



# PROPANE SAFETY FOR CONSUMERS



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

## INFORMATION IN THIS BROCHURE

### INTERACTIVE PDF

Easily access page information by clicking below titles.

- ▶ [WHAT IS PROPANE?](#)
- ▶ [ABOUT PROPANE](#)
- ▶ [PORTABLE CYLINDER STORAGE](#)
- ▶ [APPLIANCE MAINTENANCE](#)
- ▶ [LIGHTING PILOT LIGHTS](#)
- ▶ [PROPANE FIRST AID](#)
- ▶ [WEATHER EMERGENCIES](#)
- ▶ [RUNNING OUT OF PROPANE](#)
- ▶ [TREAT LEAKS SERIOUSLY](#)
- ▶ [PROPANE GAS DETECTORS](#)
- ▶ [WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE \(CO\)?](#)
- ▶ [FLAMMABLE VAPORS ARE A SAFETY HAZARD](#)
- ▶ [CALL BEFORE YOU DIG](#)



## WHAT IS PROPANE?

Propane (also called LPG-liquefied petroleum gas-or LP gas) is a liquid fuel stored under pressure in most systems, propane is vaporized to a gas before it leaves the tank. Propane is flammable when mixed with air (oxygen) and can be ignited by a variety of sources, including open flames, smoking materials, electrical sparks, and static electricity. Severe freeze burn or frostbite can result if propane liquid comes in contact with your skin.



## ABOUT PROPANE

Propane is a safe, versatile, efficient, low-emission Canadian energy. The key to safety for all fuels is proper use and handling. Propane's characteristics, along with the regulations applied to the equipment, training, storage and handling, make it one of the safest fuels for consumer use.

The information in this brochure, combined with support from W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. and local regulatory authority, can help to inform you and your family on the safe operation of your propane equipment and appliances.



## PORTABLE CYLINDER STORAGE

Always store and handle portable cylinders, such as barbecue cylinders, in an upright position, away from heat or sources of ignition, and in a secure, well ventilated outdoor area. Do not place your cylinder in household garbage or recycling containers. Contact W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. regarding safe disposal options.



## APPLIANCE MAINTENANCE

- **LEAVE IT TO THE EXPERTS. W.O. STINSON & SON LTD.** service technicians have the training to install, inspect, service, maintain, and repair your appliances. Have your appliances and propane system inspected just before the start of each heating season.
- **HELP YOUR APPLIANCES “BREATHE”.** Check the vents of your appliances to be sure that flue gases can flow easily to the outdoors; ensure the indoor and outdoor vents and air inlet ducts for all appliances are not corroded or blocked, and that they are open and/or turned on. Clear away any insect or bird nests or other debris that may occur naturally.
- **USE & MAINTAIN APPLIANCES AS DIRECTED.** Refer to the manufacturer’s operating manuals.
- **CLEAR THE AREA** around your appliances, so plenty of air can reach the burner for proper combustion. - **DO NOT TRY TO MODIFY OR REPAIR** valves, regulators, connectors, controls, or other appliance and cylinder/tank parts. Doing so creates the risk of a gas leak that can result in property damage, serious injury, or death.
- **LEARN HOW TO TURN OFF THE PROPANE SUPPLY TO YOUR APPLIANCES**
- **HAVE OLDER APPLIANCE CONNECTORS INSPECTED.** Certain older appliance connectors may crack or break, causing a gas leak. If you have an appliance that is more than 20 years old, have a W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. service technician inspect the connector. Do not do this yourself, as movement of the appliance might damage the connector and cause a leak.
- **CHECK THE BATTERIES AND TEST CO DETECTORS REGULARLY.**



## LIGHTING PILOT LIGHTS

- If a pilot light goes out or is difficult to light, there may be a safety issue. **DO NOT** try to fix the problem yourself. It is strongly recommended that only a **QUALIFIED SERVICE TECHNICIAN** light any pilot light that has gone out.
- If trying to light a pilot light yourself, exercise caution. Always follow all of the manufacturer's instructions and warnings concerning the appliance before attempting to light the pilot.
- **YOU ARE TAKING THE RISK** of starting a fire or an explosion if you light a pilot light yourself.



