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BPN

APRIL | 2019



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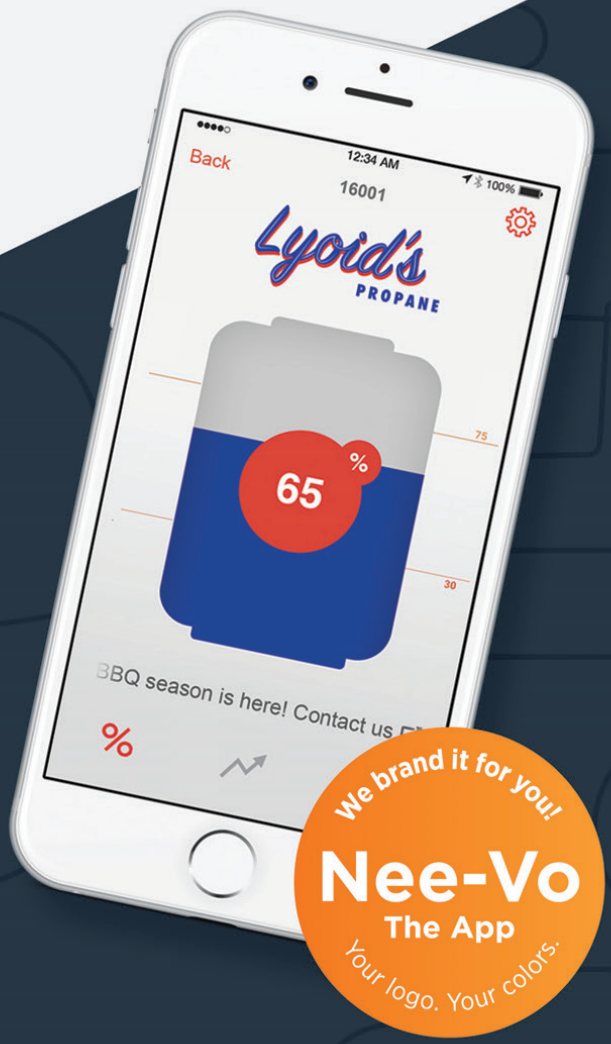
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We at ***Butane-Propane News*** are proud to be celebrating our 80th anniversary. In 1939, ***BPN*** became a standalone publication after having been a popular section of *Gas Magazine* for nearly half a decade. And the rest is history, watching the industry evolve through depressions and prosperity, war and peace, and times of more cordiality along the Beltway. Its roots have grown into new developments, including today's renewable propane.

An 80th anniversary is symbolized by an oak tree, revered for its strength and endurance, its protection, success, and stability. Since the oak takes such a long period of time and commitment to reach full maturity, it is a direct reflection of the hard work and dedication that is necessary to sustain a relationship.

This is an apt description of ***BPN***. Through the years, with different owners, publishers, and editors, ***BPN*** has remained steadfast in its dedication to bringing its readers the best, and most trustworthy, coverage of the propane industry. Our relationship with our readers is solid.

And for this we thank you, our readers, our advertisers, our supporters. Without you, ***Butane-Propane News*** would not be the publication that it is today.

As part of our anniversary celebration, we are pleased to introduce our newly redesigned magazine. We are certain you will notice our new look, while reading the content you have come to expect from ***BPN***.

Make sure to visit ***BPN*** at Booth #1141 in Atlanta; #511 in Reno; or #69 in Olathe, Kan. We look forward to celebrating with you!

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OUR COVER

To bring in propane autogas fleet customers and grow steady, year-round gallons, research the fleets in your area, meet with key company decision makers, and share the key messages about propane as transportation fuel and propane autogas fueling. Photo courtesy ROUSH CleanTech

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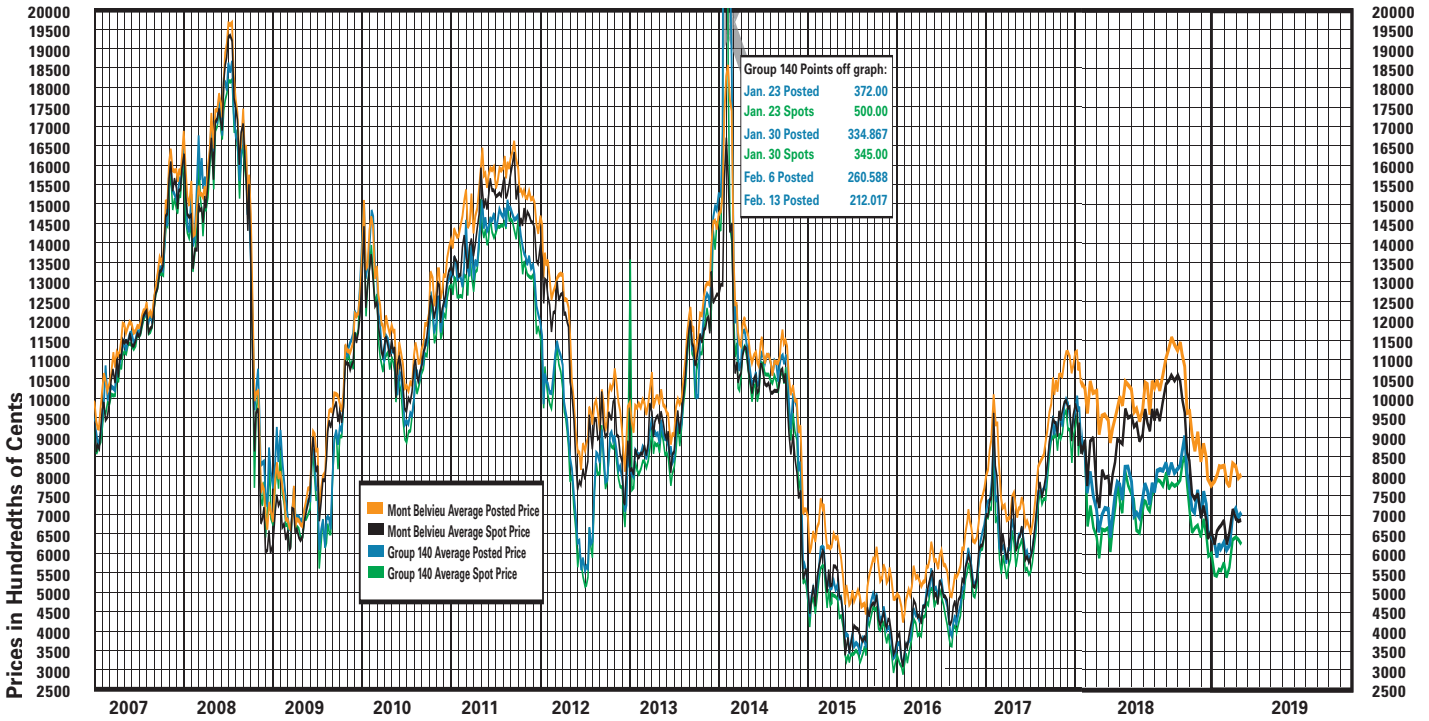
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NPGA NATIONAL PROPANE GAS ASSOCIATION

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MONT BELVIEU & GROUP 140 AVERAGE THURSDAY PROPANE PRICES

MID-WEEK AVERAGE POSTED/ SPOT PROPANE PRICES

(Cents per Gallon)

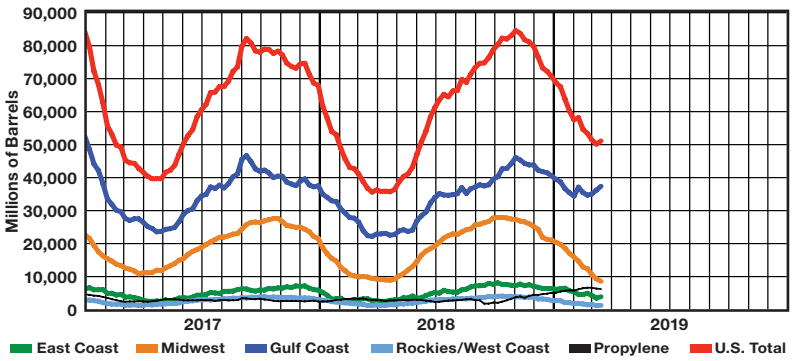
Date	Mont Belvieu		Group 140	
	POSTED	SPOT	POSTED	SPOT
2-14-19	77.423	65.00-65.375	62.330	55.75-56.75
2-21-19	83.090	70.75-71.50	70.300	63.125-63.75
2-28-19	82.757	67.75-69.00	71.830	63.25-64.25
3-7-19	79.840	68.00-68.25	69.350	62.875-63.75
3-14-19	80.257	68.50-68.875	70.730	62.00-62.50

U.S. PROPANE INVENTORIES

Feb. 22, 2019 to March 15, 2019 and One Year Ago

	2/22/19	3/1/19	3/8/19	3/15/19	3/16/18
East Coast	4,925	4,242	3,454	3,886	3,263
Midwest	12,365	10,594	9,270	8,570	9,882
Gulf Coast	34,665	35,043	36,207	37,376	22,384
Rockies/West	1,455	1,492	1,227	1,278	1,230
U.S. Total	53,410	51,371	50,159	51,110	36,759

U.S. PROPANE INVENTORIES
Jan. 1, 2017 to March 15, 2019



U.S. RESIDENTIAL PROPANE PRICES

(Mid-Month, Cents per Gallon)

Region	Date		
	3-19	2-19	3-18
East Coast (PADD I)	319.9	321.3	328.1
Midwest (PADD II)	179.7	181.8	191.1
Average U.S.	241.0	242.9	249.9

Source: "This Week in Petroleum," Energy Information Administration

CANADIAN INVENTORIES

(March 1, 2019)
Thousand Cubic Meters

PROPANE

Region	3-19	2-19	Change	3-18
Propane—East	94.1	215.1	–56.3%	120.2
Propane–West	467.4	627.1	–25.5%	387.8
Total Propane	**561.5**	**842.2**	**–33.3%**	**508.0**

BUTANE

Butane—East	230.0	322.2	–28.6%	108.3
Butane—West	685.0	696.4	–1.6%	334.7
Total Butane	**915.0**	**1018.6**	**–10.2%**	**443.0**

Source: National Energy Board

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BOLIVIA, PARAGUAY SIGN LPG DEAL

Bolivia and Paraguay have signed a commercial contract that establishes the sale of 54,000 metric tons a year of LPG by Bolivia, a pact that allows stronger energy integration between the two, says Business News Americas. The deal will generate more than $26.4 million over the contract's term.

The contract document, signed in Oruro, Bolivia, also established that, upon request and prior agreement between parties, as much as 3000 tons per month of LPG will be available between February and December, 2019.

The propane and/or butane will supply growing industrial markets in Paraguay. Between August 2013 and December 2018, Bolivia's state-owned Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales Bolivianos, or YPFB, commercialized 262,533 metric tons of LPG and invoiced Paraguay nearly $121.25 million.

Noted was that the export of LPG by Bolivia contributes significantly to its treasury as well as increased efficiency of plant infrastructure owned by YPFB, and decreased unit costs of production.

VIETNAM, JAPAN FINALIZE CONTRACT

PetroVietnam Gas Corp. (PV Gas), PetroVietnam Southern Gas Joint Stock Co., and Japan Cooperation Centre Petroleum have signed a cooperation agreement to develop an LPG distribution management system, reports *Viet Nam News*, the national English language daily.

A similar system is widely applied in Japan. Once operational, it will monitor the amount of LPG used, levels remaining in storage tanks, and then message the distribution center to facilitate refills, resulting in lower costs and improved quality control.

PV Gas said the system would promote the development of the retail LPG market in Vietnam, which remains heavily dependent on human labor for delivery and quality control. The system will first be applied for hotels, restaurants, and apartment buildings in Ho Chi Minh City. By 2020, about 50 LPG distribution management systems are expected to be installed.

The company's retail LPG sales totaled 271,180 tons last year, holding a national market share of 25%.

GLOBAL SEABORNE TRADE RISES 4%

Seaborne LPG trade rose 4% year on year in 2018 with growth in exports from North America and the Middle East and higher imports in Southeast Asia, South Korea, and Japan, the leading very large gas carrier (VLGC) owner BW LPG (Singapore) stated in its fourth-quarter earnings report released in February, and as reported by S&P Global Platts. BW LPG expects further export growth this year, led by exports from the U.S., Australia, and Canada.

No significant change in volumes is expected for the Middle East in 2019 as incremental growth in exports from the region is likely to balance the impacts of reimposed sanctions on Iran and OPEC production cuts, the company said. Based on the latest forecast from the Energy Information Administration, U.S. LPG net exports are expected to grow 23% year over year to 38 million metric tons in 2019, resulting from increased production and flat domestic consumption.

Meanwhile, key Asian buyers are boosting imports. Annual LPG imports by Japan and South Korea rose 11% and 33%, respectively, in the 2018 fourth quarter. Both countries saw a decline in volumes from the Middle East and an increase from North America, BW LPG said in its earnings presentation. Imports by Southeast Asian nations climbed 47%, driven mainly by strong demand growth in Indonesia. China's LPG imports were down 8% in the fourth quarter compared to a year earlier, but up 6% over calendar year 2018. India's LPG imports fell 14% in the final quarter of 2018 but were 5% higher for the entire year.

Fourth-quarter LPG exports from North America rose 12% compared to the same period in 2017, driven by stronger regional trade and an increase in volumes to Europe. Exports to northeast Asia also jumped, with lower exports to China countered by a rise in shipments to Japan and South Korea.

Middle Eastern exports rose 2% in the 2018 fourth quarter compared to the same period of 2017. Exports from Iran fell after U.S. sanctions were reimposed in November. But, this was countered by a rise in exports from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. The main destinations for exports from these nations were India, China, and Southeast Asia. Exports from Europe and the Mediterranean declined 18% year on year in the 2018 fourth quarter.

BW LPG has a fleet of 50 gas carriers, some 16% of the global VLGC market. Among them are 35 owned VLGCs, two part-owned VLGCs, eight chartered VLGCs, three large gas carriers, and two newbuild VLGCs set for delivery in 2020.

ARAMCO INTRODUCES FLEXIBLE CONTRACT

Saudi Aramco introduced flexible monthly LPG contract pricing for the first time in many years in January, allowing term buyers to choose the current or the following month's contract price (CP) depending on the cargo laycan, the period within which the vessel must be presented at the agreed port, a company official tells S&P Global Platts.

"This is pricing flexibility that we introduced to our customers starting January 2019," Abdullah Baltan, marketing coordinator of Saudi Aramco LPG sales and marketing, said ahead of his speech at the recent International LP Gas Seminar in Tokyo. "Basically [Aramco] gives the option to customers to have a term contract with their liftings priced on either the loading month or the following month of the loading date," he said. "So, for example in March, cargos loading in the first 10

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days will be priced on March CP, while cargos loaded 11th to the end of the month will be having the April CP."

Baltan added that half of Aramco's LPG term customers have implemented the flexible price program, accounting for 45% of the company's term volumes in 2019. "The other [Middle East sellers] are not doing it. This arrangement is just for Aramco's term buyers," an LPG trader said. "For other Middle East producers or spot barrels from Saudis you just pay based on the fixed price [of the month's CP]."

Baltan also said Aramco had removed its "destination premiums for all cargos loading from January onward." He said the decision comes as supply competitiveness from Yanbu has been decreasing in recent years due to overall pressure on global prices, which have not been reasonably reflected in its destination premiums. "So we have decided to remove these destination premiums to increase Saudi Aramco's appeal," said Baltan, adding that the move provides customers with opportunities to explore markets such as Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, and other African destinations.

He noted that the effect of this change has already been observed on Red Sea customers' nominations. Exports have risen 20% year on year to 440,000 metric tons in the first quarter of 2019, up from 352,000 tons a year earlier. Saudi Aramco, which exported roughly 7% more LPG year over year at 9.2 million tons in 2018, declined to give its estimate for 2019 in the midst of OPEC/non-OPEC production cuts.

NPA BRINGS LPG OUTLETS INTO COMPLIANCE

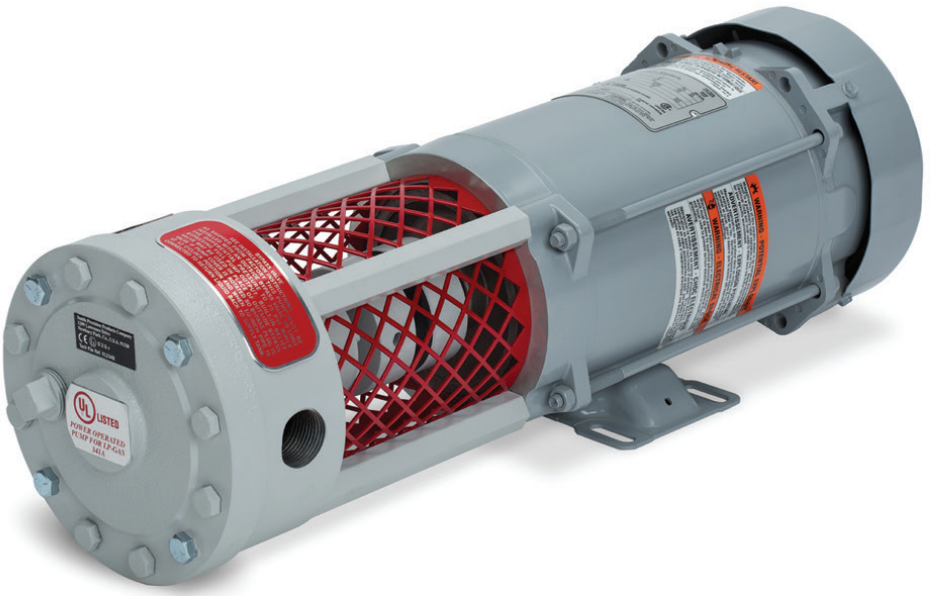
Ghana's National Petroleum Authority (NPA) is converting 510 high-risk LPG stations to cylinder distribution centers, implementing its Cylinder Recirculation Model (CRM), reports *Modern Ghana*. The move follows an explosion last year at Atomic Junction near Accra.

"What this means…they will no longer be permitted to fill cylinders or autogas when the CRM fully rolls out," said Alhassan Tampuli, NPA CEO, speaking at the signing ceremony of the 2019 declaration by oil marketing companies under the theme People Safety First. The campaign is intended to raise awareness of adhering to safety protocols in the downstream petroleum industry and educating the public on its role in preventing incidents.

Joseph Cudjoe, deputy minister of energy responsible for finance and infrastructure, expressed satisfaction of the work being carried out by NPA. "A safety-conscious sector gives the consumer confidence, thereby driving growth and efficiency," he said. He urged industry members to adhere to safety standards through their associations and peer review, and where necessary expose those who are not maintaining safety standards.



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PROPOSED EFFICIENCY STANDARD HURTS PROPANE INDUSTRY

The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) has joined other gas groups including the American Public Gas Association (APGA) and the American Gas Association (AGA) to urge the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to withdraw a 2015 proposed energy efficiency standard for non-weatherized gas furnaces and mobile home gas furnaces.

On March 12, 2015 DOE proposed raising the annual fuel utilization efficiency (AFUE) to 92%, which can only be achieved through the use of a condensing furnace. The current AFUE standard is 80%—effective in November 2015—a level at which a non-condensing furnace can easily comply. The proposed AFUE increase to 92% disproportionately hurts the propane industry and the agency underestimates the negative environmental and financial implications of the proposal, NPGA asserts.

NGPA and the others, in a petition to DOE, requested the agency withdraw the efficiency rulemaking proposal, primarily because the efficiency standards are not achievable by non-condensing furnaces.

DOE published the petition and sought comments whether it should consider the request. NPGA joined the other petitioners in strongly advocating the agency simultaneously grant the petition and withdraw the proposal. The association argued that the non-condensing aspect of a furnace is a "feature," as outlined in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, which prohibits DOE from promulgating regulations that would likely eliminate a product type or performance characteristic.

Therefore, the furnace efficiency standard proposal violates the Energy Policy and Conservation Act because it would likely eliminate non-condensing furnaces since they likely cannot meet the new standard. Comments and questions may be directed to Sarah Reboli, deputy counsel, regulatory affairs at NPGA, at *SReboli@npga.org.*

ENBRIDGE FACES COMPETITION BUILDING GULF TERMINALS

With developers of about 10 projects racing to build deep-water crude oil export terminals off Texas and Louisiana, Enbridge Inc. (Calgary) only sees enough demand for one of them in the late-2021, early-2022 timeframe, the company said in its fourth-quarter 2018 earnings call, and as reported by S&P Global Platts.

Enbridge, Kinder Morgan (Houston), and global terminal operator Oiltanking (Hamburg, Germany) have proposed developing the Texas Colt Offshore Loading Terminal about 40 miles off Freeport, Texas under a joint venture. It would be capable of loading very large crude carriers (VLCCs) directly, some-



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The joint venture filed an application with the U.S. Maritime Administration in January, a process that will take about a year to complete. “We got that in because we want to try and preserve the in-service date targets that we have out there of late-2021, early-2022,” said Guy Jarvis, president of Enbridge liquids pipelines. “We do know it is a competitive environment. We’ve continued to compete. We’ve got a line of sight to some pretty significant customers, and we’re doing our darnedest to get that project to the point where it’s a secured investment.”

