Louisiana
PROPANE GAS ASSOCIATION

LPGA

November 2024

E-Newsletter

2024Members

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Happy Thanksgiving!

We hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday with your family, friends and loved ones. The holiday season is upon us and it's the perfect time to reflect on all of the blessings of this past year. Every year is different and brings its own challenges and trials, but life is truly a gift. We are thankful for each one of you in the industry because you are what makes this industry great. We are who we are because of you. Grateful is an understatement but the sentiment is true!

According to finalized data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the average residential price of grid electricity in the U.S. increased 6.3% between 2022 and 2023. Further, the average commercial price of electricity rose 1.4% over that same period of time. Between 2013-2023, residential electricity rates increased 31.9%; the cost of commercial electricity increased 22.7% over the last decade as well.

More worrisome, policy-driven electrification efforts, which are being pursued in states across the country, will require additional investments in generation, distribution, and transmission infrastructure to produce more electrons and ensure their safe movement across the bulk electric system. All of this is embedded in the rate base passed along to utility customers, and puts upward pressure on retail electricity prices. As recently reaffirmed by the U.S. Department of Energy, per unit of energy, grid electricity is far more expensive than propane.

Fast Facts:
•2023 Average U.S. Residential Electricity Price: 16.00 cents per kWh
•2023 Average U.S. Commercial Electricity Price: 12.59 cents per kWh
•2023 Average U.S. Industrial Electricity Price: 8.04 cents per kWh

Propane is a clean, efficient, and cost-effective fuel to power countless residential and commercial building applications. For more information on the numerous benefits of using propane to power buildings, visit the Home Use and Business Use sections of PERC's website. For more information, contact NPGA's Director of State Affairs, Jacob Peterson at jpeterson@npga.org.

As always, if you have any questions or need any association information, please contact the LPGA office at 225-763-8922.

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2024-25 Calendar of Events

December 11, 2024: Fourth Quarter Board of Directors Meeting, Church Street Inn-Natchitoches, LA. Christmas Dinner to follow at Merci Beaucoup.

December 15: NPGF Scholarship Applications Open.

February 15, 2025: NPGF Scholarship Applications Deadline.

March 2025: First Quarter Board of Directors Meeting, Date and Location TBD.

April 4-6, 2025: Southeastern Propane Expo, Charlotte Convention Center-North Carolina.

June 8-10, 2025: NPGA Propane Days, Hilton Washington DC Capitol Hill.

June 29-July 1, 2025: APGA-LPGA Annual Summer Convention, Perdido Beach Resort-Orange Beach, Alabama.

June 30, 2025: Second Quarter Board of Directors Meeting, Perdido Beach Resort-Orange Beach, AL.

NPGF Scholarship Opens Dec. 15

The National Propane Gas Foundation is excited to kick off the 2025 – 2026 Scholarship Program on December 15. Children of employees of NPGA member companies, state propane associations, or PERC are eligible to apply and may be pursuing any course of study at two- and four-year colleges or technical, trade, or vocational schools.

Learn more about this opportunity, read about our past scholarship recipients, see a list of the generous donors and sponsors who make this program possible. Students can start applying on December 15.

Questions? Contact Scholarship Program Manager Maril Olson at molson@npga.org.

Special thanks to NPGF's media sponsors!

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Winter Prep Tips for Homeowners

Preparing your home for the winter season is crucial to ensure comfort, safety, and efficiency as temperatures drop. Homeowners need solutions that keep their homes warm and functional without breaking the bank. Fortunately, propane provides consistent and efficient power, even in the harshest winter conditions. By preparing propane systems early, homeowners can enjoy steady heat, reduced energy costs, and peace of mind during a commonly unpredictable season.

Winter Preparation and Safety with Propane
As winter approaches, it's important to prepare your home's propane system. Here are some helpful tips to help homeowners prepare for the winter months:

*Contact your propane supplier early to refill tanks and secure lower prices before winter demand spikes.
*When winter weather hits, be sure to clear snow and ice around tanks, regulators, and piping to prevent damage and allow easy access for service.
*Improve your home's energy efficiency even more by sealing air leaks, adding insulation, and adjusting vents to help reduce propane usage.
*Smart thermostats also boost efficiency by adjusting temperatures based on your schedule, cutting fuel consumption and lowering bills.

In addition, annual maintenance on your home's propane appliances will help guarantee they are working efficiently and safely, ultimately preventing potential issues during colder months. Since propane is odorless, mercaptan (which smells like rotten eggs or sulfur) is added to propane, giving it a distinct smell that makes leak detection easy. Installing detectors in key areas ensures proper monitoring and supports overall home safety and awareness.

Why Propane Is a Smart Choice for Winter
One of the biggest advantages of propane is its reliability during power outages. Unlike electric systems that depend on the grid, propane-powered appliances such as heating systems, water heaters, kitchen appliances, or fireplaces, will continue to run as normal even when the electricity goes out. With propane being stored on-site, homeowners are less vulnerable to supply chain disruptions during severe and unpredictable weather.

