditioning thermal envelope is essential to maintaining a home's comfortable indoor climate, the comprehensive approach to home energy depicted by the Pod is central to maximizing a home's energy efficiency, performance, and emissions profile.



NEW Training Course on Propane Energy Pod

The Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) released an online course that helps construction professionals understand how a whole-home energy package, fueled with propane, compares favorably with standard homes and can qualify for national, state, or local tax incentives for energy improvements.

The course, “An Energy and Environmental Analysis of Propane Energy Pod Homes,” is available on www.buildwithpropane.com and is approved by the National Association of Home Builders and the American Institute of Architects.

The Propane Energy Pod is a research-based solution for home construction that addresses five areas of energy use in a home — space heating, water heating, cooking, clothes drying, and fireplaces — as part of a whole-home energy package. The model represents significant reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions when compared with homes with standard appliances and mechanical systems.

Heater Safety: Time for a Checkup



A safe and efficient heater operates with the correct combustion ratio. Combustion is a chemical reaction that changes a fuel, such as propane, into a useful form of energy, such as heat. Combustion requires an ignition source and two ingredients — fuel and oxygen — in the proper proportion.

Complete combustion of propane requires a ratio of 1 part propane to 24 parts air. It produces only harmless combustion products — carbon dioxide and water. Incomplete combustion, caused by an improper ratio of propane to air, can produce harmful combustion products such as carbon monoxide and aldehydes.

Most appliance burners should be regularly inspected by a qualified technician to make sure they maintain the ideal burn ratio (4 percent propane, 96 percent air). View a Propane Safety Scenario that explains how combustion products are affected by different fuel-to-gas ratios (audio playback starts right away). The activity comes from the CETP E-Learning module Basic Principles & Practices.

Download a ready-to-print one-page learning activity — from the CETP textbook — about the products of incomplete combustion at http://www.propanesafety.com/uploadedFiles/Safety/Workforce_Training_programs/Incomplete%20Combustion.pdf

*"In the simplest terms,
an unhappy customer is
never good for
business."*



A Winter's Tale

As winter approaches, the industry is gearing up for its busy season. In large parts of the country there will be snow in varying amounts.

A recurring problem that occurs during the busy snow season is that drivers are not able to access propane tanks at customer accounts to make a propane delivery. Often this problem can be fixed by letting the customer know that your driver needs to get access to the tank, and the customer takes the steps necessary to provide access to the tank.

Sometimes the customer is not home and access to the tank by removal of snow from a driveway and providing a reasonable path to the tank is not possible. This can occur for several reasons, but the most common is that people go away for an extended vacation, there is a large snowfall while they are away and no plans have been made to clear a path to the tank.

It is common knowledge that the problem with a tank running out in the winter is that the pipes in the house freeze. When the pipes are brought back to room temperature, there is usually a crack in a water line that needs to be replaced and water damage occurs in the home from the leak.

Most tank leases that I have seen require that the customer provide reasonable access to the tank for filling. This is a good argument in the event of a lawsuit brought by a customer when gas can't be delivered because there is no access to the tank. But the better outcome is that the problem does not occur in the first instance. In the simplest terms, an unhappy customer is never good for business.

So, this busy season consider a message to your customers reminding them to keep the path to your tank accessible when snow falls. Remind them that they need to make arrangements for snow removal if they plan to be gone for an extended period of time over the winter and that access to the tank should be part of the job. Let your customer know that they can also ask for a fill before they are going away on a trip to ensure they don't run out when they are away.

Following these recommendations should help to prevent most of these problems from occurring.

Success to you!

John V. McCoy is the president of McCoy Law Group, S.C. He spoke at WVPGA's Legal Symposium. John specializes in the representation of propane companies. He can be reached at 800-599-8300 or jmccoy@mccoylawgroup.us.

Search for Centennial Artifacts Continues

Don't Miss Out

Mark your calendar and plan your travel to Atlanta for the Clean Air Rally and Autogas Parade on Saturday morning, April 14th, 2012 in Centennial Olympic Park. For more information on this event as well as other Centennial projects visit www.propane100.org.

The Propane Centennial Celebration (PCC) task force has many projects underway to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the first installation of our fuel. Of particular note is the **Centennial Museum** to be unveiled at the 2012 NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo.

The exhibit will also make appearances at other industry events in 2012. Museum work group members Roland Penta, Joe Rose, Bob Nicholson, Natalie Peal, Charles Snelling, Kurt Ruhl and Nancy Coop have been collecting and categorizing artifacts since last spring and still have several gaps to fill. They are asking for an industry-wide effort to locate some of these items.

“Our overarching theme for the Centennial Celebration, as well as the museum is **“A Century of Solutions.”** We want to create a memorable exhibit that will demonstrate the history of our industry, and also highlight where we are going,” noted Bob Nicholson, Chairman of Eastern Propane Corp. We hope to entertain the old-timers and educate new-comers with a wonderful showcase that draws traffic in to the trade show.”

The Centennial museum is organized around seven themes the task force developed, and each will have a separate section in the museum. The highlighted areas are: The Early Years; The Evolution of Transportation and Equipment; Safety: Always First; Marketing and Promotion Through the Years; What the Future Brings; and Happy Birthday Propane, which will include a video loop of historic footage and the PCC documentary video, as well as historic photo collages.

“There are several things we can't get our hands on, or that have been misplaced over the last several years, and we really need the industry's support to find them,” continued Nicholson. “We ask everyone to review the list of items needed and contact us quickly so we can finalize the museum.”

The following items are being sought by the Centennial Museum task force:

- Copy of Original NFPA 58 and other historical safety documents.
- Harry Morgan television and print advertising, other historic ads and marketing material.
- Photos and artifacts related to the Evolution of Transportation, and Changes in Equipment.
- Blueprints, plans, and prototypes for new technologies the future will bring. *(The PCC is working with PERC to showcase Propane Challenge entries.)*

If you can provide these items, please get in touch with Rick Rubidge at Rick@SMResources.org or (513) 225-3267 no later than January 15, 2012. You must provide a photo of the item and a brief description in order for it to be considered. Items can be returned after the Centennial year, but the PCC is not responsible for items lost or damaged. No large or heavy items can be accommodated.