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) expects U.S. crude exports to continue to climb as new midstream and export infrastructure connects surging onshore production to overseas markets. Enbridge CEO Al Monaco said his company is seeking to get more infrastructure positioned for oil and natural gas export markets as a strategic priority. “We’re really starting to build a meaningful position all the way through to the Gulf,” Monaco said. “So it will be a big area of focus for us.”

FORKLIFT SALES: ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING YEAR

Forklift sales in the North American market continue their unprecedented rise, with 2018 marking the fourth consecutive year of historic growth, reports the Industrial Truck Association (ITA). More than a quarter-million units were sold, marking a 2.8% increase over 2017. “All five truck classes exhibited growth in 2018, representing diverse demand across production lines,” said Scott Johnson, chairman of the ITA board of directors and vice president of marketing and sales for Clark Material Handling Co. (Lexington, Ky.).

Year-end forklift sales of 260,180 units included electric rider trucks, Class 1 and Class 2 combined; motorized hand trucks, Class 3; and internal combustion-powered trucks, Class 4 and Class 5 combined. Electric and internal combustion truck sales grew at similar rates, showing annual increases of 2.8% and 2.7%, respectively. Overall, electric products accounted for about 64% of last year’s market.

WPGA PRESIDENT SUPPORTS CLEAN AIR BILLS IN CALIFORNIA

Joy Alafia, president of the Western Propane Gas Association (WPGA), was among those who spoke at a March 20 press conference supporting a series of bills designed to ensure California meets its current clean air goals through the use of proven technologies and available clean air solutions.

Introduced by California Clean Air Now, the bills include California S.B. 216, A.B. 1115, and A.B. 1406. If passed, these bills would get older, polluting trucks off the road; promote fuel



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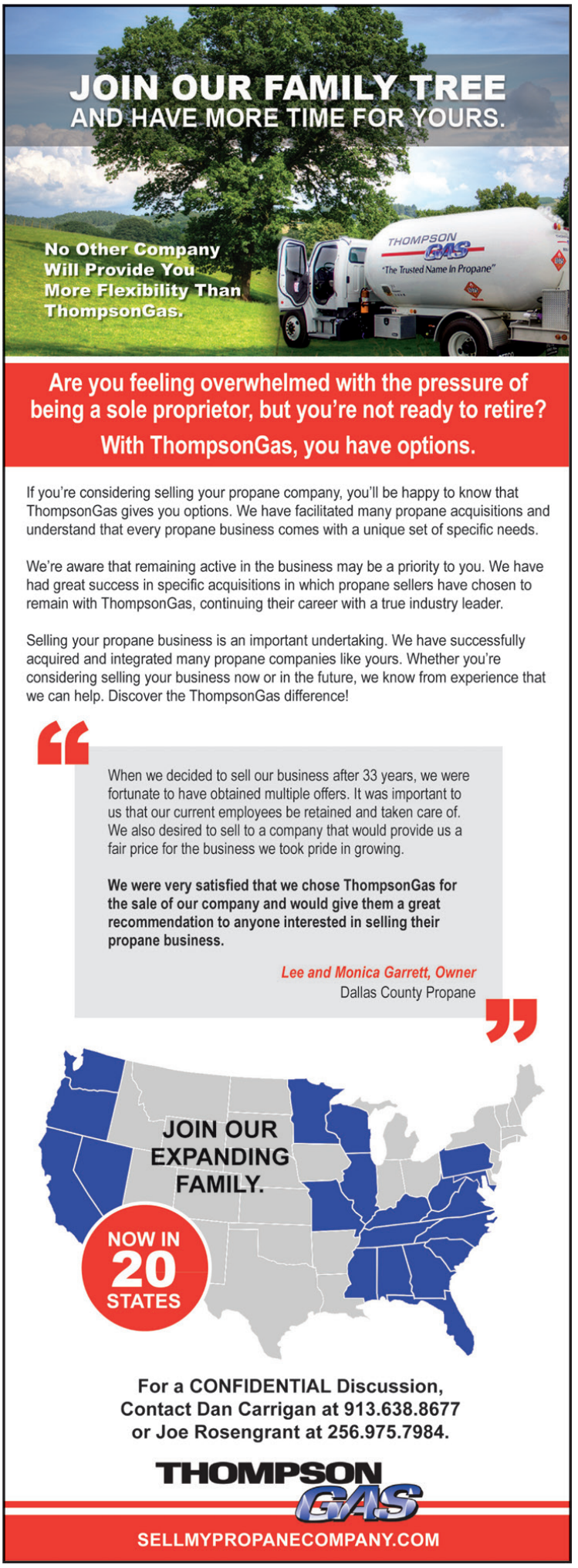
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"While most people may associate propane with backyard barbecues, our fuel represents a reliable alternative source of clean energy that heats homes, generates electricity, and powers everything from forklifts to school buses," said Alafia. "With next-generation propane expected to be 100% sustainable, propane will continue to play a critical role in helping California achieve its greenhouse gas reduction and air quality goals."

California Clean Air Now is a coalition working to ensure that California can meet its clean air goals by supporting legislation in the current legislative session that offers tangible, effective short-term air pollution solutions that can positively impact climate change in the long term. For more information, visit *CalCleanAirNow.org.*

AGREEMENTS WILL LINK CONWAY, BELVIEU MARKETS

Williams Cos. Inc. (Tulsa) and Targa Resources Corp. (Houston) said Feb. 13 they had entered into new agreements and pipeline projects aimed at linking the Conway, Kan. and Mont Belvieu, Texas NGL markets.

Williams will build a 188-mile NGL line, the Bluestem Pipeline, from its fractionator in Conway and the southern terminus of the Overland Pass Pipeline to an interconnect with Targa's Grand Prix Pipeline in Kingfisher County, Okla. In turn, Targa will construct a 110-mile extension of Grand Prix from southern Oklahoma into the Sooner Trend oil field, the Anadarko Basin, and Canadian and Kingfisher counties in the STACK region of central Oklahoma where it will connect with Williams' new Bluestem Pipeline.

In connection with the project, Williams has committed significant NGL volumes to Targa, which it will transport on Grand Prix and fractionate at its Mont Belvieu facilities. Williams will also have an initial option to purchase a 20% equity interest in one of Targa's new fractionation trains, 7 or 8, in Mont Belvieu.

Targa's Grand Prix extension will have an initial capacity of about 120,000 bbld and is expected to cost approximately $200 million. Targa and Williams are targeting an in-service date of first quarter 2021 for both the Grand Prix extension and the new Bluestem Pipeline. As part of the project, Williams also plans to expand the DJ Lateral of the Overland Pass Pipeline and make improvements at its Conway NGL storage facility. Williams expects its investment in the NGL logistics projects to be $350 million to $400 million.

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Southern LP Gas Inc. of Bowdon, Ga. Southern LP has been in business for 34 years. Customers will continue to receive uninterrupted service.

Asked about the decision to choose Blossman Gas for the sale of his business, former Southern LP president Paul Widener said, "We knew the organization as a competitor because there was a location about a mile from our office. Over the years there seemed to be a sense of integrity and professionalism. We also saw the longevity of their employees and felt there must be a good reason for their loyalty. Then, at the first meeting with Blossman, they shared their belief that employees are their greatest asset."

FERRELLGAS PARTNERS BUYS MISSOURI'S RELIABLE PROPANE

Ferrellgas Partners LP (Overland Park, Kan.) has acquired Reliable Propane, a third-party Blue Rhino distributor based in Sikeston, Mo. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Reliable Propane is a longtime independent distributor for Blue Rhino, Ferrellgas' cylinder exchange subsidiary, delivering to retail partners in the Midwest and South from locations in Springfield, Mo.; Starkville, Miss.; Olive Branch, Miss.; and Benton, Ark. The acquisition is aimed at growing the Blue Rhino segment and identifying ways to improve operational efficiencies and reduce production and delivery expenses.

SUPERIOR PLUS ACQUIRES ASSETS OF PHELPS SUNGAS

Superior Plus Corp. (Toronto) is acquiring substantially all the propane distribution assets of Phelps Sungas Inc. and BMK of Geneva Inc. (Geneva, N.Y.). Phelps Sungas is an independent propane distributor in Upstate New York serving residential and commercial customers. Terms were not disclosed.

Phelps is an established propane marketer that has operated since 1939. The acquisition is expected to add about 8600 residential and commercial customers to Superior Plus, representing 8.5 MMgal. of retail propane and distillate sales, allowing Superior to strategically grow its footprint in New York.

"The acquisition of the propane distribution assets of Phelps will be Superior's first tuck-in acquisition in 2019 and demonstrates our continued commitment to grow our footprint in the Northeast U.S.," said Luc Desjardins, Superior Plus president and CEO. "Phelps is an established, well-run business with a strong track record of serving customers in Upstate New York," added Andy Peyton, president of Superior's U.S. propane distribution business. "This transaction reaffirms our focus to leverage opportunities within our current service footprint."

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After 75 years in business, Yolanda Mosbaugh and her family made the decision to transition Ebbetts Pass Gas Service to EDP. Yolanda, shown here with Ebbetts Pass GM Don Vicari, still comes to work every day!

Valuing their legacy was important to these propane marketers. That's why they chose to sell their businesses to Energy Distribution Partners. To see what they say about selling to EDP, visit edplp.net/testimonials.



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- WOC Energy - 1958
- Lyons LP Gas - 1966
- Shute Oil & Propane - 1966
- Carmichael Propane - 1969
- Sal's Propane - 1984
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- Carolina Propane - 1994
- Ludwig Propane - 1998
- Anderson Propane Services - 1999
- Quality Propane - 2000
- United Propane - 2003
- CC Propane - 2005
- Jefferson Propane - 2006
- Kitsap Propane - 2006



INDIANA COURT AFFIRMS DISMISSAL OF FOOD TRUCK EXPLOSION CASE

DAVID R. SCHLEE

Food truck explosions are a common subject of this column. In an interesting wrinkle in the normal liability scenario for this type of incident, a recent decision from the Court of Appeals of Indiana found that a parking lot owner owed no duty to a food truck patron injured in a food truck explosion that occurred in his parking lot. The case is *Linares v El Tacarajo*.

U-Pull-And-Pay LLC, doing business as Pic-A-Part, operated an automobile salvage business in Indianapolis. Starting in 2014 it allowed a food truck, operated by El Tacarajo LLC, to park in its lot and serve customers. This was a handshake deal with no written contract or specific terms. The El Tacarajo truck generally showed up on busy days at the salvage yard, such as weekends, but there was no set schedule. The Pic-A-Part store manager affirmed that there was no service schedule, "it was just like whenever."

The El Tacarajo truck would "come in and sell some food and leave. Come and go as they please." El Tacarajo was supposed to pay Pic-A-Part $25.00 a day on at least some of the days that the truck was set up in the Pic-A-Part parking lot, but the store manager was "not sure [the payments] were made every time."

NOT ONE OF OUR VENDORS

Pic-A-Part never asked if El Tacarajo was licensed to sell food. Pic-A-Part did not ask El Tacarajo whether it had

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fire safety procedures in place for using gasoline or propane in its operations. In fact, the Pic-A-Part manager later stated that he never had contact with anyone at the food truck. The manager did note that El Tacarajo was "not one of our vendors to where we would be checking all of their identifications." Pic-A-Part was not aware of any prior incidents involving an explosion, fire, or other dangerous condition created by a food truck, gas generator, or grill on its premises at any time prior to the incident. Neither Pic-A-Part nor El Tacarajo was aware of any dangerous condition regarding the food truck or its equipment that could have caused an explosion at any time prior to the incident.

On June 20, 2015, El Tacarajo was on the Pic-A-Part property selling food from its truck. The vehicle was positioned in the customer parking lot. German Linares came to Pic-A-Part on that date to purchase automobile glass. Linares was a regular customer of Pic-A-Part, and on at least several prior occasions had purchased food from the El Tacarajo truck.

TOO CLOSE TO THE FLAME

After making his purchase of window glass from the Pic-A-Part store, Linares ordered food from the El Tacarajo food truck in the parking lot. As he waited for his food, the truck suddenly exploded and caught fire. Linares was injured and taken by ambulance to a local hospital for treatment. Subsequent investigation revealed that the explosion was caused by an El Tacarajo employee who opened a can of gasoline inside the truck in order to fill a generator. Sadly, he opened the gasoline can too close to the open cooking flame of the propane-fueled flattop grill.

> *"Pic-A-Part never asked if El Tacarajo was licensed to sell food. Pic-A-Part did not ask El Tacarajo whether it had fire safety procedures in place for using gasoline or propane in its operations. In fact, the Pic-A-Part manager later stated that he never had contact with anyone at the food truck."*

A year later, Linares filed his lawsuit against Pic-A-Part and El Tacarajo, alleging that El Tacarajo was negligent in its handling of combustible fuels, in failing to have a license from the Health Department, in failing to train its employees, and in failing to inspect its truck and equipment. Linares alleged that Pic-A-Part was negligent for failing to monitor or inspect El Tacarajo's operations, failing to determine whether El Tacarajo was properly licensed, and failing to study the food truck's safety procedures. Linares also alleged that Pic-A-Part was legally liable for El Tacarajo's negligent acts because it was engaged



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in a joint venture with El Tacarajo.

Pic-A-Part filed a motion for summary judgment, arguing first that Pic-A-Part had no duty to protect Linares from the unforeseeable actions of El Tacarajo, and second that it was not part of a joint venture with El Tacarajo and therefore not legally liable for the negligent acts of El Tacarajo. Following a hearing, the trial court granted Pic-A-Part's motion for summary judgment and entered judgment in favor of Pic-A-Part. Linares appealed.

FORESEEABLE?

The appellate court first considered whether a property owner like Pic-A-Part owed a legal duty to customers who came onto the property—to use reasonable care to try to protect them from hazards presented by the food truck in its parking lot. This, the court stated, depended on whether hazards from the operation of the food truck were "foreseeable." The court rejected the notion that a food truck explosion was foreseeable to Pic-A-Part:

> ***"No one—not Pic-A-Part, not El Tacarajo, and not Linares himself—believed or had any reason to believe the food truck was defective or dangerous. Had Pic-A-Part inspected the food truck, as Linares believes it should have, first, it is unclear what Pic-A-Part, as a salvage business, would have been qualified to inspect for, and second, there still would not have been any reason to believe the food truck was defective, because it was not in fact a defect that caused the explosion but rather human error. As for Pic-A-Part's alleged failure to inquire about El Tacarajo's license, the record indicates as of August 2014, El Tacarajo had an expired certified food handler certificate and an unpaid licensing fee. It is not clear that remained true as of the date of this incident and further, the licensing requirement apparently had no bearing on safe operation of the food truck, only the safe handling of food. Finally, there was no designated evidence to suggest Pic-A-Part had knowledge of any food truck explosions anywhere in the past, let alone any of the same or similar nature.***
>
> ***"Should food trucks be inspected? Probably. Should Pic-A-Part have taken more interest in a mobile business it allowed to operate on its premises and sell to its customers? Possibly. But should a company in a completely unrelated private business which periodically provides a parking space be required to conduct that inspection and ensure the food truck is safely maintained and its employees properly trained? Even if Pic-A-Part had asked the questions Linares and the dissent argue it should have, it still would not have been reasonably foreseeable to Pic-A-Part that the food truck would suddenly explode because of an employee's negligence."***

JOINT VENTURE?

The court likewise rejected the claim that Pic-A-Part participated in a joint venture with El Tacarajo, since Pic-A-Part did not exercise any control over the operations of the food truck:



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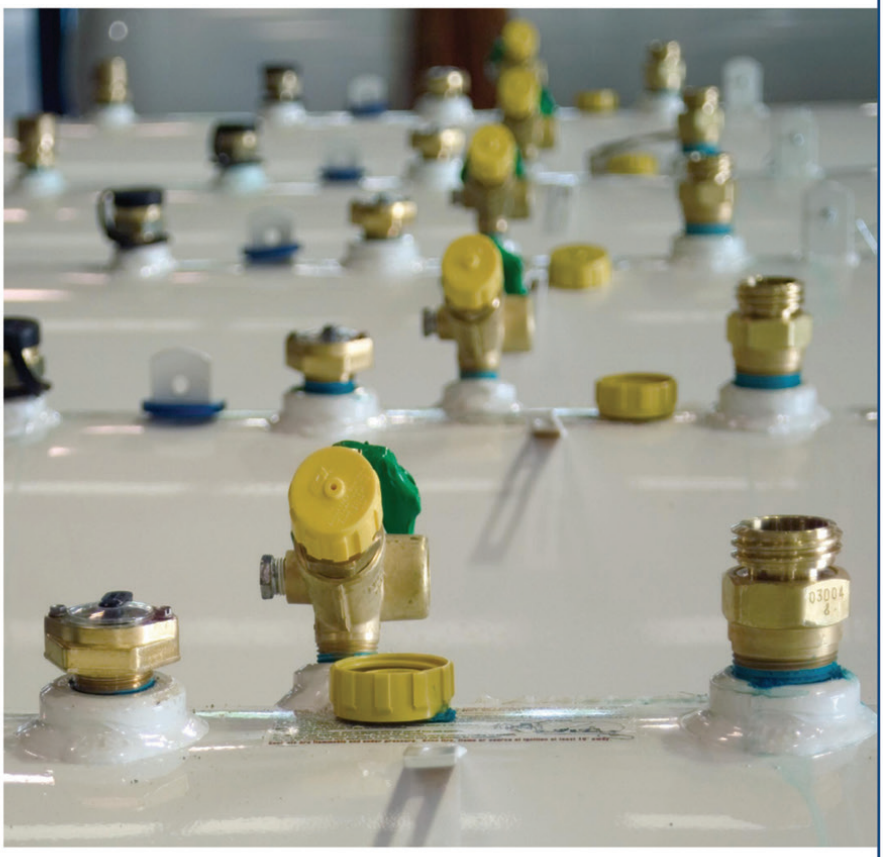
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"Our review of the designated materials reveals that to the extent there was an agreement between El Tacarajo and Pic-A-Part, and to the extent such agreement may have been mutually beneficial, it is undisputed that any such agreement did not provide for mutual control over the venture. El Tacarajo unilaterally decided when to go to Pic-A-Part's premises to sell its food, who to employ, what food it would offer, and how much it would charge. Pic-A-Part unilaterally decided where on its property El Tacarajo could park and it could have told El Tacarajo to leave on any given day or to leave and never return. No decisions were made jointly by Pic-A-Part and El Tacarajo in regard to the food truck operation."