## PROPANE **FIRST AID**

- Although propane is non-toxic, if it is mishandled, propane vapour can displace oxygen in the air and cause suffocation, and liquid propane can freeze the skin or eyes.
- If a person is having any discomfort after coming into contact with propane, move them to fresh air and keep them warm and calm.
- In all cases, seek emergency medical care.
- If they have breathed in propane vapour, administer oxygen or artificial respiration if breathing is difficult or not present.
- If exposed to liquid propane, use luke warm water to:
  - Slowly warm frostbite-affected skin.
  - Flush eyes.
  - Remove clothing frozen to skin.



## WEATHER EMERGENCIES

When a flood or winter storm warning is issued, there are several safety precautions you should take:

### FLOODS

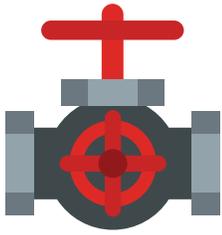
- Shut off the gas supply both from your propane tank and to your appliances, as well as the home's electricity supply.
- Do not drain your hot water tank, but shut off both the valve allowing water into the tank and the valve controlling water coming out.
- Propane tanks (even full ones) will float in water. If flooding is forecast, call W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. about the possibility of temporarily removing your propane tank.

### WINTER STORMS



- Ensure your propane tank, whether located above or below the ground, is marked by a flag, pole, or stake that is higher than the average snow cover depth.
- Have an adequate supply of propane in your tank. During and after a storm, roads leading to your home might not be accessible for deliveries.
- Ensure that your driveway and access to tanks are cleared.
- Make sure to clear snow and ice away from propane tanks and outdoor vents, chimneys, and flues, thereby reducing the potential for frozen pipes or CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning.





## RUNNING OUT OF PROPANE

### **SERIOUS SAFETY HAZARDS, INCLUDING FIRE OR EXPLOSION, CAN RESULT IF YOU RUN OUT OF PROPANE.**

If you run out of propane, the pilot lights on your appliances will go out, this can be extremely dangerous, because, if an appliance valve or a gas line is left open, a leak could occur when the system is recharged with propane.

- To avoid running out of propane, you should regularly monitor tank levels. Alert W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. if you are changing your rate of fuel usage.

### **TO RESTART APPLIANCES, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:**

- Close the supply valve on the tank and the valves on all appliances.
- Use caution when lighting pilot lights (Please refer to the 'Lighting Pilot Lights' section in your appliance operating manual).

## TREAT LEAKS SERIOUSLY



### **IMPORTANT FACTS FOR YOUR SAFETY:**

- An added odourant means that a propane leak can be detected by its distinct smell — like rotten eggs or boiled cabbage. Some people may have difficulty smelling propane due to their age (older people may have a less sensitive sense of smell); a medical condition; or the effects of medication, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
- Propane vapour is heavier than air and, in the event of an unintended release of propane, it will migrate to the lowest point.



### **IF YOU SUSPECT A LEAK**

- **NO FLAMES OR SPARKS!** Immediately put out all smoking materials and other open flames. Do not operate lights, appliances, telephones, or cell phones. Flames or sparks from these sources can trigger an explosion or a fire- Get everyone out of the building immediately.



- **SHUT OFF THE PROPANE.** If safe to do so, turn off the main supply valve on your propane tank. **LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY!** Get everyone out of the building or area where you suspect gas is leaking.



- **REPORT THE LEAK.** From a neighbor's home or other nearby building away from the gas leak, call 911, your local fire department or W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. right away.



- **DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING OR AREA** until an emergency responder, or qualified service technician determines that it is safe to do so.