In addition, whole-home propane generators are quick and can restore power to your entire home within 10 seconds of an outage. Not to mention, its unmatched efficiency can power a single home for several days and nights. This reliability is essential during winter storms when staying warm is a matter of safety and comfort — providing peace of mind when needed most.

Efficient and Cost-Effective Home Heating
When it comes to home heating, propane systems are highly efficient, offering up to 98% energy efficiency. A propane-fueled furnace can heat air to 115-125 degrees Fahrenheit, making the indoor environment feel warmer and more comfortable than heat from air-source heat pumps. This also allows for quick and consistent home heating, all while minimizing energy waste. The energy it saves has a positive impact on the environment, too. A high-efficiency propane-fueled furnace produces at least 26% fewer carbon dioxide emissions compared to a standard-efficiency electric heat pump in colder and mixed climates.

For homeowners looking to reduce their winter heating bills, propane offers several cost-saving benefits. ENERGY STAR-qualified propane furnaces are up to 15% more efficient than standard propane models and can save homeowners up to $85 annually in energy costs each year. Propane furnaces also have a 50% longer lifespan than electric heat pumps, meaning less frequent replacements and lower long-term costs.

Prep Your Propane Home to be a Winter Winner
By choosing propane and taking the right steps to prepare for winter, homeowners can enjoy a warm, safe, and energy-efficient home throughout the season. Propane's reliability during power outages, high-efficiency performance, and long-lasting equipment makes it an ideal choice for homeowners looking to get ahead of complications and prepare for the winter season. To learn more about propane and winter weather, visit propane.com/winter-storms.

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The PERC Education Program (PEP) is About to Change the Way You Train

Introducing a new employee training program that's function-based, modular, and completely customizable.

For years, PERC's Certified Employee Training Program (CETP) set the standard for the industry. Now, we've taken key learnings from this comprehensive program to create PEP — the PERC Education Program, featuring smaller, module-based training within The Learning Center. PEP can be customized to fit company needs, helping employees get to work faster. Plus, PERC has been accredited by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET), making us able to issue continuing education units (CEUs) for instructor-led and eLearning PEP sessions.

The transition away from CETP to PEP has already begun — learn more and see currently available learning paths in The Learning Center at:
propane.com/PEP

Propane Education & Research Council

PERC Education Program

For years, PERC's Certified Employee Training Program (CETP) set the standard for the industry. Now, PERC has taken key learnings from that comprehensive program to create PEP—the PERC Education Program. Starting in 2025, PEP will begin to replace CETP.

Unlike CETP, which was comprised of extensive programs filled with additional information, PEP is designed to deliver training in shorter, more focused modules. This task-specific training empowers learners by providing them with precisely the information they need, when they need it, facilitating a faster transition to work without compromising safety.

PEP provides robust safety training through new "learning paths." These paths arrange training modules so that the learning builds upon itself, starting with foundational knowledge and progressing to more complex content.

Once a learner completes a module and the knowledge assessment, their progress will be recorded in an online transcript within The Learning Center. This transcript replaces the CETP certificate.

One of the most significant advantages of PEP is its focus on role-based learning paths. Each path is designed with specific roles in mind, guiding learners through the necessary training that aligns with their professional responsibilities. Currently available learning paths include Bobtail Delivery Driver, Gas Piping Installer, and more.

PERC has also been named an accredited provider by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET). This accreditation allows PERC to issue IACET continuing education units (CEUs) for instructor-led and eLearning PEP sessions.

As PERC continues to develop new materials that reflect the changing landscape of the propane industry, additional learning paths will be introduced in The Learning Center.

Those looking to learn more about PEP should visit Propane.com. Under the "Safety and Education" tab, visitors can find comprehensive information about the program, including timelines for implementation and additional resources. Utilizing the FAQs, comparison charts, and other materials available on the site, employers and employees can better navigate this transition in propane education.

For more information on the PERC Education Program, visit Propane.com/PEP.

Be Thankful for Clean Cooking with Propane

By: Tucker Perkins, President and CEO of Propane Education & Research Council (PERC)

Debates about "clean cooking" in the U. S. often boil down to the question of gas vs. electric stoves. The cultural cache of gas stoves and the shiny newness of electric technologies like induction stoves make for compelling drama, but the theater obscures a larger truth: clean cooking can happen with both gas and electricity.

What defines clean cooking? A good place to start would be the Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA), a non-profit that works to improve health and air quality around the world with funding from the United Nations Foundation. The work of the CCA supports the U.N.'s 17 Sustainable Development Goals, particularly number 7, which deals with energy access. From the CCA website: "Switching to clean cooking – using modern stoves and fuels – transforms lives by improving health, protecting the climate and the environment, empowering women, and helping consumers save time and money."