DISSENT

One of the appellate judges dissented from the ruling. The dissent opened by reciting the recent history of these explosions:

> ***"Food truck explosions occurred in Traverse City, Mich. in 2013; Philadelphia, Pa. in 2014; Foggy Bottom, District of Columbia in 2016; Portland, Ore. in 2017; Downtown, District of Columbia in 2017; and in Southwest Washington, District of Columbia, in 2018."***

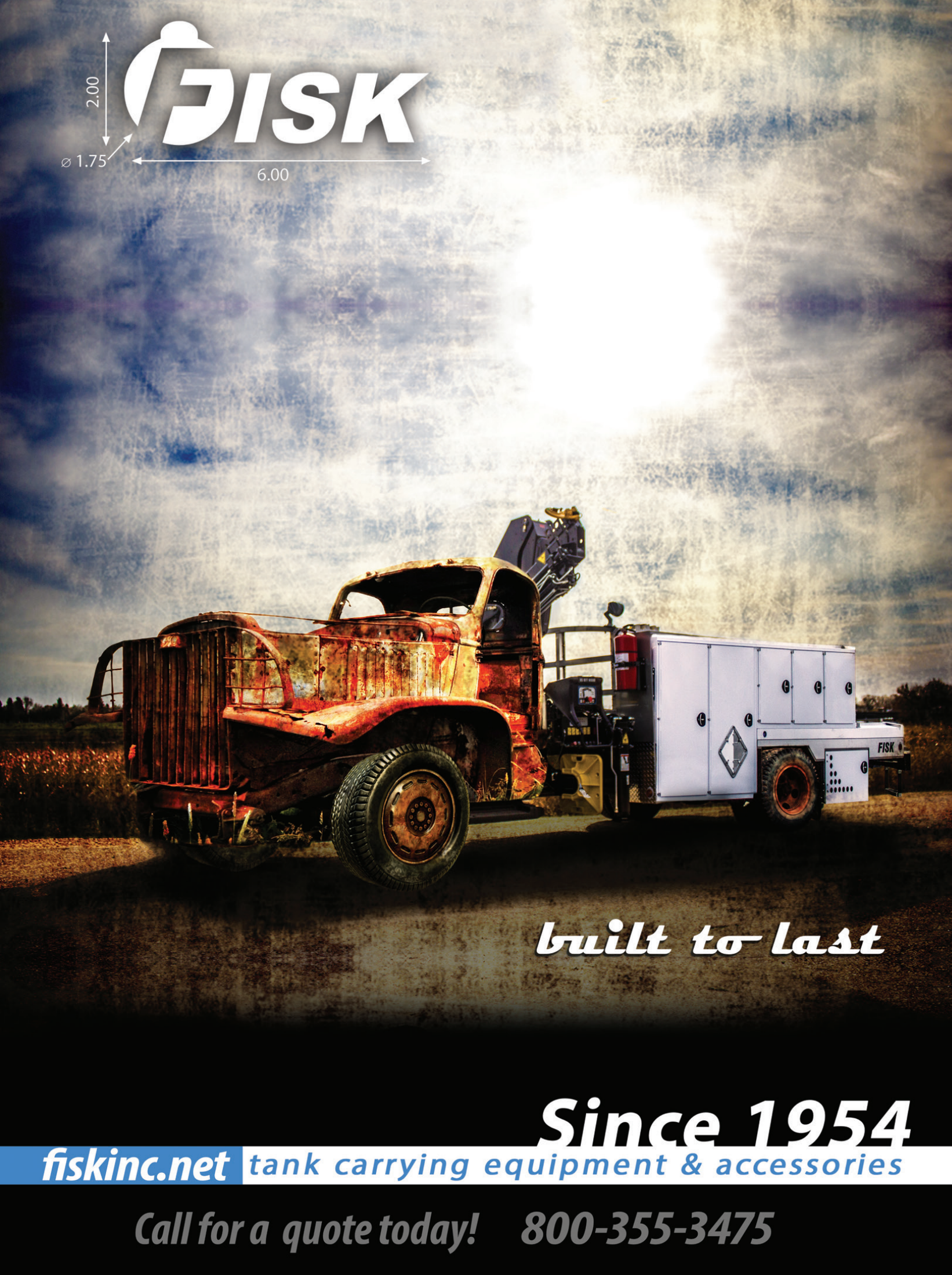
The dissent continued by pointing to Pic-A-Part's failure to make any inquiry at all about the truck, despite knowledge from its own business operations of the hazards of flammable materials:

> ***"Pic-A-Part was well aware of the risks of explosions from handling flammable materials. Indeed, as noted in the majority opinion, Pic-A-Part trains its employees in handling flammable materials and posts warnings and instructions for its customers about the dangers.***
>
> ***"Notwithstanding its knowledge of the risks of mishandling gasoline, propane, and other flammable materials, Pic-A-Part made no inquiry or investigation of El Tacarajo's use of flammable substances on its property in close proximity to its customers. Pic-A-Part failed to make reasonable inquiries about El Tacarajo's operations and failed to determine whether such operations posed an unreasonable risk of harm to its customers. Indeed, nothing in the record before us indicates that Pic-A-Part made any inquiry regarding (1) whether El Tacarajo was licensed to sell food in the conduct of its business, (2) whether it trained its employees in the handling of flammable substances in close proximity to heat sources, (3) whether it used gasoline or other flammable substances in its operations, (4) whether it had proper fire safety procedures in place, or (5) whether it complied with legal and safety requirements."***

The appellate decision was handed down on Feb. 8. The suit by Linares against El Tacarajo continues.

David Schlee is a shareholder in the Kansas City law firm of Schlee & McCarthy PC. Readers may contact him at drschlee@schleelaw.com.




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Installing and using propane autogas fueling infrastructure is easy. Propane autogas equipment doesn't require excessive space; the average footprint of a fueling station is 300 square feet.

HOW TO HELP FLEETS TRANSITION TO PROPANE AUTOGAS

TODD MOUW and JIM BUNSEY

Propane providers across the nation can bring in propane autogas fleet customers that account for steady, year-round gallons.

Every day, you drive around the city or town you live in. By paying attention to the service and fleet vehicles you see, you can learn a lot about which fleets would consider propane autogas vehicles if they knew about the benefits. Spot a pest control company. What type of vehicle is it? Does an EPA/CARB certification exist for that vehicle system to operate on propane autogas? Check out the back of school buses and look for the diamonds denoting fuel type. Are they running on diesel or another alternative fuel? See a city or county vehicle? How far do you think they are driving every day? Research the fleets in your area and whether they are considering a shift to alternative fuels.

FACE TO FACE

Key company decision makers need to be aware of propane autogas vehicles and infrastructure options. When it comes to fueling, you are the expert! How can you get their attention most effectively?

A sit-down meeting and presentation can be a great way to introduce options. Many valuable resources from the Propane Education & Research Council Product Catalog, including video case studies and cut-sheets, are at your fingertips to download and share. Inviting other industry experts will help you be better prepared to answer any and all questions, too. For example, propane fuel system providers, like Superior Energy Systems, are available to help you with costs associated with fueling equipment and installation information. Propane autogas fuel system manufacturers, such as ROUSH CleanTech, can speak to the types of commercial vehicles available with propane systems. Other options include inviting the fleet customer to tour your facility, especially if you have on-site propane autogas fueling, or tour the facility of a fleet customer you currently serve.

BACK TO BASICS MESSAGING

You have likely heard the phrase "propane autogas" for several years now, along with the key benefits of why it is such an ideal solution for fleets. The most important thing to remember is that the fleets you are approaching have very likely not heard about propane autogas. Start from the beginning.

Three key messages about propane as a transportation fuel are:

No. 1 — It's economical

Propane autogas generally costs up to 40% less than gasoline and up to 50% less than diesel. In addition to the fuel cost savings, propane autogas burns cleaner in engines than gasoline and diesel, which results in reduced maintenance costs and potential for longer engine life. Engines fueled by propane autogas require less oil by volume than diesel and no additional diesel emission fluids or extra valve adjustments. Customers report less servicing needed for fluids, coolants, and filters.

No. 2 — It's easier on the environment

Fleet vehicles that run on propane autogas emit fewer greenhouse gases, smog-producing hydrocarbons, and particulate emissions than gasoline-fueled vehicles. When compared to diesel, propane autogas vehicles emit fewer nitrogen oxides, greenhouse gases, and virtually eliminate particulate matter. Ford Class 4-7 vehicles equipped with a ROUSH CleanTech fuel system are 75% cleaner than the current federal emissions standard for nitrogen oxides—and 99% cleaner than diesel vehicles built before 2007.

No. 3 — It's safe and widespread

Propane autogas is the third most commonly used transportation fuel across the U.S. and the globe (behind gasoline and diesel). Propane autogas vehicles operate about 50% more quietly, which increases safety and decreases driver fatigue. Propane autogas is a nontoxic, noncarcinogenic, and noncorrosive fuel.

Next, review the basics around fueling. Three key messages about propane autogas fueling are:

No. 1 — It's cost-effective



Fleet vehicles like school buses that run on propane autogas emit less greenhouse gases, smog-producing hydrocarbons, and particulate emissions than gasoline-fueled vehicles.

It is more cost-effective to install propane autogas fueling than any other conventional or alternative fuel. The average cost of a propane autogas fueling station is $24,000 to $200,000 dependent on fleet size.

There are three main options for installing propane autogas infrastructure:

- The fleet purchases and owns the equipment, as well as maintains it, and the fuel provider supplies fuel for an agreed upon price and time period (usually by bid).
- The fleet agrees to a "lease to own" structure with their fuel provider for an agreed upon price and time period at cost-plus (cost is built into the price per gallon).
- The fuel provider installs the equipment for the fleet and fully maintains it, in exchange for a three- to five-year fueling contract at cost-plus.

No. 2 — It's easy to use

Installing and using propane autogas fueling infrastructure is easy. Propane autogas equipment doesn't require excessive space; the average footprint of a fueling station is 300 square feet.



It is more cost-effective to install propane autogas fueling than any other conventional or alternative fuel. The average cost of a propane autogas fueling station is $24,000 to $200,000 dependent on fleet size.

Propane autogas dispensing is a closed-loop system and new technology allows for almost zero fugitive emissions.

No. 3 — It's intelligent

Some propane autogas dispensers are fully integrated and customizable web-based units. These dispensers track key data like driver and vehicle identification, vehicle mileage, and gallons pumped for a virtually unlimited number of vehicles, drivers, and customers. You can access all fleet information in real time and create customizable reports, without the need to purchase and install separate technology.

FOLLOW UP

In the weeks and months after your presentation at a customer site, be sure to follow up. Ask specifically for updates about where the prospect's decision-making process is and help to answer questions. Remember to provide updated information on technology and fleets transitioning to propane autogas.

Be sure to track every conversation in your customer relationship management software. If your company doesn't have a CRM, simply use an Excel spreadsheet.

Once you take notice of the businesses around you, you'll be sure to find fleet customers interested in propane autogas.

Todd Mouw is president of ROUSH CleanTech, manufacturer of propane autogas fuel systems for fleet vehicles, based in Livonia, Mich. Jim Bunsey is director of operations for Superior Energy Systems, manufacturer of propane autogas dispensers, based in Columbia Station, Ohio.



As Oregon state legislators were working on the state budget, community colleges and industry partners rallied outside the Capitol to support funding that would enable them to maintain and add to the capacity needed to train workers.

COLLEGE OFFERS AUTOGAS VEHICLE SERVICE TRAINING

STEVE RELYEA

There's a growing need for technicians in a variety of industries, including the propane and alternative fueled-vehicles industry. Now is the time to start training people for those positions.

Those are messages being promoted in the state of Oregon and across the country by a propane marketer and a community college. CoEnergy Propane (Albany, Ore.) and Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC; Albany, Ore.) partner in teaching students and automotive service professionals how to service propane-powered vehicles. They also are working to increase the number of educators teaching these skills nationwide.

In Oregon, they recently joined the state's 16 other community colleges at two events promoting the importance of community colleges and their career technical education (CTE) programs. Career Technical Education Day (Feb. 1) and Community College Day (March 7) were held at the Oregon state capitol as legislators were working on the state budget. The rallies were organized to support funding that would enable community colleges and their CTE programs to maintain and add to the capacity needed to train workers.

Randy Camp of CoEnergy Propane attended both rallies. He is general manager of the company, which provides propane services to residential, agricultural, and commercial customers. He is also a member of the board of education of LBCC.

"CTE fills our industry's pipeline with future employees," he told ***BPN*** after the events. "Our employees are aging out and we don't have quality, trained employees to fill those positions. Unemployment is at 4.3% here, so it's hard to find employees. These Days show people in the Capitol that CTE is needed. By and large, we've had positive feedback from legislators."

Representatives of LBCC also participated in the rallies. At CTE Day, the school showcased its transportation



Vehicle displays provided eye candy that drew the attention of legislators and their staff, resulting in conversations and the sharing of informational handouts.

programs, which cover automotive, heavy equipment/diesel, and alternative fuels—including propane autogas. Participating industry partners included CoEnergy, Pacific Propane Gas Association, Propane Education & Research Council, and Papé Kenworth.

"The CTE Day at the Capitol provided state reps in the House and Senate with information about community college programs that lead to high-wage, high-demand, highly-technical workforce skills and jobs—this is true in the propane industry and alt fuels," said David R. Becker, dean of the Advance Manufacturing & Transportation Technology Division at LBCC.

CRITICAL TRAINING

Inside the Capitol, LBCC's president, business leaders, dean, and other administrative staff met with representatives, senators, and their staff. Their messages to legislators included the following: Community colleges and their CTE programs provide critical training for today's workforce. Graduates have a high employability rate and secure high-paying, career-oriented positions. Many are offered jobs before completing their program.

Outside, the college displayed a CoEnergy truck, a bi-fuel propane 2012 Caprice, and a 2010 CNG Freightliner. "We were able to display informational handouts on our industry partners along with vehicle displays that were eye candy resulting in conversations as they drew people's attention—legislators and their staff," Becker said.

"The purpose of CTE Day was to elevate CTE," he added. "CTE is the core of what community colleges do—two-year programs that lead to high-paying jobs. Everybody doesn't need a four-year degree to get quality high-paying jobs."

"In the legislature, we are pushing for more funding for these programs because of the workforce needs. If you are in Oregon, reach out to your legislators and tell them to fund the community colleges. We don't want to put all the expense of an education on the shoulders of the students. We want to keep that pipeline of educated and qualified employees flowing."

LBCC has automotive and heavy transportation programs and offers this training to current students as well as industry professionals. Most industry classes are taught at the employer's locations, mostly in the Pacific Northwest. LBCC has also made presentations at the SEMA Show, an automotive aftermarket trade show put on by the Specialty Equipment Market Association.

CoEnergy's truck was at the two rallies to draw attention to the company's cooperation with LBCC's training of students on autogas technology. Among the services CoEnergy offers its customers is the conversion of cars, trucks, and vans to run on propane autogas. Its vehicle conversion center also serves in a consulting capacity to LBCC's Advanced Transportation Technology Center (ATTC).

ATTC has a classroom, offices, and shop area designated for alternative fuels. Most of the technicians who have taken these courses are already employed. LBCC has seen students who had completed its alternative fuels classes take positions with dealerships, fleets, aftermarket fuel manufacturers, and propane marketers. Over the past five years, hundreds of technicians have been trained in LBCC's alternative fuels courses.

HIGHLY SOUGHT AFTER

"Not many people know how these systems actually work," said Bryan Schiedler, transportation technology department chair at LBCC. "Because of this fact, many of the people who take courses from us are highly sought after by fleets who use these systems, deal-

Continued on **Page 60**

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

JOE COLANERI

The new reality of advocacy and governance in 2019



Oran Cam/Shutterstock.com

The 116th Congress is now in full swing, and while it has been difficult to read all of the political and policy tea leaves since the 2018 midterm elections, and the government has just emerged from the longest shutdown in history, some trends are now emerging. We can observe and speculate on the new reality on Capitol Hill even if we cannot, with certainty, predict policy outcomes.

The outlines and character of a potentially new emerging Democratic majority will soon begin to become clear. All of this takes place in a highly charged political atmosphere shadowed by the upcoming 2020 presidential election, the fallout from the government shutdown, the newly divided government, the almost daily Democratic presidential candidate announcements, and the president's own political vulnerabilities.

RETROSPECTIVE

President Trump has, for now, redefined mainstream conservatism. While no one really knows what his lasting legacy will be politically or policy-wise, it is a safe bet that he has shifted the "movement conservative" playing field despite the protestations of the Never Trumpers—a group that makes up between 10% to 15% of today's GOP. Trump commands north of 80% support within the Republican Party—so he owns movement conservatism for now.

And it could be said that the restive Tea Party movement that organized in 2009, and proved a significant political counterweight to President Obama's agenda, provided the momentum that turned Congress toward the GOP in 2010 and 2014, and gave logical rise to Donald Trump's insurgent presidency in 2016.

POINT

The Tea Party stands as one of the most significant political movements of the last 50 years—a movement that has shaped our national policy and politics, and our congressional and national leadership. It helped redefine Republicanism and define so-called "Trumpism"—a seeming hybrid of traditional GOP philosophy leavened by a populist grass-roots anti-establishment insurgency.

From the Tea Party came a platform of opposition to federal deficits, decreased federal regulation, minimal government involvement of any kind in health care, entitlement reform, and across-the-board tax cuts. This renewed orthodoxy—one part traditional GOP, one part populist—drove the GOP and culminated in the 2016 GOP victory and a governing Republican majority in the 115th Congress.

From a policy perspective, Trump will be mostly remembered for the tax cut bill in 2017 and for the ongoing program of administrative regulatory relief. In prior articles for ***BPN*** and particularly in the early months of the Trump Presidency, I strongly urged the propane industry to seize the opportunity the Trump Administration had offered to provide relief from burdensome rules and regulations—to categorize and prioritize those regulations and actively lobby the White House and the agencies in a once-in-a-generation transformative program. There was, and there still is, interest in building the economy by shielding businesses large and small from excessive and duplicative burden. I felt this could be accomplished, and still believe it can be accomplished, by a coalition of like-minded industries, or by the propane industry alone.

TRUMP COUNTRY IS PROPANE COUNTRY

The trick was or will be to engage the Trump country constituency—propane country—the states to which Trump owes his presidency, rural America, the Midwest, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the South and Southeast, North Carolina and Florida for example, to build powerful policy cases for regulatory relief.

Donald Trump is not a policy wonk, but he possesses exceptional political skills, knows his voters and his base, and his political lifeline is, in part, in propane country. This should be a natural organic alliance that provides the industry with opportunity, but it needs to be organized.

This cannot be a passive aggressive exercise. To be successful, it needs to be a strong, powerful grass-roots movement based on connecting the dots between the needs of the industry and the President's natural political constituency. If any industry could do this, it would be propane. Trump still commands the agencies and his base remains intact. This regulatory initiative can still be accomplished—but the clock is ticking.

A NEW REALITY

Political cycles wax and wane—and we now appear to have an ascendant Democratic House majority pressing an aggressive policy agenda from the left. Make no mistake about it—the outcome of these debates will impact the propane industry for a generation and may in time reshape the entire energy industry.

Trump and the Tea Party have, for now, redefined modern conservatism, but a new generation of House Democrats, empowered and emboldened by the biggest midterm popular vote victory in American history in 2018, is poised to redefine modern liberalism and perhaps seize the nation's policy agenda.

COUNTERPOINT

What is now happening is apparent in the emerging domestic debates of 2019 being pressed by the House Democrats:

- Support for a big government "Green New Deal" to fight climate change, which may become a signature issue in 2020
- Support for "Medicare for All" going beyond the Obama-era Affordable Care Act and suggesting a much larger role for government in health care
- Revisiting the tax reform and tax cuts of 2017 to pay for the "Green New Deal," implying a new philosophy on the use of the tax code for social purposes and a paradigm shift in the assessment of tax code "winners" and "losers"
- Infrastructure rebuild—a "go to the moon" style initiative that will not only tackle our nation's aging roads and bridges, but reshape our entire economy through clean energy programs
- Resilience and disaster relief that will respond to the challenges of climate change and have at its core new ideas for backup power, hybrid technology, combined heat and power (CHP), microgrids, vehicle-to-grid, and other hardened infrastructure concepts
- Aggressive federal funding streams aimed at both short-term and long-term challenges (the FAA authorization bill has become the proxy for these new initiatives).

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PROPANE?

The Green New Deal, Medicare for All, and revisiting tax policy are all shaping up as a new Democratic ideological orthodoxy and a progressive litmus test heading into 2020. These ideas and possible champions have suddenly burst onto the scene after years behind the curtain. Much as the Tea Party agenda began to take shape in 2009, there are now real opportunities to begin to realize more progressive goals, and a liberal-leaning counterpoint to the Trump base taking shape in Congress and out beyond the Washington Beltway.

- A recent Gallup poll shows 51% of Democrats identify themselves as liberals
- In 1992, when Bill Clinton was elected president, 25% of Democrats identified themselves as liberals, 25% conservative, and the rest as moderate
- And across the political spectrum the lean toward conservative has narrowed: 35% of Americans now say they're conservative; 35% moderate; 26% liberal.

And there is intensity in the rising liberal base. It's a "go big or go home" mindset.

The political energy in America right now—online, on cable, and with political donors—is with the progressives. Agree with the following premise or not, the new House Democrats will argue that their victory in 2018 suggests that the nation's politics have taken an abrupt dramatic turn and has earned them capital to cash in.

While this suggests a shift in national policy direction, it is in no sense a finished product—rather it is a rough cut. The new liberals in Congress, much as their counterparts in the Tea Party a decade ago, are in pursuit of a new policy holy grail and they are not afraid to push the boundaries of the traditional norms and folkways of the Washington power elites—this time from the left.

This means robust oversight of the Trump Administration's entire policy agenda and implementation of same, as well as the entertaining of ideas from the left long discussed but little debated seriously—changes in health policy, energy, financial regulation, and the means to pay for them.

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

The propane industry, indeed all stakeholders, need to be aware of and prepared for an aggressive policy and political soul-searching that could fundamentally change liberal orthodoxy across the board and challenge longstanding progressive policy.

How can the propane industry leverage the Trump Administration for signature regulatory relief but also tap the political momentum driving the Green New Deal? The answers are not necessarily mutually exclusive and may lie in an old industry business model that well served the industry a generation ago.

Much as the Tea Party gave rise to the norm-shattering Trump Presidency that for now has transformed traditional Republican governance, no one can ignore the potential transformational debates we may soon see from the left—a classic point-counterpoint that reflects the certainty of restive political energy and intensity on both sides of the political spectrum and challenges traditional policy approaches across the board.

A NEW PROPANE ADVOCACY PARADIGM

How can the propane industry market its vast superiority as a domestic clean fuel to add value through advocacy? The answers may lie in tried-and-true grass-roots strategy while utilizing a few modern organizational trends.

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AUTOGAS EXPERTS ADDRESS COMMON MYTHS, PRESENT THE FACTS

STEVE RELYEA



John Barnett
U-Haul



Mark Denton
Blossman Gas



Jim Bunsey
Superior Energy Systems



David Kennedy
Alliance AutoGas

Many of the barriers to the adoption of propane autogas are based on myths. Some propane marketers remember the inferior vehicle systems of the 1980s and are reluctant to enter the autogas market again. Many members of the public are not even aware that propane can fuel vehicles, so when they think of alternative fuels, they think electricity is the only solution.