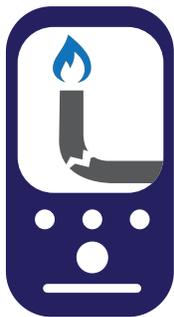
- **GET YOUR SYSTEM CHECKED.** After the area has been deemed safe, a qualified W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. service technician must check your entire system to ensure that it is leak-free, turn on the propane, and check and re-activate the propane appliances.



### ODOR LOSS

On rare occasions, propane can lose its odor. Several things can cause this including:

- The presence of air, water, or rust in a propane tank or cylinder.
- The passage of leaking propane through the soil.
- Since there is a possibility of odor loss or problems with your sense of smell, you should respond immediately to even a faint odor of gas.



## PROPANE GAS DETECTORS

- Propane gas detectors sound an alarm if they sense propane in the air. They can provide an additional measure of security. You should consider the purchase of one or more detectors for your home.
- Always ask if the product is certified by an agency recognized in the province of use, such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC).
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding installation and maintenance.
- Never ignore the smell of propane, even if it is faint or the detector is not sounding an alarm.



## WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE (CO<sub>2</sub>)?

Carbon Monoxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is a colourless, odourless and tasteless toxic gas. All fuel-burning appliances can present the risk of CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning if not installed, operated, vented or maintained properly.

**CO<sub>2</sub> CAN BE DEADLY!** High levels of CO<sub>2</sub> can make you dizzy or sick. In extreme cases, CO<sub>2</sub> can cause brain damage or death. CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning symptoms include: headache, shortness of breath, dizziness, nausea and fatigue.

### CARBON MONOXIDE AND YOUR SAFETY

- If you suspect CO<sub>2</sub> is present, or someone is showing symptoms of CO<sub>2</sub> poisoning, **ACT IMMEDIATELY!**
- If safe to do so, open windows and turn off appliances you suspect may be releasing CO<sub>2</sub>.
- Evacuate the building and call 911, or your local fire department.
- Call W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. or a qualified service technician to check CO<sub>2</sub> levels and your propane equipment.

### SIGNS OF IMPROPER APPLIANCE OPERATION THAT CAN GENERATE HIGH CO<sub>2</sub> LEVELS:

- Sooting, especially on appliances and vents
- Unfamiliar or burning odor
- Increased moisture inside of windows

### TO HELP REDUCE THE RISK OF CO<sub>2</sub> POISONING:

- Have a W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. service technician check your propane appliances and related venting systems annually, preferably before the heating season begins.
- Regularly check your appliance exhaust vents for blockage.
- Ensure there is adequate air supply and venting for combustion.

- Install CO<sub>2</sub> detectors on every level of your home (it's the law).
- Never use a gas oven or range-top burners to provide space heating.
- Never use portable heaters indoors unless they are designed and approved for indoor use.
- Never use a barbecue grill (propane or charcoal) indoors or an enclosed space for cooking or heating.



## FLAMMABLE VAPORS ARE A SAFETY HAZARD

The pilot light on your propane appliance can ignite vapors from gasoline, paint thinners, and other flammable liquids. Be sure to store and use flammable liquids outdoors or in an area of the building containing no propane appliances.

**DON'T RISK IT!** If you cannot operate any part of your propane system, or if you think an appliance or other device is not working properly, call W.O. STINSON & SON LTD. for assistance.



## CALL BEFORE YOU DIG

If underground tubing or piping brings propane to your building, call before you dig, before making an addition to your building, doing major landscaping, or installing fence posts. Contact your municipality for more information.

**DISCLAIMER NOTICE:**

The material contained in this brochure is intended to be for general informational purposes only. W.O STINSON & SON LTD. is not responsible for any actions taken or omitted to be taken as a result of the information contained in this brochure, or for any damages that may arise as a result. Specific questions, fact situations and concerns should be directed to the appropriate industry expert or regulatory authority in your area.