Among those modern fuels is propane, a low-carbon fuel already used for cooking, space heating, and water heating by an estimated 11 million US households (that number jumps to around 50 million when outdoor grilling is considered). Propane is cleaner than the US electric grid on average – its calculated carbon intensity is 79, compared with 130 for average US grid electricity. Significant advances in renewable propane have the potential to produce fuel with zero or negative carbon intensity.

The CCA works to increase the adoption of propane and electric methods for cooking in parts of the world where cooking with wood and other biomass is prevalent. Smoke from cooking with these sources is responsible for an estimated 4 million deaths worldwide each year.

A recent article published in Healio rightly points out that women are disproportionally affected by indoor air quality issues, in large part because they do more cooking on average. This is true in the U.S., but the disparity is magnified in places like sub-Saharan Africa, home to 40% of the 2.4 billion people who lack access to clean cooking worldwide. Among the article's takeaways is the well-established assertion that proper ventilation during cooking can reduce health risks, no matter the energy source used.

In 2019, the CCA published a report on effective ways to scale up the use of propane (also called liquefied petroleum gas, or LPG) in developing economies, using an effort in Tanzania as a case study. The report detailed the challenges and successes associated with setting up propane markets and infrastructure and provided a range of recommendations for future efforts. The report's conclusion is instructive: "No one solution alone meets Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 and ensures universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services, including for cooking, by 2030. However, enabling access to LPG can significantly contribute to reaching SDG 7."

Given this global context, it's worth revisiting the gas vs. electric debate in this country. Most Americans are fortunate to have access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy for clean cooking. Whether it's with gas or electricity, we should all be thankful for that.

Banning Propane Forklifts Just Doesn't Make Sense

For decades, propane-powered forklifts have been the go-to technology for American business and economic movement. These carefully crafted machines move everything from shipping containers to materials and commodities for multinational corporations to local "mom and pop" businesses. They keep it all moving and meeting deadlines in a cost-effective and low-emissions manner.

But recent events are placing that workhorse status in jeopardy. In June, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) passed a new regulation that the state will phase out spark-ignited forklifts — including propane models — in favor of zero-emission alternatives, i.e., almost exclusively electric forklifts.

This effort, while seemingly noble on the surface, doesn't account for almost assured higher costs and disruption of American business and economic movement that could result. These implications will be felt well beyond California, particularly in the dozens of states that follow California's lead in such matters, either implicitly or legislatively.

There is a bigger picture to consider. Propane forklifts cannot be removed from the flow of business without consequences. And those consequences will likely be felt by end-user consumers from coast to coast, as higher costs for electric forklifts are passed on to them.

Propane Forklifts Do It All

By some estimates, there are about 750,000 propane forklifts operating across North America. That's a substantial amount, but consider that in relative terms, the propane forklift is a recent development. The first propane-powered models appeared in the mid-1950s and quickly established themselves as indispensable to business.

Fast forward 70 years, and enter, for example, a lumber yard. There, you will see rubber-tired propane forklifts moving quietly and almost effortlessly on rough terrain to move materials necessary for a number of applications, like home construction. Or enter a massive distribution center, where forklifts operate both inside and outside the facility. Only a propane forklift can move seamlessly between the two environments. Often, an electric forklift can't handle the rough terrain you find outside, and diesel or gasoline forklifts can't enter the facility due to the harmful emissions they produce.

According to Colin Sueyres, president and CEO of the Western Propane Gas Association, roughly 40% of the market in California is using electric forklifts. There are a myriad of operations — large and small companies, construction nonprofits, retail outlets and many, many others. It's true that propane forklifts are a great option there, but electric forklifts can do the job as well.

But what if there is a facility where there are high-lift demands, or a logistics operation running three eight-hour swing shifts? In some use cases, Sueyres said, there is no electric forklift available on the market that can do what a propane model can do. And that doesn't begin to cover the increased cost of an electric forklift and battery chargers, nor the cost (and hassle) of connecting the chargers to the electrical grid.

Unintended Consequences of Bans

That's the paradox of the CARB regulation, which essentially means manufacturers cannot produce or sell Class IV and Class V spark-ignited forklifts for use in California starting in 2026. That includes propane models, but also gasoline- and natural gas-powered units. The regulation would also require the early retirement of those forklifts.

Does this make sense, though, particularly from the macro view? The regulation will mean that many operations will have to buy and deploy multiple electric forklifts to do the work of one propane forklift. This will place financial stress on businesses, a cost that could be passed on to consumers, thus increasing inflation. According to Sueyres, this is one of the many unintended consequences of the regulation.

But another unintended consequence is that some businesses will simply find it too costly to do business in California and move to an adjacent state, like Nevada. That can affect job creation, which impacts the economy as a whole. Of course, some businesses could simply fold, exacerbating the jobs issue important to so many politicians. Others could decide to, in effect, break the law by operating propane forklifts anyway.

Now, multiply this situation by dozens of states that follow California's lead, in essence saying that whatever that state does as far as emissions, we will do the same. The unintended consequence might be a run on electric forklifts, which will drive up the price on individual units.