Four autogas experts will address these and other myths during a seminar at the National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) Expo in Atlanta. They will also present the facts about today's autogas dispensing equipment, vehicles, and growth opportunities. The seminar is meant for propane marketers who are looking to learn more about the installation and maintenance of autogas stations; who are skeptics about the dependability of the vehicle systems and fueling infrastructure; and/or who want to sell gallons independently of the weather.

Among the myths these experts will address, and the facts they will present, are the following:

The myth: "It's too difficult to install and maintain autogas refueling equipment." There is a general misconception that propane stations require substantial time and money to install due to the complexity of the systems, says Jim Bunsey of Superior Energy Systems. In addition, it is sometimes assumed that autogas dispensers require time-consuming training, are difficult to work on and maintain, and require extensive calibration. "These misconceptions sometimes occur due to the fact that other alternative fuel infrastructure, such as CNG and electric, do require substantial financial outlay, site preparations, and equipment," Bunsey explains.

The fact: Prepackaged and fully tested autogas skids with new technology make autogas dispensers easier to install, operate, and maintain. If station operators are performing routine maintenance, including lubricating dispenser nozzles and the propane pump, they should experience no downtime. If service technicians have been properly trained to handle propane autogas and have experience with gasoline and/or diesel refueling stations, they should have no trouble installing or servicing an autogas dispenser—the systems perform in very similar fashions. As director of operations at Superior Energy Systems, Bunsey has directed thousands of autogas and midstream installations. "At the panel," he says, "marketers can come hear a step-by-step outline of how simple the installation process and maintenance requirements can be and why new technology is propelling autogas to the top of the alternative fuel ladder."



The myth: "Public refueling of propane autogas will never happen." This myth exists because many people have never actually refueled or experienced refueling a propane autogas vehicle, especially with a modern dispenser equipped with a quick-connect nozzle, says David Kennedy of Alliance AutoGas. "They can only relate to cylinder refueling, which does necessitate a propane professional to refuel," he explains.

The fact: Advancements in autogas refueling have made it easy for end users to refuel a propane-powered vehicle. The industry's self-regulation is limiting access to its fuel through its own outdated safety regulations. In addition to serving as director of autogas design at Alliance AutoGas, Kennedy is active in PERC's Research and Technology Development advisory group and NPGA's Technical Safety and Standards group, and has been an NFPA 58 AutoGas Subject Matter Expert. "During this panel I will point out the advancements in autogas refueling and point out the differences in refilling a propane cylinder compared to an autogas vehicle."

The myth: "Autogas isn't worth my time, money, or resources." Some marketers' only experience with autogas is with the systems that went away in the late '80s, early '90s due to technology challenges. "They haven't given the new technology an honest chance," says Mark Denton of Blossman Gas. In addition, many people believe that you can't make money on autogas because it is all "cheap" bid fuel only.

The fact: The new technology is state of the art and cannot be compared with the carbureted systems of the '80s. This technology is available for both original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and EPA- and CARB-certified aftermarket systems. Today's systems are extremely dependable and are saving fleet customers significant money on fuel cost. Denton, who serves as vice president of business development at Blossman Gas, has been in the retail propane business since 1978 and has worked almost exclusively with autogas for the past 10 years. "I drive an F-150 using an EPA-certified bi-fuel system, which has close to 200,000 miles on it, and the only thing I have had done to the propane system is change some fuel filters."

The myth: "No one outside of the propane industry cares about the adoption of autogas." Propane-powered vehicles have not yet been marketed to the average consumer, so there is a general lack of knowledge about them, says John Barnett of U-Haul, the largest propane retailer in North America. Compare that to electric vehicles: "Electric vehicles made their way into the mainstream market and have been marketed to consumers in a consistent and effective manner."

The fact: The autogas industry is growing quickly, but quietly. The public is seeking better transportation solutions and most people understand that there is a need for clean-burning fuel to address the issue of CO_2 emissions. U-Haul has a vast infrastructure and is actively marketing autogas to the many fleets with which it does business. Barnett has been dispensing propane since 2006, pushed for propane-powered service vehicles in his fleet when he was U-Haul company president in California, and began upgrading U-Haul's dispensers with new pumps to fill autogas tanks when he entered his current position: propane programs manager at U-Haul. "Caring about the adoption of anything stems from awareness, accessibility, and appealing to people on a personal level," he says. "For some, that appeal may involve financial savings, environmental responsibility, making our busy lives a little easier…or all of the above."

To get the most out of the seminar they will be presenting at the NPGA Expo, the speakers recommend that attendees read up on autogas at the PERC website (*propane.com*) and bring any questions they might have. They also recommend that attendees consider how far autogas technologies have come since the '80s—just as phone technology has evolved from payphones to smartphones—and come to the event with an open mind regarding marketing propane autogas.

Bunsey concluded, "We hope to expel the common myths associated with autogas by bringing together all pieces of the autogas puzzle—the marketer, the station equipment provider, the fleet manager, and the autogas vehicle system manufacturer—to explain how autogas can be an excellent addition to a propane marketer's offerings."

Their seminar, "Autogas Dispensing Equipment—Myth vs. Fact," is to be held Sunday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo in Atlanta. ■

NOW'S THE TIME FOR A FINANCIAL PHYSICAL

STEVEN ABBATE

Every year brings new challenges to retail energy marketers. For propane marketers this past year has seen the cost of tanks skyrocket and the pool of qualified CDL drivers shrink with upward pressure on wages. Natural gas competition continues, and heat pumps and geothermal remain a threat to market share. So, what's a propane marketer to do?

A good place to start is in understanding your financial results. The four basic areas of a financial analysis are revenues, cost of goods sold, operating expenses, and capital expenditures. Because we are in a commodity-based business, we like to look at gross profit (GP) as it is better to analyze trends in GP than revenue.

GROSS PROFIT

We define GP as what you sold the propane to your customers for minus what the propane cost (with or without transportation). Accountants may define GP differently and many include direct operating expenses such as driver and truck expense.

I think it is important to know the difference between a financial analyst and an accountant. Here is one definition I was given: "An accountant is someone who solves a problem you didn't know you had in a way you don't understand. A financial analyst is an expert who will know tomorrow why the things they projected yesterday didn't happen today."

> *"With the increased cost of propane tanks and driver wages, analyzing your return on investment for setting a customer tank has never been more important."*

All kidding aside, most accountants report on results and financial analysts look at trends. Trend analysis is the first step in better understanding your business. Gallons are a great place to start and normalized gallons is the best first step. Normalization could mean normalizing gallons by taking out extraordinary events like hurricanes, however, for many marketers it involves weather normalization based on degree days.

The table below shows a gallon trend for a propane marketer. This marketer is losing gallons for heating accounts and gaining gallons overall. Understanding where you are growing and shrinking helps determine your plan of action.

ANALYZE MARGINS

The next step would be to analyze margins as Gallons X Margin = GP. If margins are decreasing in the example above, then you may be selling more gallons and achieving a lower GP. Even if GP were flat, it typically costs more to deliver more gallons so in that case profits would be down. The old adage of "We are losing money but we are making it up in volume" was never a sustainable plan.

The next area of examination is operating expenses. We use a four- or five-year comparative income statement. Several different metrics can be used depending on the expenses. Cents per gallon is good for driver wages, truck fuel, and vehicle maintenance. Percentage of revenue is used for credit card processing fees, bank fees, bad debt, and working capital interest. Benefit expenses such as medical insurance, payroll taxes, 401(k), workman's comp, etc. should

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	2015	2016	2017	2018
Non-heating gallons delivered	727,000	785,300	844,700	897,000
Heating gallons delivered	1,057,000	988,000	1,001,450	1,064,000
Weather variance to normal	102.5%	96.5%	98.8%	106.6%
Total weather adjusted gallons	1,031,220	1,023,834	1,013,613	998,124
Total adjusted gallons	1,758,220	1,809,134	1,858,313	1,895,124
Growth/(Attrition) rate		2.9%	2.7%	2.0%



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Propane Cargo Tank & Inspection Workshop*
12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Registration

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Concurrent Education Sessions — Groups A—C
9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	WIP Leadership Forum at the Expo*
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	PERC Update Live!
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Opening Keynote Speaker "J.R." Martinez
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.	Expo Hall Welcome Reception

*Additional registration required

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Prayer Breakfast*
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Concurrent Education Sessions — Group D
10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Expo Hall Open
10:15 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.	Technical Workshops
10:15 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Fast Track Sessions in the Expo Hall
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Women in Propane Roundtable
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Women in Propane Networking Reception
7:30 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.	Young Gassers Reception*

MONDAY, APRIL 15

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Expo Hall Open
9:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Fast Track Sessions in the Expo Hall

EXPO PARTNERS

Propane Education & Research Council (PERC)

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Superior Plus Energy Services
Thompson Gas
UPAS (United Propane AutoGas Solutions) Group
Warm Thoughts Communications
Westmor



SPECIAL EVENTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 13



PERC Update Live!

Presenter: Tucker Perkins, president and CEO, Propane Education & Research Council

2:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

Tucker Perkins will update industry members on how PERC is changing to help marketers take on the real challenges of natural gas expansion, driver shortages, dwindling weather demand, customer and employee retention, and public pressure to eliminate the use of fossil fuels. Learn how PERC's new focus will help grow the industry and proudly serve its customers in 2019 and beyond. Perkins will share strategies for your company to leverage opportunities to make propane—and your business—the smarter choice for today, tomorrow, and beyond.



Opening Keynote Speaker: Jose Rene "J.R." Martinez

3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

J.R. Martinez is an American actor, author, motivational speaker, and retired U.S. Army solider. In March 2003, Martinez was deployed to Iraq. The following month, he sustained severe burns to over 34% of his body when his Humvee hit a roadside bomb. Since his recovery, Martinez has become a highly sought after motivational speaker, traveling nationwide to speak about his experiences to veterans groups, corporations, schools, and other organizations. In addition, he began his acting career on the Emmy Award-winning daytime drama "All My Children," and has since appeared on numerous television shows, including "Dancing with the Stars," where he was season 13 champion. Martinez is the author of "Full of Heart: My Story of Survival, Strength, and Spirit," a New York Times bestseller. He also serves as a spokesperson for Operation Finally Home, as well as for the Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors and Glasswing International.

Expo Hall Welcome Reception

4:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Check out the 2019 exhibitors and begin networking at the Saturday evening opening of the Expo Hall. Take this opportunity to see what is new and to meet with fellow propane industry members on the tradeshow floor. (All attendees with a Full Access or Saturday/Sunday conference and expo pass are invited.)

SUNDAY, APRIL 14



Prayer Breakfast

Presenter: Rev. Dr. William Fulllilove, Ministries Pastor, McLean Presbyterian Church

7:30 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

Running to Win: Our Hope for the Future and our Help for Today

Too many people start off well in the Christian life, but don't finish the race. Why? Because they don't even know what the end of the race looks like. A challenge for Christians today is not knowing where they're going, leaving a lack of direction and purpose in this life. By reclaiming a doctrine of heaven—an understanding of where God is taking us—it is possible to find greater purpose in this life as well. Dr. Fulllilove offers a look at the Bible's picture of heaven in Revelation 19:6-10, one that will encourage those who believe and invite those who don't.

Women in Propane (WIP) Roundtable: Operations and Sales on the Same Page

Speaker: Paige O'Dell, vice president of operations, AmeriGas

3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

Strong leaders, who ask great questions, are those who will rise in the ranks of their organizations. At AmeriGas, operations executive management requires the most effective leaders in the company. Industry leader Paige O'Dell shares insights and personal stories from her impressive career. She relates her experiences in successful business operations and explains how a close relationship with sales teams makes a difference. Audience members will engage in roundtable discussions following her presentation.

Women in Propane Networking Reception

5:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Keep the conversation going and join the Women in Propane for a Networking Reception immediately following the WIP Roundtable session. All registrants are invited.

Young Gassers Reception

7:30 p.m.–Midnight

College Football Hall of Fame, 250 Marietta St NW, Atlanta

Join the Young Gassers for its 60th Anniversary Celebration. The annual Members Reception is open to everyone in the propane industry. Join the group's champagne toast to the industry. No charge for current members; all others will be charged $25 admission.



CONCURRENT EDUCATION SESSIONS

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

GROUP A — 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

2019 Propane Market Outlook: Markets in Flux*

Presenter: Mike Sloan, managing director, ICF

Sponsored by Global Gas

Delivery Efficiency Case Studies

Presenter: David Lowe, vice president of sales, Pro Image Communications

Driving Revenue With Service Operations: Turn Your Appliance and Install Business into a Money-Maker

Presenter: Saul Cohen, product specialist, Cargas Systems

Growing Your Gallons with Propane School Buses

Presenters: Chad Bojarski, owner, Energys USA Inc. and Tri State Testing; Andy Ernst, propane marketing manager, CHS; Paul Fiereck, sales representative, North Central Bus & Equipment; and John Thomas, transportation manager, Eastern Carver County Schools

Propane.com Can Do That

Presenter: Gregg Walker, director of external communications, PERC

Success Stories of Retail Propane Marketers

Presenters: Chris Caywood, Caywood Propane Gas Inc.; Scott Prewitt, regional vice president, Blossman Gas; Dan Richardson, president and CEO, Conger LP Gas; Pat Thornton, editor, and Andrea Young, marketing director, Butane-Propane News

Sponsored by: Warm Thoughts Communications

GROUP B — 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Benchmarking Panel Discussion

JD Buss, trading manager, Twin Feathers; Chad Caron, general manager, Dead River Co.; Chad Kroening, fleet/projects manager, Boehlke Bottled Gas; and Joe Rose, Lin's Propane Trucks

The Changing World of Customer Portals

Presenter: Robert Kulawiec, COO, Destwin Energy Systems

Demystifying Digital Marketing*

Presenters: Gary Corbett, regional sales representative, Warm Thoughts Communications; and Jeff Stein, marketing consultant, Reach Local

Drowning in Data? How to Make Critical Decisions Using Key Metrics and Significantly Reduce Paperwork

Presenter: Mike Shilts, vice president of marketing, K&K Management Solutions/Energy-Force

Engaging Residential Decision Makers in New Construction and Factory-Built Housing

Presenters: Rich Buchholz, president, Waypoint Construction Services LLC; and Jesse Marcus, director of residential and commercial business development, Propane Education & Research Council

Real Accidents: How They Happen and Steps to Prevent the Incident or Protect the Company

Presenters: John Hansen, partner, McCoy Leavitt Laskey LLC; and Eric Leskinen, executive vice president, P3 Propane Safety

It's Time for a Financial Physical!

Presenter: Steven Abbate, president, Cetane Associates

GROUP C — 12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Building Partnerships with Community Colleges and Vocational Technical Schools

Moderator: Randy Doyle, PERC Councilor

Panelists: Jay Carraway, vice president of continuing education, Lenoir Community College; Mike Davis, president, Davis Propane; Bridget Kidd, senior vice president, industry relations, Propane Education & Research Council; and Armistead Mauck, vice president/co-owner, Cherry Energy

Culture & Education to Autogas Gallon Capture

Presenter: Representative, United Propane Autogas Solutions (UPAS) Group

From Prospect to Raving Fan: Understanding the Customer Journey

Presenters: Ben Gutkin, vice president marketing services, Warm Thoughts Communications; and Olivia Mastromonaco, social media manager, Warm Thoughts Communications

Sponsored by: Cetane

How to Scale Your Deployment for Maximum Return

Presenter: Eric Duckworth, vice president of sales, Americas, WESROC

**Certificate session*



CONCURRENT EDUCATION SESSIONS

Past Due Blues
Presenter: Milissa Lord, vice president of business development, A.R.M. Solutions

Risk Management Tools to Support Creative Customer Offers*
Presenter: Angela John, director of structured products, BP

A Strategic Shift in Developing and Deploying Workforce Training
Presenters: Courtney Gendron, senior programs manager, CETP, Propane Education & Research Council (PERC); and Eric Kuster, director of safety and certification, National Propane Gas Association

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

GROUP D — 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Autogas Dispensing Equipment — Myth vs. Fact
Presenters: John Barnett, propane programs manager, U-Haul; James Bunsey, director of operations, Superior Energy Systems; Mark Denton, vice president of business development, Blossman Gas; and David Kennedy, director of autogas design, Alliance AutoGas

Benefits and Rewards of Hiring Veterans*
Presenter: Jesse Lord, account executive, Vets 2 Techs

Customer Service Representatives — True Partners in Safety
Presenters: John Hansen, partner, McCoy Leavitt Laskey LLC; Bridget Kidd, senior vice president, industry relations, Propane Education & Research Council (PERC); and Paula Laney, safety director, Oklahoma LP Gas Board

Low-Cost Residential Load Growth Strategies
Presenter: Bob Torbin, director of codes and standards, OmegaFlex

LPG Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Systems: Supporting Business Continuity in Critical Infrastructures
Presenter: Ramon Gonzalez, vice president, Empire Gas Co. Inc.

Stand Out from the Crowd with Google My Business
Presenters: Mike Blumenthal, faculty and cofounder, Local U; and Paula Wilson, director of industry engagement, Propane Education & Research Council (PERC)

How Well Do K-Factors Predict Individual Deliveries?
Presenter: Danny Silverman, vice president, Angus Energy

PROPANE TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

Propane Technical Workshops target the service technician/installer, propane gas system designer, equipment purchaser, sales personnel, and anyone else involved in the sales, installation, and servicing of propane systems and related applications.

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. **Venting Direct Vent Hearth Products**
Presenter: Rich Dahl, national service trainer, Empire Comfort Systems

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Hearth and Patio Gas Technician's Tools of the Trade**
Presenter: Keith Szczepanski, Ray Murray Inc.

12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. **Emerging Water Heater Technology**
Presenter: Raymond VanAssche, vice president of innovation, Rinnai



FAST-TRACK SESSIONS

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

Short on time? These 45-minute, information-packed sessions will be held in the expo hall during exhibit hall hours on both Sunday and Monday.

Earn More from Every Truck, Every Tank, Every Day

Presenters: Maria-Teresa Palbow, IMR product manager, Aiut; and Andy Slaven, Aiut

10:15 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Integration of remote sensor technology can greatly reduce operating costs associated with the storage and delivery of propane. This presentation explains how by using smart gas metering, remote tank monitors, and predictive usage algorithms, most distributors can increase efficiency by more than 50%.

LP-Gas Regulator Applications: Three Stage Systems

Presenter: Bill Hanes, distribution sales representative, Maxitrol Co.

11:15 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Designed for building inspectors, HVAC contractors, mechanical contractors, plumbing installers, propane equipment wholesalers, and utilities, this session will increase understanding of third-stage regulator applications on two- and five-pound systems, including sizing, venting, codes, and standards.

Meter Creep Test

Presenter: Milt Swenson, sales manager, Westmor Industries

12:15 p.m.–1:00 p.m.

A cargo tank operator must check the internal self-closing stop valve in the liquid discharge opening for leakage at least once per calendar month that the cargo is in service, in accordance with CFR49. This session will review procedures that can be used to perform an effective meter creep test, requirements to be met, and documentation for reporting.

NFPA 58 Update

Presenter: Alex Ing, engineer, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

1:15 p.m.–2:00 p.m.

This session provides a broad overview of the NFPA Standards process focusing on the NFPA 58, 2020 edition, and its associated revision cycle. Updates of the NFPA 58 Second Draft meeting and changes between the first and second drafts will be discussed.

DOT Update

Presenter: James Landrum, federal propane specialist, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Georgia division

2:15 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

Learn about the updates on the Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations that pertain to the transportation of propane.

Preventive Maintenance for Bobtails

Presenter: Jason Soulon, regional sales manager, Westmor Industries

3:15 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

Bobtails are lasting longer and working harder than ever before. Preventive maintenance takes on greater importance with longer service intervals for some components, extended hydro testing periods on select bobtails, as well as greater exposure to corrosive road treatments with the added miles. This session looks at how to manage preventive maintenance to protect this investment.

MONDAY, APRIL 15

Maximizing the Efficiency and Safety of LPG Terminals

Presenters: Jim Bunsey, director of operations, Superior Energy Systems; Derek Rimko, operations manager, Superior Energy Systems; and Liz Woods, rail terminals manager, CHS Inc.

9:15 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

What options do propane marketers have to fill in the gaps in their supply chain? Industry experts in terminal operations offer ways to increase storage efficiencies by taking advantage of new equipment and technology, while upholding all safety standards.

Relief Valve Sizing and Operations

Presenter: Erick Barrios, Emerson-Fisher

10:15 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

The different types of relief valves and the operation and function of each will be featured in this presentation that looks at both commercial and residential systems. Learn how to properly size relief valves and gain an understanding of how they operate and the way they protect a system.



NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE

Three-Way Valve



The EA7853A ¼-in. three-way quick-acting valve with electric actuator from **RegO** provides a safe, easy way to open and close the valve from a remote location. It features a dual fail-safe actuator with a CSA/UL-rated explosion-proof enclosure, spring return with handle, fusible link, and electronic thermal cutoff. These features ensure automatic valve shutoff when power supply is lost or turned off. Available from Dealers LP Equipment/R.E. Michel.

