

# SAFETY TIPS

## Handling and Transporting Propane Cylinders



Canadian Propane Association | Association canadienne du propane

Small cylinders are compact and portable – it is no wonder they are used extensively for RVing, camping and backpacking, not to mention powering outdoor equipment like fire pits and barbecues.

These cylinders are safe when properly used and handled:

- Inspect your propane camping equipment carefully before you leave home. Check for leaks by soaking each fuel cylinder connection with soapy water or leak solution and look for telltale bubbles. If you detect a leak, call your propane supplier.
- Make sure you are familiar with the manufacturers' written operating and maintenance instructions of any appliance that you are using.
- When shopping for propane equipment for your RV or camping, make sure the product is certified for Canada.
- Do not use portable propane camping equipment in your RV.
- Use propane equipment on a level surface in an open, well-ventilated area away from shrubs or dry wood. Never turn in at night with a stove, cooker or lantern still burning.
- Never smoke while handling a propane cylinder.

### Storing propane cylinders

- Whether full or empty, new or old, always store cylinders outdoors whenever possible, away from heat or sources of ignition (matches, smoking materials, etc.).
- Keep propane cylinders in a secure, well ventilated area, off the ground, on a non-combustible base, and store in an upright position.
- When storing, disconnect cylinders, plug or cap all cylinder outlets.
- Never store spare cylinders under or near the barbecue.

### Transporting propane cylinders

To bring cylinders home or to camping sites, follow these easy tips:

- Disconnect cylinders and plug or cap all outlets before you go.
- Always carry the cylinder in an upright position with the safety valve on top.
- While travelling, placing your propane cylinder on the floor of the passenger compartment is ideal with a window open. When in the trunk, block the trunk lid open.
- Never leave a cylinder in a parked vehicle with the windows up. Heat builds up quickly and could cause an explosive release of propane in the vehicle.

### PROPANE SAFETY

- Propane is a safe and reliable energy source.
- It is stored and transported in its compressed liquid form, but by opening a valve to release propane from a pressurized storage container, it is vapourized into a gas for use.
- Propane is an odourless gas to which an odourant called mercaptan has been added to give it a sulfur smell – like rotten eggs – to help detect leaks.
- Immediately leave the area if you smell propane. If safe, close the supply valve on the propane containers.
- Seek medical attention if you are showing physical symptoms of CO poisoning (headaches, nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, confusion, impaired judgement, loss of manual dexterity).
- Propane cylinders must be inspected and requalified every 10 years.

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- Secure the cylinder in the upright position so it cannot tip over while you are driving.
- Do not transport or use propane containers that are damaged, show signs of corrosion, have been exposed to fire, or appear to be leaking.

### Reusable propane cylinders

Reusable five-pound cylinders are an eco-friendly alternative to one-pound cylinders for use in camping, barbecuing, heating, torching, and much more. We encourage Canadians to use five-pound cylinders for a few reasons:

- The small one-pound cylinders are typically manufactured and filled from supplies out of Canada. Although the five-pound cylinders may be slightly larger and heavier, you are supporting your local Canadian suppliers.
- While handy, single-use cylinders cause collection and disposal issues for provincial parks and municipalities, whereas you can refill a five-pound cylinder at a propane refill location.

### Disposal of one-time use cylinders

If you need to use one-time use cylinders, remember the following:

- Never leave them at your campsite or dump them in a park.
- Only dispose of them at parks in designated enclosed collection cages.
- Never place them in household waste or in construction/renovation bins.
- Even if the cylinders have been emptied and depressurized using a special 'key', they must still be disposed of through the correct channels – they are still considered hazardous waste.
- Contact your municipality for the location nearest you to recycle propane cylinders.



It is illegal by Canadian law to refill cylinders without proper training.

Refillable one-pound cylinder kits manufactured to specification TC-39M and aerosol containers are being sold in Canada. The kits allow consumers to refill their cylinders and come with a stand for a home barbecue 20 lbs cylinder and the connectors. BUT remember:

### Regulation requires:

- Filling must be done by personnel trained for that purpose.
- All propane cylinders are filled to a maximum 80% liquid level for safety reasons, which is not possible with these refill kits.
- The cylinder sold in this kit is approved under specification TC-4BAM and can be refilled, but cylinders known as a 'single trip' or 'non-refillable' cylinder cannot be refilled – **it is difficult to distinguish the difference between refillable and non-refillable cylinders.** Refilling non-refillable cylinders is a safety risk as it is not designed to handle the refilling pressure.
- Do not attempt to refill aerosol containers or any cylinder that is manufactured and marked as TC-39M.

### Questions:

- Contact a qualified refiller to determine if a cylinder can be filled properly.
- Propane fuelling station locations can be found on the [Canadian Propane Association website](http://www.propane.ca).