



Propane Gas Dispensing Safety

Propane gas, used in a variety of ways and in many industries, can be a dangerous source of accidents and injuries in the workplace. Propane's gas characteristics and storage method require that operators are properly trained on hazards and risk controls.

There are specific propane training and inspection requirements published in national codes (such as NFPA 58) and by government agencies such as the United States Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

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Follow these basic guidelines:

- Only authorized, properly trained users should handle propane gas. Never allow someone without training and experience to handle propane.
- Conduct a visual inspection of cylinders and equipment before filling begins.
- Learn to recognize the odor of propane. To increase likelihood that a propane leak will be detected, an odorant (usually sulfur-based) is added to the gas.
- Read the safety data sheet (SDS) to understand more about propane.
- Propane leaks can be very hazardous. The gas can cause third-degree or deep-freeze burns to the skin. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is critical when dispensing propane gas, including:
 - Eye and face protection
 - Proper gloves and clothing
- Propane gas displaces air, so it should not be used in confined spaces. Proper ventilation should be available.
- Eliminate potential sources of ignition by restricting others from the propane transfer station. Ignition sources are not permitted within 25 feet of the point of transfer, and combustible materials are prohibited within 10 feet.
- NO SMOKING signs should be prominently posted in the vicinity.
- Tanks should be protected against vehicular traffic by means of cages or bollards.
- Know the location and how to operate emergency shutoffs, pump controls and fire extinguishers.
- Practice evacuation procedures and know the company's emergency evacuation plan.
- Never rush. Injuries can be prevented when employees take time to do the job safely.

Additional information and training resources, related to propane use, can be obtained from:

- The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA): <https://www.nfpa.org>
- Propane Education and Research Council: <https://www.propanecouncil.org>
- National Propane Gas Association: <https://www.npga.org>