Electronic Register



The LCR.iQ from **Liquid Controls Corp.** is described as the next generation in meter registration and data control with its most powerful and scalable electronic register ever produced. The register is easy to operate, easy to see, and configurable to the needed application or industry.

Internal Valve



Designed for use with LP-gas as a main valve on bobtails, delivery trucks, and stationary storage tank pumping systems, **RegO's** EA3212D series 2-in. threaded internal valve with electric actuator may also be installed for liquid withdrawal, vapor transfer, or vapor equalizing. Installation is quick and easy, and it fits in both full and half couplings, as well as in-line applications. The valve comes fully assembled with the electric actuator, ready to install. It features leak-free construction with components internal to the valve body.

Swing-Check ESV



RegO's EA6010 series electronically actuated swing-check emergency shutoff valve (ESV) is designed for installation in liquid transfer lines at LP-gas or NH_3 bulk plants for quick shutoff of liquid or vapor flow in case of an accidental pull-away, line break, or hose rupture. The valve comes fully assembled with the electric actuator, ready to install. Flanged end connections make for simplified installation and maintenance. The valve features durable construction, and it provides double the flow of competitive products. Offered in threaded and flanged 1-1/4-in., 2-in., and 3-in. pipe sizes, it is UL listed for use with LP-gas and NH_3 as an ESV. Available from Gas Equipment Co.

Mechanical Gas Timer



The **Firegear Outdoors** E-Stop Gas Timer, available from Rutherford Equipment, can be used for grill and fire pit applications. The all-mechanical unit has a built-in emergency stop button—no power needed. Maximum capacity of 430,000 Btuh for propane, 290,000 Btuh for natural gas; no conversion necessary. It comes in 2.5- and 1-hour models and has four 1/2-in. NPT inlets and outlets and six mounting holes (2 front and 4 side).

Fuel Delivery System



The new ProControl3 from **BASE Engineering** is the first and only universal remote control for the oil and gas industry. It includes all BASE truck remote control and safety features, as well as complete delivery system management from the end of the hose. The ProControl3 works seamlessly with the BASEstation platform and other delivery automation systems for the industry.

Heating Oil Tank Monitors



Angus Monitoring Service LLC has introduced the GREMLIN Heating Oil Monitor that uses 4G LTE cellular service, allowing data transmission immediately after installation on a dedicated bandwidth using CAT-M communications. The monitor offers the same features as the other GREMLIN products and will provide a larger coverage area. All GREMLIN tank monitors include features such as a custom dealer-branded app for mobile installation, back-office integration, 7+ year battery life, low upfront costs with approved financing, and end-to-end support prior to, during, and after deployment.



BOOTH NEW PRODUCTS

Bulk Plant Relief Valve

Emerson has released the new Fisher Type 63EGLP tank relief valve, typically used on propane tank applications 30,000 gallons and larger. The new model offers a 40% increase in relief capacity, a 20% weight reduction for easier installation, and dual-pilot design for reduced maintenance costs. The UL-certified relief valve is approved for bulk propane storage relief installations compliant with NFPA 58.



The increased capacity offers significant savings for tanks 90,000 gallons or larger—they now require only two Fisher Type 63EGLP valves versus three traditional multiport relief valves. *Booth #811 fisherregulators.com*

Risers

Bergquist Inc., in partnership with Chicago Fittings, has added the 1-in. IPS X-Riser to its flexible riser lineup. Offered in 3-, 6-, and 8-ft lengths with ¾-in. MPT or 1-in. MPT outlets, the new equipment utilizes Chicago Fittings' CFlexliner technology for better advance flexibility and reduced memory when coiled, making for easier installation. With the increased Btu capacity, the riser can be used with generators and other high-demand applications. The cost is below that of a rigid riser with a coupling. There are no additional underground fittings, which saves both time and money while preventing a potential leak spot. *Booth #117 bergquistinc.com*



Shipping Program

Bergquist Inc. is introducing Select Ship, a 2-day subscription-based shipping program for all customer deliveries in the contiguous United States. The Select Ship subscription plan is $499 per year, and it allows customers to receive propane equipment in two days. Bergquist has a list of over 60 items in stock that are ready to be shipped immediately. If the guaranteed items are not in stock at the time of a purchase or if it does not deliver items within two business days, customers will receive a 10% credit on the items. The subscription includes free freight on all standard equipment, vent-free heaters, and tankless water heater orders with no minimum. *Booth #117 bergquistInc.com*

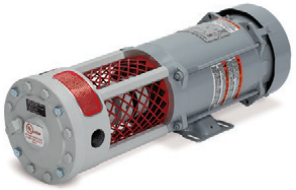
ESV Actuator

Hanbay Inc. has expanded its product line with the addition of a new ESV (emergency shutoff valve) actuator. The compact electric ESV controllers have a dual fail-safe feature for added safety. In the event of a fire, the fusible link mechanically fails at temperatures exceeding 100°C (212°F), closing the valve. The thermal fuse embedded inside the CSA/UL rated Class 1 Div 1 explosion-proof enclosure also provides a supplementary layer of protection. These units, which can be easily retrofit on existing installations, do not freeze or lock up in frigid temperatures because they include internal heaters to ensure reliability. *Booth #1214 hanbayinc.com*



Training Videos

Smith Pumps has produced a series of three training videos covering the replacement of the mechanical shaft seal assembly, maintenance for internal pump components, and bypass relief valve options for all E-series pump models. The training videos can be viewed from Smith's YouTube channel via a computer, tablet, or smartphone device by visiting *www.smithpumps.com* and clicking on "Training Videos," or by visiting *smithpumps.com/tutorials.php Booth #733*



Vaporizers

The ZIMMER, said to be the most hassle-free, easy-to-use dry electric LPG vaporizer on the market, requires virtually no maintenance compared to other vaporizer types. Introduced by **Algas-SDI**, the new unit has been designed to start up in less than 60 seconds, is easy to maintain, and has easily accessible components. It expands the company's vaporizer line. *Booth #916 algas-sdi.com*



Internal Valve

Designed for use with LP-gas as a main valve on bobtails, delivery trucks, and stationary storage tank systems, **RegO's** EA3213D series 3-in. threaded internal valve with electric actuator comes fully assembled with the electric actuator. It is ready to install for liquid withdrawal, vapor transfer, or vapor equalizing. Installation is quick and easy. The valve fits full or half couplings, and in-line applications. *Booth #739 regoproducts/lpg*



Magnetel E-Dial

The Magnetel Electronic Dial (E-Dial) from **Rochester Gauges LLC** provides temperature-compensated volumetric level, temperature reading, specific gravity, two programmable level alarms, and 4-20mA analog output of tank contents. The user can set up the unit by downloading the E-Dial app and select specific gravity, level





BOOTH NEW PRODUCTS

alarms, 4-20mA analog output, and application range (5%-95% or 3%-97%). The E-Dial can be set up stand-alone or paired with a temperature sensor for continuous automatic temperature compensation of liquid levels. *Booth #639 rochestergauges.com*

Gourmet Griddle

Fire Magic's new Echelon gourmet griddle is perfect for outdoor cooking of anything from bacon and eggs to rice and fajitas. Manufactured from heavy-duty stainless steel, the grill features dual burners that provide up to 40,000 Btu, hot surface ignition, backlit control knobs, and a large 30-in.x18-in. two-zone cooking area that allows simultaneous preparation of multiple dishes. It is offered in built-in and portable versions, and comes with a stainless-steel cover to protect the griddle when not in use. *Booth #621 firemagicgrills.com*



Mobile Service Software

Cargas Energy's HVAC service solution, the latest version of its mobile service software, includes back-office software and a Mobile Service app that work together seamlessly. Its all-new design makes the software easier to learn and use. The entire system has been reworked around a task-based model to better manage complex jobs and multi-task work orders. Previously available for Windows, the Mobile Service app is now offered for Android to cover the needs of more businesses. New features include the ability to add or edit serial numbers in the field and to take equipment photos and save them to a customer's account. The Mobile Service app communicates instantly with the office system so all team members have access to the latest information and what's happening in the field. *Booth #1140 cargasenergy.com*



Operations Portal

A Consumers feature has been introduced within the **Tank Utility** Operations Portal, where propane marketers are able to invite and track engagement of consumers to increase the "stickiness" of their customers for better customer retention. Within the Consumers feature, propane marketers are able to promote a white-labeled mobile app to their customers with the real-time tank level of their tank; invite customers to download the Tank Utility mobile app directly from the software platform via email address; track when the consumer last views and how often they engage with the mobile app; and capture emails from any customer that downloads the Tank Utility mobile app. This information can be exported to any email marketing system. *Booth #753 tankutility.com*



LPG Performance Enhancers

Adding Lumin products, the CGX-4 with CH25X technology, Vapo-Kleen with CH25X, and HGX-3 with CH25X technology, to commodity propane will enhance its performance, reduce customer maintenance, and reduce downtime, making it a premium fuel. According to **ValvTect**, CGX-4 improves combustion, cleans up deposits, removes heavy-end buildup, disperses water for safe removal, provides lubrication, and prevents steel tank deterioration in propane fuel systems. Vapo-Kleen, designed for propane-powered stationary systems, is formulated to clean direct- and indirect-fired vaporizers in process systems. HGX-3 is used for propane in metalworking processes. *Booth #1216 valvtect.com*



Tank Monitor

The fifth-generation Gaslog SC415 model tank monitor from **Silicon Controls** now is available with its unique GPS capability optional, significantly reducing the price. The unit features a 15-year battery life, a call-a-day on the LTE network, half-hour alarm checks, and an optional GPS function. The monitor's powerful distribution analytics, and cloud management suite reporting current level, historical usage, and estimated empty date, reduce delivery costs, improve gallons per stop, and optimize bobtails and drivers. The Gaslog SC415 can be used in any gas environment, with C1/D1 certification. *Booth #1349 siliconcontrols.com*



Hose End Valve

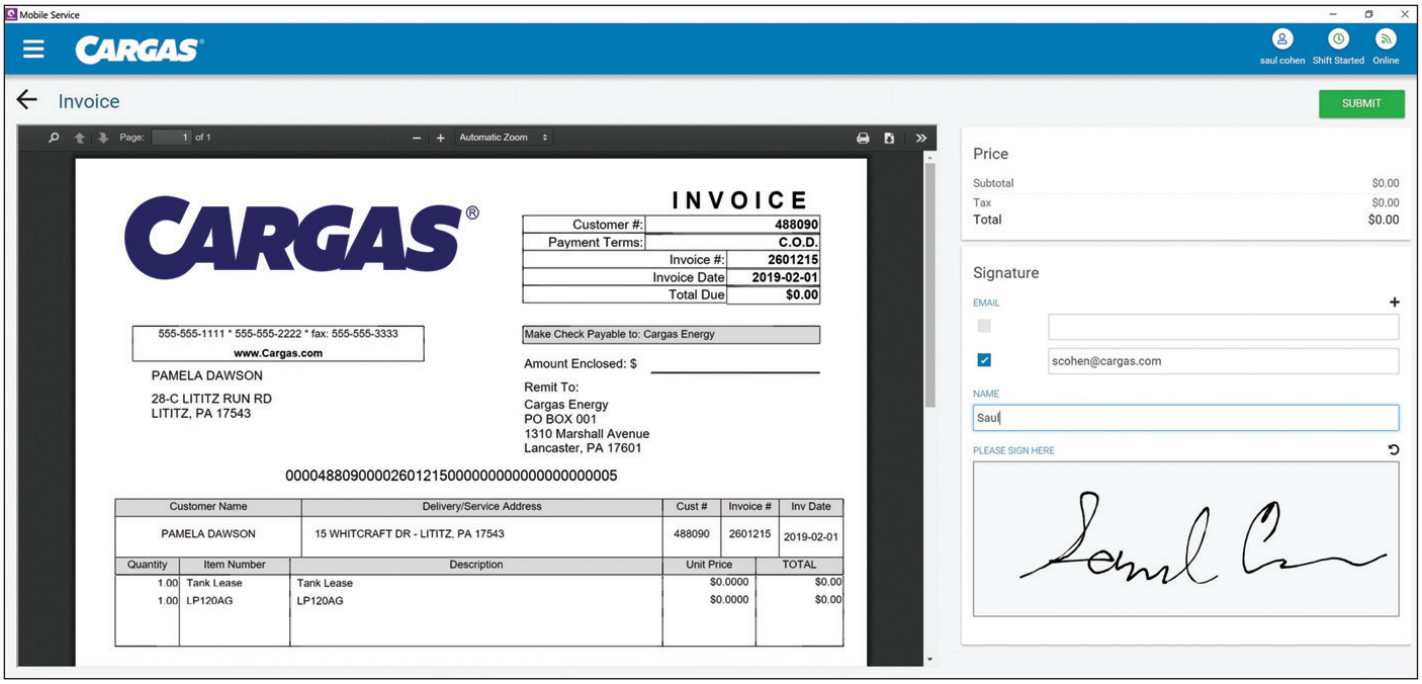
Squibb Taylor's improved Quik Jaw hose-end valve is easy to operate by pulling up on the locking collar to open the jaws. Place the jaws on the fill valve, release the collar, tighten a quarter turn, and open the valve to fill. To close the valve, loosen the collar a quarter turn to bleed, then pull up on the collar to release. It is a minimum-loss valve (0.75 cc at disconnect), and is said to be the highest-flowing valve for forklift cylinder filling and bobtail delivery trucks. *Booth #1121 SquibbTaylor.com*



Transport and Delivery

Team Drive-Away is the transportation industry's leading provider of commercial vehicle transport and delivery. It specializes in hazmat-registered, hassle-free truck moves. The company is uniquely positioned as experts in the propane industry, knowing the challenges that you face, the cadence of your business, and the experience to know how to help. *Booth #1157 teamdriveaway.com*

Continued on **Page 52**



Software tools make it easier for technicians to handle service contracts or agreements while they are with the customer, so they can more easily sell these and other products and services.

FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY: MAKE SERVICE OPERATIONS A MONEYMAKER

STEVE RELYEA

Service and appliance sales are often considered to be a loss leader or a cost of doing business by propane marketers who are primarily focused on delivering propane. But that doesn't have to be the case, says Saul Cohen, product specialist at Cargas (Lancaster, Pa.). If the marketer focuses on efficiency and expansion, the service operation can be a profit center.

Cohen will present a seminar on this topic at the upcoming National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) Expo. At Cargas, as a product specialist, he is a subject matter expert for the propane industry and software. In 2005, Cohen created and presented to Cargas the business plan to start Cargas Energy software solutions for fuel delivery and service companies.

Today, he tells ***BPN***, software solutions like these can help propane marketers increase service efficiency, improve customer satisfaction, and build consumer interest in additional propane appliances.

Among the practices the software can facilitate are the following:

ADDRESS THE PROBLEM THE FIRST TIME

To maximize both the marketer's efficiency and the customer's satisfaction, service jobs should be completed on the first visit. Software can make it easier to know in advance what equipment the customer has, capture information about what service needs to be done, and ensure the technician has the parts needed for the job. "This helps you do a better job with the customer, with an improved fix rate and first-time efficiency," Cohen says.

KEEP A RECORD OF THE INSTALLED EQUIPMENT

Software tools also make it easier for technicians in the field to capture details of the equipment they have installed. They can do the installation, take photos, and those photos are automatically uploaded and attached to the customer's account for everyone to see in the future. "If you go back and it's different, you have proof the customer has changed or added something."

QUOTE IN THE FIELD

Software tools make it easier for technicians to handle service contracts or agreements while they are with the customer, so they can more easily sell these and other products and services. “Some consumers are interested in generators, indoor/outdoor propane fireplace/heating, or pool heaters. The propane marketers should provide incentives for their people in the field to educate consumers on the benefits of these and other propane appliances that they may not be aware that you offer so you can [cross-sell/upsell] these items,” Cohen says.

“Another example is to offer a yearly service check, so you can test the generator annually to make sure it works when it’s needed. That provides peace of mind to customers and additional revenue for your company.”

BUILD A LOYALTY PROGRAM

In some regions, consumers don’t think of propane marketers as a source of appliances. When these consumers want a cooktop or a fire log, they might look to an appliance retailer rather than a propane marketer. “A loyalty program is one way to get customers to think of you that way,” Cohen says. “Some marketers provide loyalty points; as customers buy fuel, they get points that they can cash in to buy appliances and equipment.”

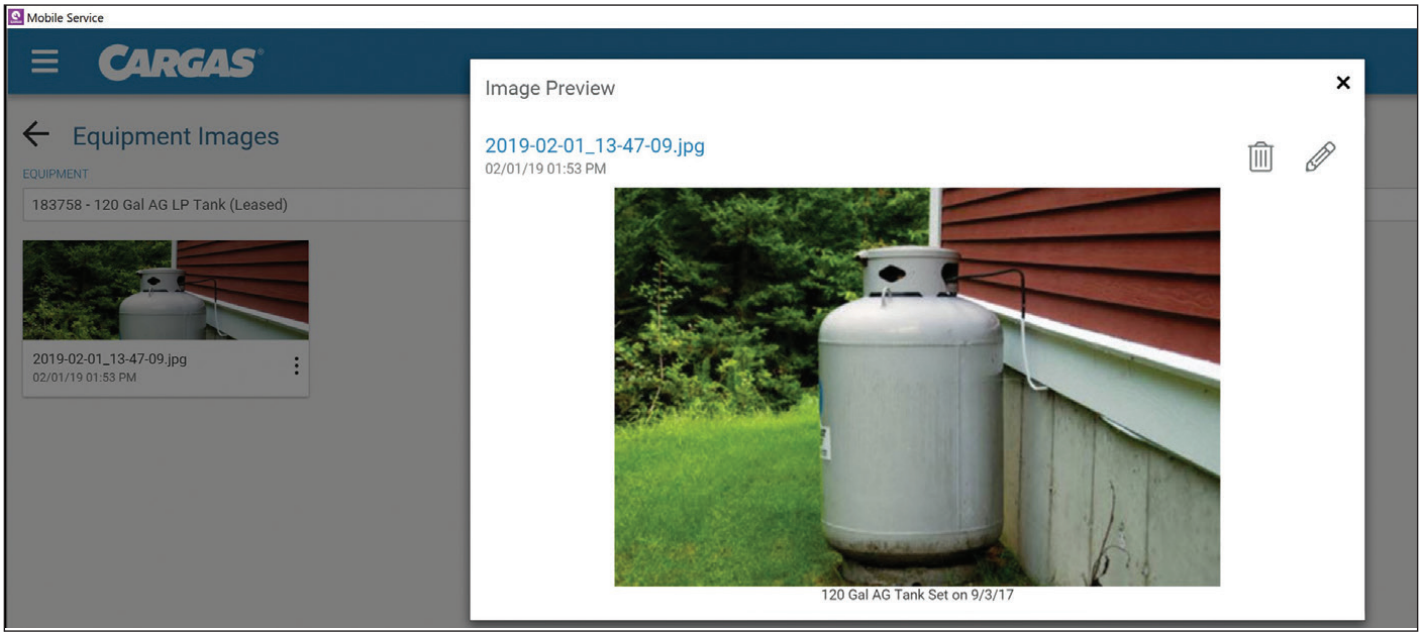
For those looking to expand their service operations, Cohen suggests looking at their existing operations and asking themselves, “Am I making money in service?”

“We are trying to make people think of service as a profit center rather than a cost of doing business,” Cohen says. “Most marketers do service just to get the fuel delivery. But if you are now able to manage it with software — quoting in the field (signature capture), first-time efficiency (eliminate callbacks and not having the right parts), addressing the problem rather than having to go back to the customer a second time—service can be a moneymaker.”



Saul Cohen, product specialist at Cargas (Lancaster, Pa.), will present his seminar “Driving Revenue With Service Operations: Turn Your Appliance and Install Business Into a Money-Maker” at the NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo.

Cohen will cover these ideas and others in his seminar, “Driving Revenue With Service Operations: Turn Your Appliance and Install Business Into a Money-Maker.” The seminar is to be held Saturday, April 13, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. at the NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo in Atlanta. ■



With today’s software, technicians can do the installation, take photos, and those photos are automatically uploaded and attached to the customer’s account for everyone to see in the future.







WORK TRUCK SHOW 2019: PROPANE AUTOGAS STAKEHOLDERS MAKE THEIR CASE

PAT THORNTON

A walk through the massive annual Work Truck Show in Indianapolis in early March gave attendees a chance to discover almost every new development in the work truck world. Alternative fuels received a good deal of competitive spin regarding which fuel delivers the best bang for your buck now and in the future. Many speakers and seminars made their case that electric vehicles are the way of the future—or that clean diesel is the way of the future—the option of propane autogas wasn't mentioned.

Meanwhile, an ever-growing group of stakeholders representing propane autogas begs to differ. This group, anchored by the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC), has steadily reserved more floor space at the Work Truck Show and they, too, want their message heard. "Education and awareness continue to be critical," said Michael Taylor, director of autogas business development at PERC. "Many people are resistant to change, but we have been successful in convincing fleet managers that propane has a short-term return on investment, typically less than two years, and can provide the lowest total cost of ownership over the vehicle life."

At PERC's booth at the Work Truck Show, attendees were asked to "pin" their fleet profile—regardless of fuel type—on an in-booth map of the United States. All participants were eligible for prizes and were encouraged to make several "pit stops" throughout the booth to learn more about how propane autogas could help their fleet reach sustainability goals while cutting costs over the lifetime of the vehicle.

Taylor cited "clean diesel" and gasoline as two fuels that fleet managers are reluctant to switch from. "We can show the cost savings and we have numerous testimonials to back us up," he said. "The environmental concerns remain despite the efforts to position 'clean diesel' and gasoline as free of contaminants," noting that runoff can find its way into soil and water and cause serious contamination. Case studies on fueling with propane can be found at *propane.com*.

"Electric vehicles will likely find their niche with personal sedans and some Class 1 and 2 vehicles. There will be very limited success for EVs expected to handle significant payload or range. I expect there will continue to be limited additional adoption for electric school buses. Propane makes much more sense."

On the following pages are some details on other stakeholders promoting propane usage who were at the Work Truck Show.

SES AIMS TO HELP MAKE PUBLIC REFUELING A REALITY

Superior Energy Systems (SES; Columbia Station, Ohio) displayed a propane autogas dispenser at the Work Truck Show. Having worked exclusively in propane since 1975, the company has sold more than 1100 dispensers to customers in all 50 states and throughout Canada. Projects have ranged from very small dispenser installations to massive midstream infrastructure installations such as the Crestwood Terminal at Montgomery, N.Y., that can fill four transports in 17 minutes.

Several factors are currently helping to make public refueling a reality, including creating an opportunity for autogas customers to no longer be limited to refueling between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., when an attendant is available. Superior and others have been working with the National Propane Gas Association's Technology, Standards, and Safety Committee (TS&S) to make the K-15 connector safer and ease the requirement for glasses and gloves at refueling sites. "State propane associations in states such as Minnesota are also offering infrastructure rebates to help make public refueling sites available," said Jim Bunsey, director of operations at SES. "We are getting to the point where a good portion of autogas users can drive up 24/7 and use their credit card to refuel."

"While more environmentally-friendly and cost-effective, the goal is to make refueling with propane as user-friendly as it is to refuel with motor gas or diesel," Bunsey said. In addition to the dispenser, Superior displayed a Propane Autogas Evacuation System that simply, safely, and efficiently removes autogas from fleet vehicles for service and maintenance. The system can be used with both liquid and vapor vehicle systems and operates completely on air using a pneumatic pump, with no engine, electricity, or switching of hoses.



ROUSH CLEANTECH'S SCHOOL BUS SUCCESS

ROUSH CleanTech displayed an F-550 chassis cab at its booth and a Ford F-750 propane-powered van body in the Propane Education & Research Council booth. While there wasn't a school bus in sight, Ryan Zic, school bus sales director for ROUSH CleanTech, extolled the reduced emissions of the ROUSH bus compared to a diesel model manufactured before 2007. "Our engine is 90% cleaner than the current EPA standard," Zic explained. "You would have to operate 100 of our propane autogas vehicles to emit as much NO_x as one diesel bus manufactured before 2007."

He wanted Work Truck Show attendees to take away the propane message—that alternative fuel vehicles offer a fuel option that substantially lowers NO_x emissions. "Our school district customers are responding in a big way. With all the diesel emission scandal and maintenance system complexity, fleets are ready for a fuel that is clean, straightforward, and reliable." Zic noted there are currently 14,000 propane school buses operating in more than 850 school districts in North America. "School fleets have been challenged over the past nine years with a tough, stop/start duty cycle and a complicated diesel emission system that struggles with excessive idle. The simple, passive emission system offered on our propane school buses was a huge motivator early on for fleets to switch away from diesel. That is still a major factor today, but, like the diesel emission system, our customers are evolving too," Zic said. "We now have peers within school fleets sharing data on cost per mile of operation between propane and other fuels. They report savings from 15 to 30 cents per mile when compared to a diesel bus—some even more. Reducing the cost per mile of operation is quickly becoming as much a motivator as the simplicity of propane school bus operation."

With strong gains in the U.S. and Canada, propane buses are gaining traction even in areas where alternative fuels have struggled in the past. "The Midwest, Central Plains, and remote provinces of Canada have been strong adopters of propane because of cold resilience and effective operational costs." Zic also cited headway as more retail propane marketers engage in alternative fuel development by utilizing business development teams, promotions, marketing materials, vehicle incentives, and more. "When retailers engage like this, it really amplifies the propane autogas cause and makes potential buyers feel infinitely more comfortable in taking the next steps toward a propane fleet."





FREIGHTLINER EXPANDS S2G OFFERINGS WITH NEW 8.8-LITER ENGINE

Freightliner Custom Chassis Corp. (FCCC; Portland, Ore.) utilized its presence at the 2019 Work Truck Show to showcase a new version of its S2G work truck powered by an 8.8-liter propane engine, part of FCCC's DriveForce non-diesel engine line.

The S2G now comes with two engine options—an 8.0-liter as well as the new 8.8-liter—from FCCC's DriveForce, its line of proprietary non-diesel engines for the commercial market. Touted as providing "diesel-like" performance and "gasoline-like" operation, FCCC says S2G delivery fleet owners can expect smooth, quiet, reliable power at lower operational costs.

The 8.8-liter DriveForce liquid propane engine offers 270 hp@2600 rpm, 565 lb-ft@1500 rpm, and is the only factory installed propane autogas engine available to the medium-duty market. Its front suspension offers up to a 55-degree wheel cut for industry-leading maneuverability, and a GVWR of up to 33,000 pounds.

The S2G has a 60-gal. LPG fuel tank, and Allison 2500RDS and 2550RDS automatic transmissions with PTO provisions available. The chassis comes with 3-year/50,000-mile warranty with towing and roadside assistance and 24/7 factory-direct customer support.

"The 8.8-liter propane engine…offers the torque and power of a diesel engine at near-idle RPM levels," said Mike Stark, product manager for Commercial Chassis at FCCC. He told ***BPN*** that the new 8.8-liter DriveForce engine is designed with the terrain of a typical bobtail route in mind. "Customers were not as concerned about speed," he said, "as they were about torque and reducing oil consumption."

ONE-STOP SHOPPING WITH ICOM NORTH AMERICA

ICOM North America (New Hudson, Mich.) has enjoyed dramatic growth in the past few years. "People are seeing the benefits of propane autogas and we've done a better job of aligning with partners to allow a 'one-stop shopping' approach for those wanting to make a switch to autogas," said Albert Venezio, chairman of ICOM North America.

Four years ago, ICOM partnered with various propane industry stakeholders, including Industrial Propane Services (IPS), Signature Truck Systems, and several other retail propane marketers and service providers, to create United Propane Autogas Solutions (UPAS). According to Venezio, the partnerships have been critical to make "one-stop shopping" available. "We had to make it easy to partner with those who can provide all components of the autogas program—the best retail marketers, competitive propane pricing, and the most ideal gas dispensing systems."

It has expanded its dealer network to 150 in the U.S. and Canada, and is seeing growth in Mexico and Latin America. "We have the largest grouping of EPA and CARB certifications with a total of 500 certifications. We're working with UPAS to bring about more shuttle buses, trolleys, work trucks, pickup trucks, vans, and law enforcement vehicles," Venezio added.





ALLIANCE AUTOGAS' NEWLY RELEASED TECHNOLOGIES

Following a record number of technologies released in 2018, Alliance AutoGas (Swannanoa, N.C.) had a wealth of accomplishments to share at the Work Truck Show. This technology included a previously unreleased vehicle system in partnership with Prins Alternative Fuel Systems installed on a 2019 Chevy Silverado.

Examples of the new 2018 technologies include 58 new EPA certifications covering 38 different vehicle platforms, an electric/propane autogas hybrid Ford Fusion, and the aftermarket autogas port-fueled direct injection (PFDI) engineered system introduced last year for the 2018 Ford F-150 with the 3.3-liter V6 and the 5.0-liter V8. "We are pleased to differentiate Alliance AutoGas in the alternative fuel market as hybrid-friendly," said Alliance AutoGas president Stuart Weidie. "This vehicle is a precursor of many to come in the Ford family."

"While we aren't doing a live conversion or a ride and drive at this year's Work Truck Show, we have more to share than ever," said Ed Hoffman, president of Blossman Services Inc. (BSI), Alliance's technology distributor. "In 2018 we not only



maintained our industry-leading portfolio of products, but also expanded into new technological realms." Hoffman explained that all products were simple multi-point fuel-injected engines a few years ago while the company ran through R&D projects to better understand how they would interface with fuel systems of the future.

The Prins and Alliance-engineered system installed on the 2019 Chevy Silverado displayed in the PERC booth is estimated to save more than $3000 annually in fuel costs and result in an average reduction of 58 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. The vehicle was provided by Alliance AutoGas service center Dickinson Fleet Services, and was fully equipped with the Alliance AutoGas-engineered system.

NAFTC ADDS PROPANE-SPECIFIC CURRICULUM

The National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium (NAFTC) of West Virginia University was represented at the Work Truck Show by interim director Micheal Smyth, who met with a number of propane industry stakeholders. "We have many projects going," Smyth said. "Fleets are adopting, autogas product upfitters are making much more robust and stable systems, and early adopters are feeling much more confident in their autogas vehicles."

Smyth told ***BPN*** that NAFTC is currently creating several training projects for the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC). "We are putting a propane autogas training program online for first responders," Smyth added. "We are creating education on how the vehicle works and what they need to know when they respond to an accident. In addition, NAFTC is preparing an online version of Propane 101. This should allow for shortening of technical training from a three-day to a two-day class if students do the Propane 101 online and replace some 'dry lecture' with a more interesting approach."

NAFTC is also producing videos for PERC on autogas facility maintenance, tank purging at the commissioning, and how propane acts in the transfer process.



AUTOGAS PAVILION

Continued from **Page 45**

The 2019 Autogas Pavilion is sponsored by UPAS (United Propane AutoGas Solutions) Group. The site brings together autogas industry manufacturers, products, processes, educational tools, and services specially designed for this fast-growing segment of the propane industry.

UPAS Group, as sponsor of the Autogas Pavilion, strives to unite interested propane autogas beneficiaries to promote the advancement of propane use in vehicles and equipment as a viable, safe, clean, affordable, and recognized alternative fuel for the future, while utilizing one of America's own natural resources.

Its mission is to create a group of "hands on" technical members that are dedicated to working together to promote autogas and continue building the propane industry. Its goals are to have everyone involved from propane vehicle systems manufacturers, system installers and service points, manufacturers and installers of fueling infrastructure, propane fuel suppliers, propane fuel retailers, and fleet administrators, to be able to provide education and solutions to users of autogas.

Quick-Connect Nozzle

The Staubli ultra-low emission quick-connect nozzle is easy to use and weighs approximately 3 lb. No autogas can escape, and no gas flow is possible, unless the refueling nozzle is engaged by the connection piece. Available from **Alliance AutoGas,** the Staubli valve's design allows for effortless connection and simulates the ease of refueling with a gasoline pump nozzle. *Booth #T-122 allianceautogas.com*



Hose Reel Assemblies

Elaflex now has available hose reel assemblies with the reel and hose. The reels are available with spring, hydraulic, pneumatic, or electric drive systems. The lightweight steel and stainless steel frames enhance this robust, high-performing unit. *Booth #132 elaflex.com.au*

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Indiana propane gas association

MEMBER VERIFICATION PROGRAM NTEA MVP The Association for The Work Truck Industry VERIFIED MEMBER

NTEA THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE WORK TRUCK INDUSTRY MEMBER

MEMBER NPGA National PROPANE GAS Association



PFDI System



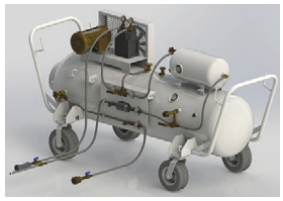
The **Alliance AutoGas** PFDI system, first introduced in 2018, remains the first and only aftermarket technology of its kind available to the marketplace today. This alternative fuel solution can integrate Alliance's engineered system into the OEM factory computer system of the vehicle, providing a seamless communication between the two. *Booth #T-122 allianceautogas.com*

Autogas Nozzle

Elaflex is displaying its ZVG2 EURO nozzle, a new ultra-low-loss, quick-connect style nozzle that now has a latching device for ease of use by consumers. The nozzle connection follows the ISO 19825 standard. The ZVG2 EURO UL nozzle features a new look "Nozzle Talker," a large window display on the top of the nozzle that can be used for advertising or communicating important messages to your customers or operators. Both the latching mechanism and the Nozzle Talker can be retrofitted in the field. The nozzle requires little maintenance, is low-cost over the lifetime of the product, and is completely repairable. It comes with an 18-month manufacturer's warranty. *Booth #132 elaflex.com.au*



Propane Evacuation System



The Propane Evacuation System from **SLEEGERS** is a self-contained unit that includes everything needed to safely and efficiently evacuate liquid and propane vapor from a motor fuel tank. Current liquid injection propane technologies require the opening of the motor fuel tank for filter replacement and pump service. The evacuation system provides a safe, compliant service tool that also conserves all stranded fuel for reuse. *Booth #324 sleegers.ca*

Fuel Management System



The P4-ParaFUEL-Fleet is a self-contained autogas fuel management system for NTEP fleet and retail that is RFID- or PIN code-actuated. It can be used by an unlimited number of customers, drivers, and vehicles at differing price levels. The system, from **Parafour,** offers local access with a USB stick for reporting or is networkable with an ethernet connection. *Booth #332 parafour.com*



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Scale Control



Parafour's P4-Parascale-Lite automatic scale control shuts off fuel flow to a cylinder when it reaches the full level. The control features explosion-proof components, with no exposed wires or other fragile parts, and has a pump motor control, flow control solenoid, fill complete lamp, among other options. It is easily installed on standard scales. *Booth #332 parafour.com*

Hose



The **Elaflex** Orange Band propane hose has now been certified to UL21 and CSA 8.1 for use in the North American market. The hoses come in sizes from ½-in. to 2 inches, and are resistant to abrasion, have low permeation, and are extremely low leaching of extractables that harm injectors. They have a 2-year manufacturer's warranty. *Booth #132 elaflex.com.au*

Chassis Cab



ROUSH CleanTech's F-650 chassis cab with a single long tank features a 6.8L V10 Ford engine with a ROUSH CleanTech autogas fuel system. It features a 6-speed automatic transmission, a 50 usable gallon tank, weighs 33,000 GVWR, and can be used with bobtail trucks. *Booth #T-129 ROUSHcleantech.com*

Cylinder Exchange Kiosk



The **SLEEGERS** Automated Propane Cylinder Exchange Kiosk allows customers to purchase or exchange barbecue cylinders 24/7 without an attendant. The web-enabled kiosk is third-party certified to the applicable North American standards and is equipped with various safety features. The kiosk uses a secure PCI compliant payment terminal that accepts debit and credit card transactions. *Booth #324 sleegers.ca*

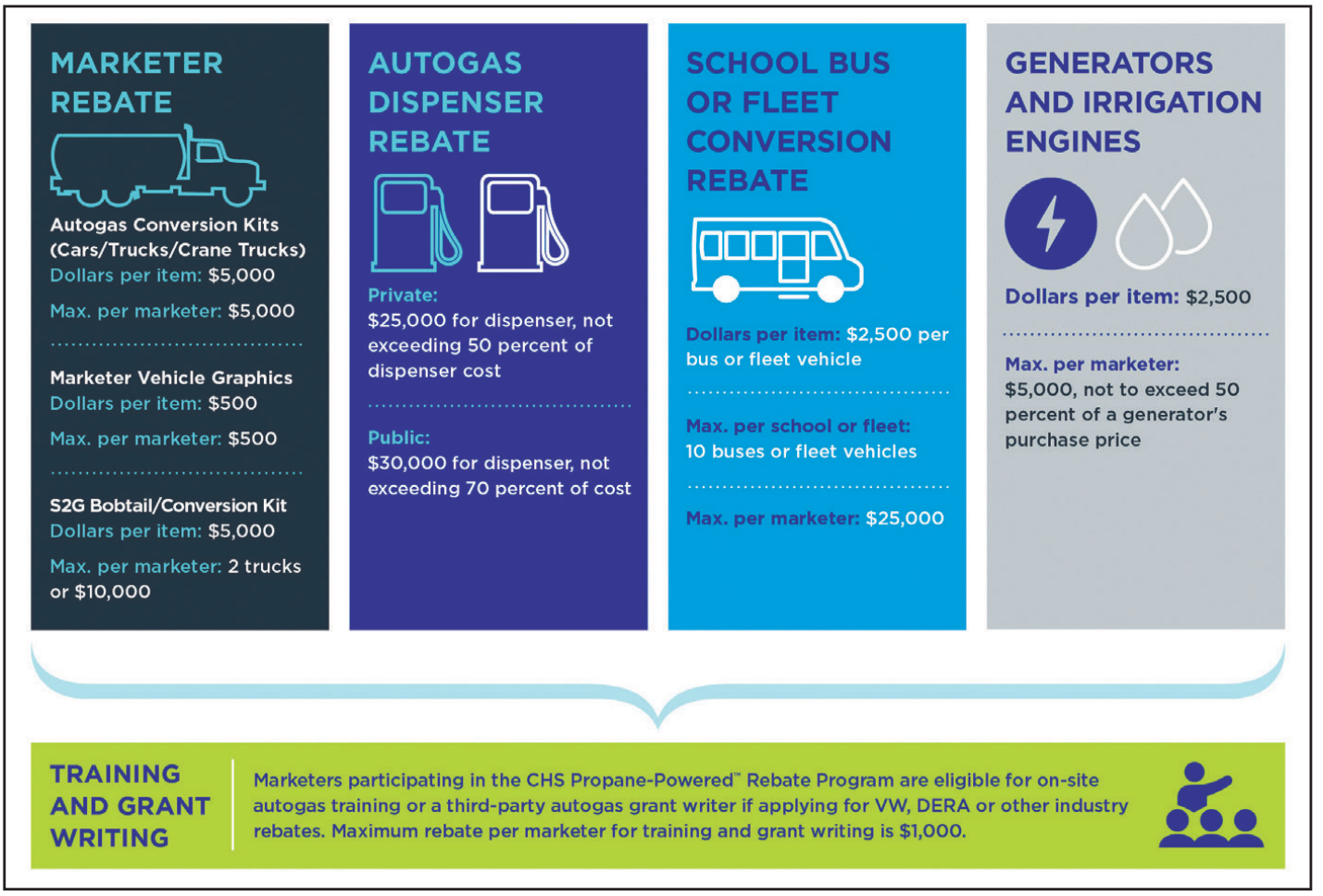
Air Compressor System



A self-contained air compressor system for internal valve actuation is available from **Parafour.** The system is computer controlled with leak detection and warning with alarm options. The compressor has a 1-gal. air tank at 80 psi, with output pressure regulated to 30 to 50 psi. It requires minimal maintenance. *Booth #332 parafour.com*




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The CHS Propane-Powered Rebate Program offers funding toward propane-powered technologies, training, and grant writing.

CHS CREATES REBATE PROGRAM TO GROW PROPANE GALLONS

PAT THORNTON

As one of the largest propane wholesalers in North America, CHS (Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) is providing a new resource for propane marketers to adopt propane as an alternative fuel with its CHS Propane-Powered Rebate Program. The program is a first-of-its-kind initiative offering marketers rebates for adopting propane-powered technologies, participating in training, and making investments in autogas infrastructure.

"We heard our customers say it's hard to justify the cost of a dispenser or pay for other infrastructure if they don't have any autogas customers," said Andy Ernst, propane marketing manager at CHS, the country's largest farmer-owned cooperative. "To help solve the problem and work to keep more American-made gallons here in the United States, CHS decided to invest in getting more marketers involved in autogas."

Ernst and other CHS leaders saw several areas where they could help spur growth in addition to autogas dispensers. "Marketer conversion kits, school bus or fleet conversions, generators, irrigation engines, and training or grant writing support are all areas where CHS is willing to help with funding of $0.01 for every gallon of wholesale propane purchased," Ernst said. CHS partnered with retail marketers to form the program, which offers rebates for sales dating back to January 1, 2018. "A lot of our customers have more than a year's worth of purchases to their credit already."

PROPANE-POWERED TECHNOLOGIES

By taking advantage of the rebates, marketers can save thousands on propane-powered investments. The program offers a number of different options. Marketers can receive up to $5000 to convert their car, truck, or crane truck to autogas; two bobtail conversion kits or two new S2G bobtails can be funded at a maximum of $10,000; and as much

as $500 can be used toward vehicle graphics. For private use, dispenser rebates allow up to $25,000 for a dispenser, not exceeding 50% of the dispenser cost. As much as $30,000 is allowed for dispensers available to the public, not exceeding 70% of cost. A limit of $25,000 at $2500 per vehicle can go toward school bus or fleet conversions with a max of 10 buses or fleet vehicles. A maximum of $5000, not to exceed 50% of a generator's purchase price, may be allotted to propane generators and propane irrigation systems.

TRAINING, GRANT WRITING

In addition to funding infrastructure, the industry is well-positioned to take advantage of grant dollars available due to the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) and VW settlement. "These grant funds are available to encourage the use of alternative fuel, including propane, and the CHS Propane-Powered Rebate Program can help marketers capture grant dollars for propane instead of the electric industry," said Ernst. To this end, marketers can receive a maximum rebate of $1000 toward training or grant writing. "Training and grant writing help marketers not only get funding, but also help with communicating the value of propane as an alternative fuel," Ernst explained. Jeff Fisher of Fisher Consulting, who has won more than $220 million in DERA funding for various energy-related programs, is available through a partnership with CHS to provide grant-writing services. "I'm glad to partner with CHS to make sure any one of its co-op members or customers can start benefitting from autogas sales," said Fisher, whose services range from drafting a grant proposal to simply helping edit an existing draft.

CHS also helps marketers take advantage of already existing autogas resources and training. "We partner with companies like ROUSH, Blue Bird, ICOM, and Alliance AutoGas, who already offer training; we just help make it available to our customers," Ernst said. Along with webinar trainings, CHS offers free marketing materials that customers can utilize when talking with fleets and bus companies.

For Ernst, any step toward autogas adoption is a positive step. "Step one is to get people talking about autogas, and there has been great success in this area with school bus fleets. Through our partnerships, we can work with our wholesale customers to encourage school districts to learn about the cost savings and environmental benefits from switching to propane-powered buses."

Ernst envisions propane marketers growing their gallons by leveraging the rebate money from CHS with other sources of funding. "Several propane state associations have funding for autogas that can augment funding from CHS to make some investments that require almost no out-of-pocket funding," said Ernst. "We want to help CHS customers, but feel we are ultimately helping grow the whole industry."

For more information on the CHS Propane-Powered Rebate Program, marketers can visit *CHSPropaneInsights.com*. ■





"CTE is the core of what community colleges do—two-year programs that lead to high-paying jobs," said David R. Becker, dean of the Advance Manufacturing & Transportation Technology division at Linn-Benton Community College.

AUTOGAS VEHICLE SERVICE TRAINING

Continued from **Page 32**

erships who sell vehicles to customers who use these systems, and other companies that do business with the fleets as well. For example, Knapheide has sent technicians to some courses so they don't interfere with installations when adding a new body or other accessories."

ATTC is now also training educators to expand the availability of this education nationwide. LBCC is a longtime member of the National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3).

"We have people come here from around the nation to get training in this sector. We can help with professional development; we have done that with other colleges," Schiedler said. "Any business can look at getting their local community college involved," he added.

Oregon has had a special interest in alternate fuels because the state is one of the leaders in the implementation of low-carbon fuel standards. There is also growing interest in these fuels nationwide, since the new Democratic majority in the House has been proposing green initiatives. This reinforces the need for technicians and educators focused on propane autogas-fueled vehicles.

"LBCC trains the trainer for this kind of project," Camp of CoEnergy concluded. "This is the center of the hub and it will come out from here."

For more information about LBCC and its ATTC, visit *linnbenton.edu.* ■



INSURANCE INDUSTRY LOSSES MEAN HIGHER PREMIUMS FOR PROPANE MARKETERS

FRANK B. THOMPSON

The headline from the *Insurance Journal* read, "A.M. Best Sees $12 Billion P/C Insurance Underwriting Loss for 2018."

This was followed by even worse news: "The U.S. property/casualty industry is expected to report that 2018 was its third consecutive year with an underwriting loss." That loss in 2018 follows a $25.3 billion loss in 2017, and a loss of $7.3 billion in 2016.

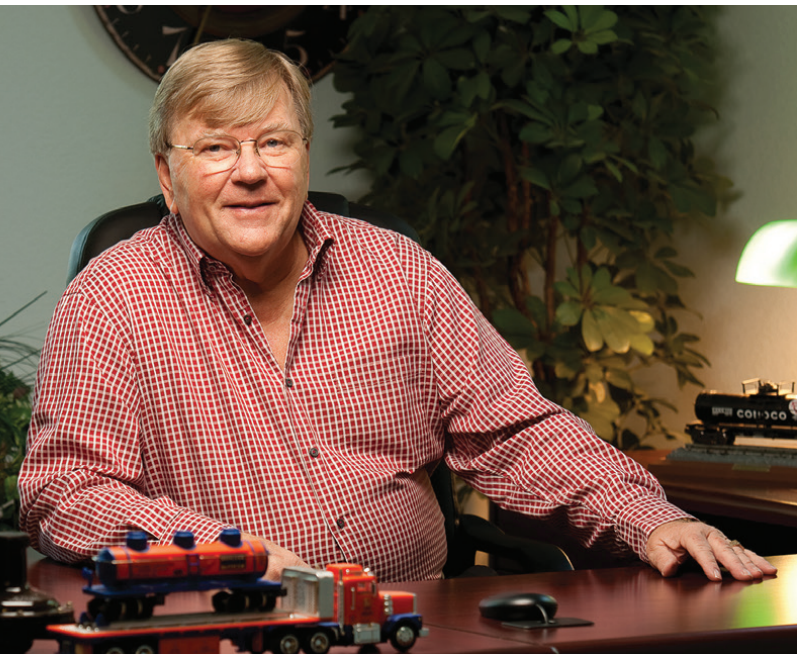
So what does that mean to propane marketers? The answer, higher premiums. The property and casualty insurance market has been stable over the past six years. Rates have stayed flat, which allowed some new insurance companies to enter the propane marketplace.

The focus of the propane industry has been on CETP training, which has reduced the frequency and severity of liability claims. This allowed the newer insurance companies to enter the marketplace with lower premiums; however, claims outside of general liability have increased substantially. Property claims from forest fires, tornados, wind, and hail storms are increasing in frequency.

REASONS FOR LOSSES

All insurance companies, whether new or old, are experiencing an underwriting loss when it comes to vehicles. Weather-related claims, such as fire damage and flooding along with fog and snow, increase the loss ratio. Auto parts and repairs are rising, as are distracted driving accidents.





All of the above are reasons why there is the $12 billion underwriting loss.

Why is the huge loss terrifying? Because for the past six or seven years, when an insurance agent called on a propane marketer, their sales pitch was that they had an insurance company that could beat the existing company's price. This forced the insurance producer that had the business to go back to the insurance carrier they were using and try to get a price reduction to match the lower quote.

A NEW SALES PITCH

Now the price increases place the shoe on the other foot. The insurance companies are forced to raise insurance premiums for their customers. The increased cost will cause some marketers to forget the savings they got in the good times and they will be out shopping their business due to the price increases.

A new agent, just starting out, explained to me how terrifying the future looked to her. She has been calling on new accounts to quote and every time she gets an opportunity to quote, she is higher than last year's premium. It is hard to sell a new account when the buyer was expecting 2018 pricing and, due to rate increases, now has no price advantage.

My response was that she was going to have to learn to sell the coverage and service differences between the insurance companies, which did not make her happy. This gets back to the old saying, "there is a fair price for any item, everyone in the chain has to make a profit," which is also true about the price of insurance.

Frank B. Thompson is a chartered property and casualty underwriter based in Phoenix. He is the owner of PT Risk Management, an independent insurance company specializing in writing propane and petroleum risk policies throughout the U.S.



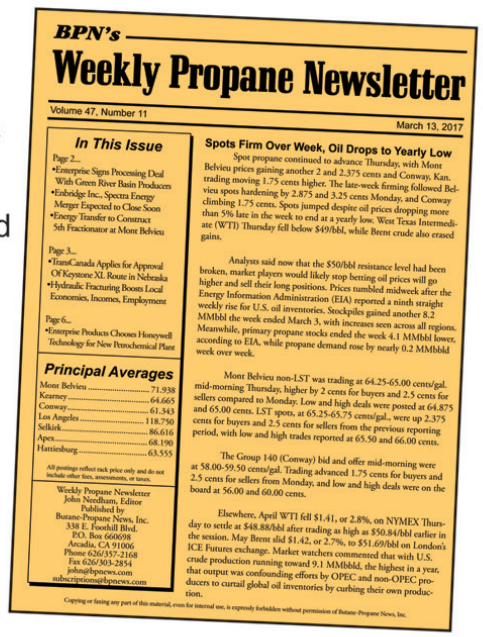
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Kearney 64.665
Conway 61.343
Los Angeles 118.750
Selkirk 86.616
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Spots Firm Over Week, Oil Drops to Yearly Low

Spot propane continued to advance Thursday, with Mont Belvieu prices gaining another 2 and 2.375 cents and Conway, Kan. trading moving 1.75 cents higher. The late-week firming followed Belvieu spots hardening by 2.875 and 3.25 cents Monday, and Conway climbing 1.75 cents. Spots jumped despite oil prices dropping more than 5% late in the week to end at a yearly low. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) Thursday fell below $49/bbl, while Brent crude also erased gains.

Analysts said now that the $50/bbl resistance level had been broken, market players would likely stop betting oil prices will go higher and sell their long positions. Prices tumbled midweek after the Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported a ninth straight weekly rise for U.S. oil inventories. Stockpiles gained another 8.2 MMbbl the week ended March 3, with increases seen across all regions. Meanwhile, primary propane stocks ended the week 4.1 MMbbl lower, according to EIA, while propane demand rose by nearly 0.2 MMbbld week over week.

Mont Belvieu non-LST was trading at 64.25-65.00 cents/gal. mid-morning Thursday, higher by 2 cents for buyers and 2.5 cents for sellers compared to Monday. Low and high deals were posted at 64.875 and 65.00 cents. LST spots, at 65.25-65.75 cents/gal., were up 2.375 cents for buyers and 2.5 cents for sellers from the previous reporting period, with low and high trades reported at 65.50 and 66.00 cents.

The Group 140 (Conway) bid and offer mid-morning were at 58.00-59.50 cents/gal. Trading advanced 1.75 cents for buyers and 2.5 cents for sellers from Monday, and low and high deals were on the board at 56.00 and 60.00 cents.

Elsewhere, April WTI fell $1.41, or 2.8%, on NYMEX Thursday to settle at $48.88/bbl after trading as high as $50.84/bbl earlier in the session. May Brent slid $1.42, or 2.7%, to $51.69/bbl on London's ICE Futures exchange. Market watchers commented that with U.S. crude production running toward 9.1 MMbbld, the highest in a year, that output was confounding efforts by OPEC and non-OPEC producers to curtail global oil inventories by curbing their own production.

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FINANCIAL PHYSICAL

Continued from **Page 37**

be measured as a percentage of total payroll. Percentage of gross profit can be used for office wages and expenses, insurance, etc. Comparing these metrics over a period of a few years will help guide you to managing expenses.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

The last area to analyze is your capital expenditures. This includes vehicles (new and major repairs), propane tanks, computer systems, tank monitoring systems, and major building expansions/renovations. The good news is that the new tax laws have provided expanded Section 179 deductions (accelerated depreciation). Check with your accountant on specifics, however, the consensus is that you can now write off 100% of the first $1 million in the first year. That is a cash flow savings of $340,000 if you are in a 34% tax bracket. That's a great incentive to invest in money-saving systems. We always recommend a cost-benefit analysis showing payback before choosing what system to invest in.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the increased cost of propane tanks and driver wages, analyzing your return on investment for setting a customer tank has never been more important. Our recommendation to clients is to take a hard look at the return on investment and price accordingly. In our presentation at the NPGA Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo on Saturday, April 13, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m., in Room 311, we will be sharing our tank investment analysis and expanding on the above items. We hope to see you there!

Steven Abbate is managing director of Cetane Associates, LLC, a provider of hands-on merger and acquisition advisory services for privately held companies. He may be contacted at sabbate@cetane.net.

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POINT-COUNTERPOINT (continued from p. 34)

The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) has built a formidable grass-roots advocacy network over the years and reinforced its effectiveness with Propane Days, but the complexity of the issues now before Congress coupled with a divided government will challenge the industry as never before.

AN ADVOCACY TEMPLATE

The Propane Vehicle Council (PVC) of the mid-'90s sent Congress a loud and clear message of strong industry commitment to the motor fuel market. As it evolved, it began to include off-road as well as on-road vehicles in its policy portfolio, but the message sent was clear and its success was obvious. The old PVC successfully navigated national tax policy by securing motor fuel tax equity, and won some of the first-ever federal funding for propane vehicle deployment through the Department of Energy's Clean Cities program.

That same advocacy template, with a few variations, can now guide NPGA into the future. Using the infrastructure and resilience issues as a guide, the industry can take the old PVC model and reshape it to accommodate the new opportunities available to the industry on Capitol Hill and within state and local governments.

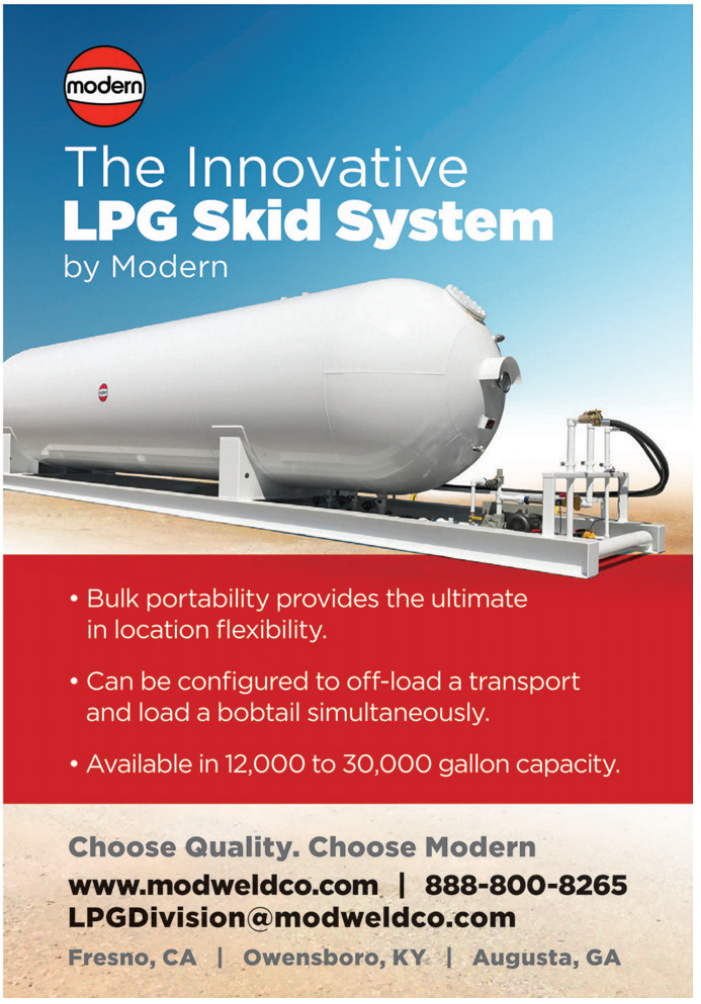
One option would be to form an updated infrastructure-style industry caucus within NPGA and organize the industry's priorities into four broad categories: tax policy, funding, public policy, and regulatory relief. The industry could then begin to build internal and external coalitions around targeted issues, challenges, and opportunities.

In certain issue areas, it might be indicated for NPGA to join/form coalitions with like-minded industries to advance specific legislative or regulatory priorities. In fact, targeted issue coalitions are a significant advocacy trend on Capitol Hill. The point being that every new Congress provides every stakeholder an opportunity to reflect on prior policy battles and develop strategies to address those challenges.

The Green New Deal, divided government, and the looming 2020 elections will challenge traditional advocacy models but also provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to organize priorities and devise specific strategies to address them.

Propane's built-in advantage of being a clean American fuel puts it on the side of emerging societal and political energy trends, while its obvious Trump-country constituency provides the industry with a grass-roots advantage in pressing the case for regulatory relief to a receptive and willing White House audience.

Joe Colaneri is a partner at AJW Inc., a Washington, D.C.- and Sacramento, Calif.-based public policy and advocacy firm. He was previously executive director of the Propane Vehicle Council from 1996-2002.







GET THE FACTS ABOUT SAFETY DOCUMENTATION

ALEX BURNS

Propane safety experts report that on average, 35% of safety documentation is inaccurate or incomplete. At first glance, it may appear as an exaggeration. However, when considering factors like complex industry requirements, limitations associated with traditional paper documentation, and the range of human error, this percentage becomes all too absolute. The reality of the situation is that propane marketers using outdated paper-driven processes are putting themselves at risk for safety and compliance issues.

How can 35% of safety documentation become inaccurate? A single safety inspection form has 50 required fields including critical operating tests like leak checks and flow and lock-up testing. This means 50 opportunities for incomplete or inaccurate data on just one of hundreds of forms. Once a form is completed in the field, it is filed away in a cabinet and typically not revisited until the appliance or system is due for reevaluation. In a worst-case scenario, the form may only get a second look when an issue arises with the inspected system. By that point, it may be too late to assess if the form was completed properly, and may not be sufficient evidence to protect the company from fines or legal claims.

MAJOR CHALLENGES OF SAFETY DOCUMENTATION

Paper-driven safety documentation allows too great of a margin of error between the field and the filing cabinet. This





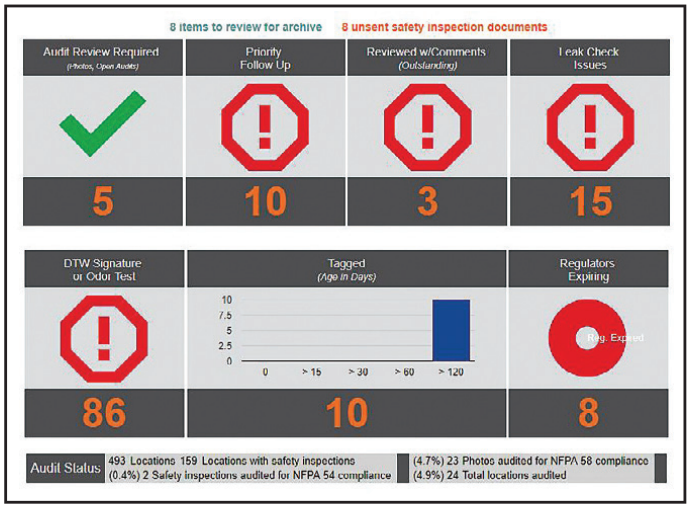
method provides no efficient way for management to audit safety inspection data. After all, 50 form fields per safety inspection form is time-consuming to complete by hand, and even more time-consuming to audit. Now is that 35% average looking more plausible? Additional liabilities of traditional paper safety documentation processes in the propane industry include

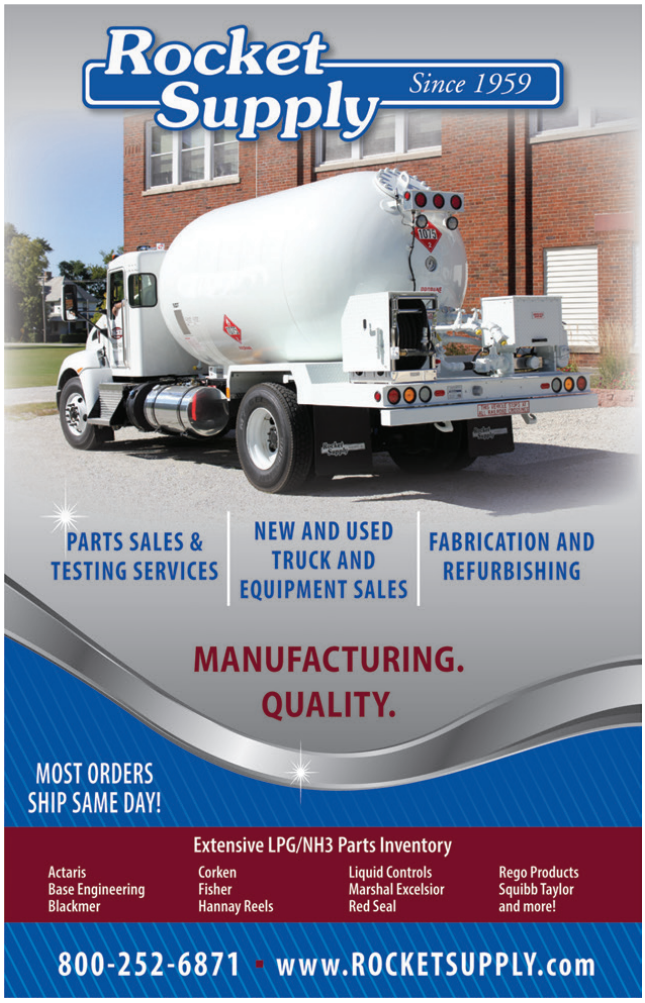
- Lack of systematic processes to follow up on inaccurate or incomplete service records and inspections;
- Difficulties keeping track of compliance requirements, like when regulators need to be replaced or when DOT cylinder requalifications are due, and maintaining NFPA 58 cathodic protection inspection requirements; and
- Accountability issues, no simple way for management to identify technicians that are repeating mistakes or omissions on documentation.

Safety documentation is a glaring challenge that propane marketers face daily. Beyond the internal inefficiencies and operational safety hazards that inaccurate safety documentation can cause, it simply cannot be overlooked that inaccurate safety documentation poses a serious threat to overall compliance and risk management. Singular issues that could arise from inaccurate or incomplete safety data can lead to costly fines, dangerous scenarios, and potentially expensive litigation. So, how can propane marketers address and overcome the challenges of safety documentation in our industry? Implementing a technology-based safety documentation process.

A CRITICAL SOLUTION FOR PROPANE MARKETERS

Utilizing a technology-driven safety documentation process is the way to take your safety documentation from 65% accurate to 100% accurate. Doing so will maximize internal







efficiencies and significantly reduce company risk.

A technology-based safety documentation system has the ability to automatically store, retrieve, and audit your safety documentation and compliance data. Instead of letting documents gather dust in a filing cabinet, they are automatically updated to a secure cloud-based platform. Complex documents, like safety inspection forms with 50 fields, can be evaluated for accuracy and completeness in a matter of seconds by advanced Error Recognition Technology. Forms with missing or incomplete information are immediately flagged for correction. Additionally, any important deadline requirements, like replacements and renewal inspections, are logged and flagged for a future follow-up. Adopting a technology-driven process delivers highly valuable advantages, including

- An automated, systematic process to follow up on service records and inspections;
- Proactive alerts for compliance deadlines, like regulator replacement, DOT cylinder requalifications, and NFPA 58 cathodic protection requirements;
- Photo documentation capabilities to document NFPA 58 container placement requirements;
- Mobile safety inspections that automatically sync to a cloud-based system; and
- Management reports to analyze safety data and assess employee performance.

All of these elements come together to create an efficient and effective safety documentation process that translates immediate benefits into lasting results. Beyond improving efficiencies directly affected by safety data, a technology-based system will enhance daily operations and provide important performance snapshots for management staff.

Management can use the system to easily generate 12 individual management reports from a single safety inspection form. The system can also generate management reports for individual service technicians. This provides a detailed summary of technician performance so management can customize training to specific service technicians based on the errors that have been identified, thus minimizing future mistakes.

Today, the P3 Compliance System has become the leading technology-based safety documentation system for propane marketers. It was developed to serve a glaring need in our industry, and continues to adapt and advance to continue doing just that. New integration capabilities with back-end operating systems, monthly cargo tank motor vehicle (CTMV) discharge system inspections, and offline mobile capabilities are some of the latest advancements that help propane

Continued on **Page 80**





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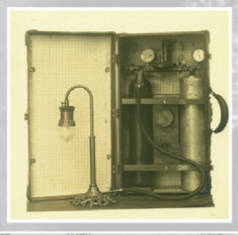
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LLOYD POPE
Energy Distribution Partners



JOE YATES
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Ferrellgas (Overland Park, Kan.) has promoted **Chad Pendill** to director of business development, where he will support the company's ongoing efforts to acquire multi-state and independent propane companies. Pendill, based in St. Michael, Minn., joined Ferrellgas as an account manager in December 2017 after a 27-year career in the wholesale equipment business.

Energy Distribution Partners (EDP; Chicago) recently added several general managers to its staff. Their responsibilities will include maintaining the current residential and agriculture markets in their respective service areas, in addition to being responsible for growing their company locations across all of its business segments. **Lloyd Pope** has joined EDP as general manager for Dassel's Petroleum (Hollister, Calif.). Pope has been involved with the propane industry for 38 years, having worked for Cal-Gas, Heritage, and Blue Star in a number of management and supervisory positions. He has served on the NPGA board of directors and is a past president of the Pacific Propane Gas Association.

Joe Yates has joined EDP as general manager for WOC Energy (Towanda and Mansfield, Pa.). Since 1983, he has held many positions in the propane, fueloil, and HVAC industries. Yates was vice president and controller of Sinkler Inc. and later worked as a general manager and operations manager at Superior Plus Energy Services and Griffith Energy.

Frank Lane has joined **RegO's** (Elon, N.C.) technical support team as LPG technical advisor. Lane has more than 30 years of experience in the propane and pressure vessel industry. Most recently, he was the assistant director of research and development/quality control for Manchester Tank and Equipment, where he was responsible for worldwide research and quality activities. He has also held positions at AmeriGas and Lane Butane Co. Inc.

ROUSH CleanTech (Livonia, Mich.) recently promoted **Brian Carney** to vice president of customer success, overseeing both ROUSH CleanTech and ROUSH Performance's Customer Success divisions. Carney, who joined ROUSH CleanTech in 2010, created the Customer Success department two years ago. He has helped to build a center of customer excellence that has positioned the company as a leader in the industry and pushed its rapid growth.

Dylan Kyle has joined ROUSH CleanTech as commercial sales manager, to expand the adoption of propane autogas vehicles in commercial fleets. He previously managed sustainability projects for the health, safety, security, and environmental department for the Oiltanking Co.

ROUSH CleanTech's newly named business development manager **Adam Wilkum** will focus on the alternative-fuel school bus market. As part of the public transportation industry for nearly 20 years, Wilkum has provided his expert level industry knowledge to some of the largest fleets in North America. He was previously with Thomas Built Bus, Cummins Inc., and Lion Electric, providing Tier 1 sales and support to both dealers and end users. Wilkum's experience includes equipment specification guidance for competitive advantage, securing grant funding for clean energy projects, and providing technical education to both small and large groups.



RegO (Elon, N.C.) has made several changes to its technical service organization, with the appointment of **Cody Reeves** as technical service specialist. Reeves, with more than 10 years of service in the LP-gas industry, is replacing **Ed Miller**, who is retiring. Miller has been with RegO for 12 years, and is a 45-year industry veteran. Throughout his career, Miller held numerous positions from delivery driver, service technician, branch/district management, and 16 years as safety director and vice president of safety for major marketers. Reeves was previously with Superior Plus, where he served as lead gas technician and took part in the safety champion program, with responsibility for quarterly safety meetings and plant inspections to help address any safety issues.

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

2019

April 12—PERC Council Meeting, The Omni CNN Center, Atlanta. (202) 452-8975

April 13—Women in Propane Leadership Forum, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta. *wip@npga.org*

April 13-15—National Propane Gas Association Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta. (202) 466-7200

April 14-17—GPA Midstream Convention, San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter, San Antonio, Texas. (918) 493-3872

April 15-18—High Performance HVAC Summit 2019, Wyndham Orlando Resort, Orlando, Fla. (800) 633-7058

April 23-26—ACT Expo, Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, Calif. (888) 993-0302

April 25-26—National Propane Gas Association Benchmarking Council Meeting (Groups A-H), Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina, San Diego, Calif. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

May 2-3—National Propane Gas Association Benchmarking Council Meeting (Groups I-M), Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina, San Diego, Calif. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

May 6-7—2019 Vermont Fuel Conference, Jackson Gore at the Okemo Mountain Resort, Ludlow. *steph@vermontfuel.com*

May 6-8—Manufactured Housing Institute 2019 Congress & Expo, Hyatt Regency New Orleans, New Orleans. (703) 558-0646

May 9-10—PERC Advisory Committee Meeting, San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter, San Antonio, Texas. (202) 452-8975

May 14-16—International School of Hydrocarbon Measurement Conference & Expo, Cox Business Services Convention Center, Oklahoma City, Okla. (405) 831-8609

May 15-17—Western Propane Trade Show & Convention, Reno Events Center, Reno, Nev. (916) 447-9742

May 19-22—Eastern Energy Expo, Hershey Lodge & Convention Center, Hershey, Pa. (973) 467-1400

May 21—Energy xPortCon, Hilton Americas Hotel, Houston, Texas. *xportcon@rbnenergy.com*

May 22—Michigan Propane Gas Association Propane Safety Awareness Day, State Capital Lawn, Lansing. (517) 487-2021

May 28-30—Canadian Propane Association Annual General Meeting, Seminar, and Golf Tournament, Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls, Ont. (613) 683-2270

June 2-5—2019 National Propane Gas Association Presidential Forum, Annual Meeting & Propane Days, Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

June 3-6—2019 Oklahoma/Arkansas Propane Gas Associations Annual Conference, Shangri-La Resort, Monkey Island, Okla. (405) 424-1775

June 10-13—Mid-States Propane Expo and Tradeshow, Embassy Suites by Hilton & Olathe Conference Center, Olathe, Kan. (785) 354-1749

June 11-13—Global Petroleum Show, Stampede Park, Calgary, Alta. (888) 799-2545

June 17-20—NFPA Conference & Expo, Henry B Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas. (800) 344-3555

June 19-21—Pennsylvania Propane Gas Association Annual Membership Meeting, Frank J. Pasquerilla Conference Center, Johnstown. (717) 441-6040

June 25-27—New Mexico / Colorado Propane Gas Associations Convention, Sagebrush Inn, Taos, N.M. (303) 424-0870

June 25-27—North Dakota Propane Gas Association Meeting and Convention, Roughriders Hotel, Medora. (701) 223-3370

July 17-18—PERC Council Meeting, Resort at Squaw Creek, Olympic Valley, Calif. (202) 452-8975

July 19—Virginia Propane Gas Association Summer Meeting, Omni Homestead, Hot Springs. (804) 648-6299, ext. 1006

July 24-26—Michigan Propane Gas Association Summer Convention, Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville. (517) 487-2021

July 25-27—Africa 2019 Oil and Gas International Trade Exhibition, KICC, Nairobi, Kenya. *feedback@expogr.com*

July 25-28—Florida Propane Gas Association Annual Convention, Hutchinson Island Marriott, Stuart. (850) 681-0496

July 31-Aug 2—Pacific Propane Gas Association Annual Conference & Membership Meeting, Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, Wash. (844) 585-4940

August 8-10—Crossroads Propane Expo & Conference, location tba, Corpus Christi, Texas. (800) 325-7427

Aug. 11-14—SCPGA/GPGA Southern Connection Convention, The King and Prince Beach & Golf Resort, St. Simons Island, Ga. (803) 865-2284

Aug. 28-29—Arizona Propane Gas Association Annual Membership Summer/Fall Meeting, Hassayampa Hotel, Prescott. (602) 315-0155

Sept. 8-10—2019 Fall TS&S Committee Meeting, Hyatt Regency Inner Harbor, Baltimore. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

Sept. 8-10—North Carolina Propane Gas Association Annual Convention, Myrtle Beach Spa & Resort, Grand Dunes, S.C. (919) 787-8485

Sept. 11-13—2019 Nevada Propane Dealers Association Annual Conference & Membership Meeting, Mont Bleu Resort & Casino, South Lake Tahoe. *nvpropane@gmail.com*

Sept. 12-13—National Propane Gas Association Benchmarking Council Meeting (Groups A-H), Four Seasons St Louis, St. Louis. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

Sept. 15-18—New England Fuel Institute Heating & Energizing America Trade Show (HEAT), Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, R.I. *events@nefi.com*

Sept. 17-18—South Dakota Petroleum & Propane Marketers Association Annual Convention & Petro Expo, The Lodge, Deadwood. (605) 224-8606

Sept. 17-19—Gastech Conference, NRG Center, Houston. *gastechevent.com*

Sept. 19-20—National Propane Gas Association Benchmarking Council Meeting (Groups I-M), Four Seasons St Louis, St. Louis. (202) 466-7200 ext. 335

Sept. 22-24—Manufactured Housing Institute Annual Meeting, The Westin Savannah, Savannah, Ga. *info@mfghome.org*

Sept. 24-26—32nd World LPG Forum & European Congress, RAI Amsterdam, Amsterdam. *info@worldlpgforum-aegpl2019.com*

Sept. 25-27—World Energy Conference & Expo, Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C. *connie@aeecenter.org*

Sept. 29-Oct. 1—NPGA 2019 Fall Board of Directors Meeting, Nemacolin Woodlands Resort, Farmington, Pa. *registration@npga.org*

Oct. 9-10—Propane Gas Association of New England Annual Meeting, Portsmouth Harbor Events, Portsmouth, N.H. (888) 445-1075

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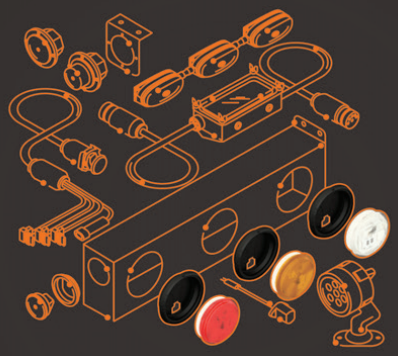


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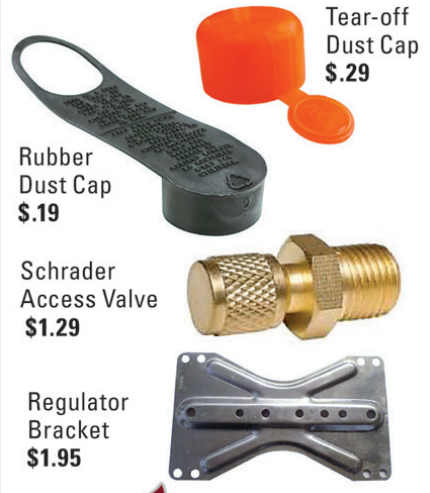
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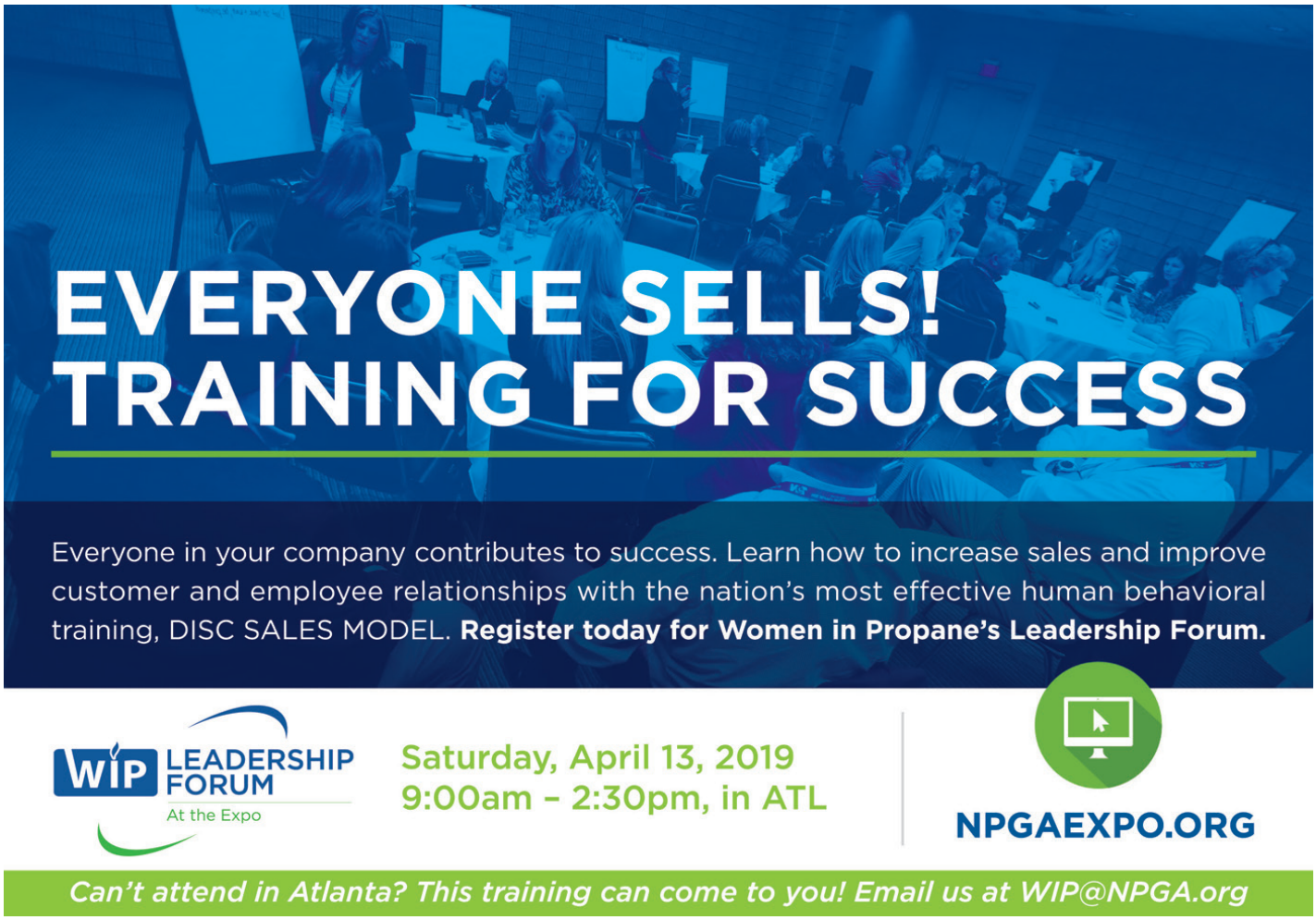
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Continued from **Page 68**

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Alex Burns is the vice president of the P3 Compliance System division of P3 Propane Safety. For more information, email Alex_Burns@p3propanesafety.com *or visit* p3propanesafety.com.



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HOW A PASSION FOR HORSES LED TO A CAREER IN LP INSURANCE

KAREN MASSMAN VanASDALE

Growing the liquefied petroleum (LP) transportation sector of a national insurance company was not Michelle Ceschan's career goal when she graduated from Robert Morris University 15 years ago with a degree in communications and a passion for horses. She knew nothing about insurance or propane distribution.

Growing up with horses, cattle, sheep, and cats in a rural community in Ohio, Ceschan, now a business development specialist for propane operations at National Interstate Insurance Co., did know hard work and responsibility. Taking care of the animals before and after school was part of her daily routine. She began riding horses at age 2 and was involved in 4H along with her brother. In high school, she began working at a local tack shop and continued there even after graduation. It was a coworker at the tack shop who nudged her to apply for a job at Progressive Corp.

While at Progressive, she became immersed and worked her way up to becoming a commercial auto inside sales representative. Nine years later, she moved to National Interstate, a specialty property and casualty insurance company based in Richfield, Ohio.

The new position brought tremendous opportunity, which changed the course of her career and opened the door to the propane industry. Within six months, Ceschan was brought in to focus on growth of the company's Transportation: LP division, working with propane distributors.

"I've made a career out of insurance," she said. "If you'd asked me in high school if I would be building a career based on insurance and propane, I would have said never."

National Interstate offers both a traditional insurance program designed specifically for LP distributors and an alternative risk transfer program specific to this class of business. Alternative risk transfer insurance, or ART, allows propane distributors to basically become their own insurance companies. Premiums are paid into the customized program. If the company doesn't suffer significant losses, a portion of the premium, along with investment income, may be returned.



"It's definitely a niche. Not everyone is the same size. We do different solutions for customers," she said, explaining her customers may have anywhere from three transportation units to 400 units. "We like to lay it all out for our customers to have options. Buyers are more interested in seeing what they can get for their money."

Although her official title is business development specialist, Ceschan also plays a customer service role working with both agents and customers when they have a claim or issue. "The nice thing about propane, they [her clients] are very safety focused. There's not a lot of crisis-focus activity."

Her clients and agents are located primarily in the Midwest, but a few are sprinkled throughout the country. She travels quarterly to visit customers and agents and attend industry conferences.

One of the fun parts of her job is when her propane career intersects with her passion and hobby of showing horses. An avid rider of both English- and Western-style, Ceschan has won several regional and national horse shows. Once the show season rolls around—spring through fall—she's on the circuit where she occasionally runs into her customers.

"There are some of our current clients who show the same breed, but in different states. Similar to propane, it's a close-knit community," she said. "It's kind of neat to have that different connection with someone."

Several years ago, Ceschan also started a side business out of her home related to her love of horse shows: Hold It! Magnetic Numbers, custom-made Swarovski number holders for equestrians. And, she and her husband, Justin, still find time to travel and attend their niece's and nephew's activities.

Her secret to managing a demanding career, horse shows, and family? "It's just a matter of being organized. I have a planner I pull out every morning to review daily, weekly, and monthly tasks and events. I use a lot of Post-it notes, and also have a running list of notes on my phone for various activities in the event I'm not by my planner. I also find reminders work wonders, too!" ■

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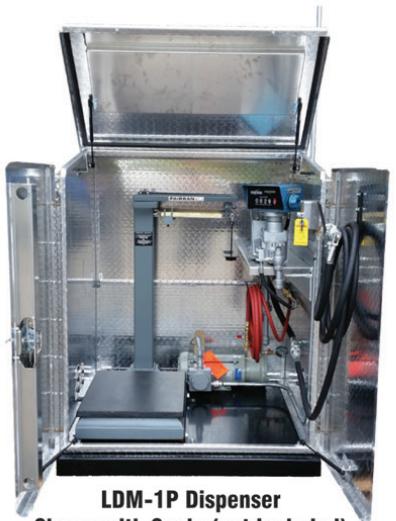
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