

Safety & Small Propane Cylinders

It's no surprise that small propane cylinders are commonly seen almost everywhere. Portable, convenient and less expensive than large tanks which power bundled appliances and home heat, smaller cylinders are highly popular. And as with anything else, they should be handled with safety in mind.

Following these guidelines will help you in the safe handling and storage of smaller propane cylinders.

When Transporting Propane Cylinders ...

- Keep cylinders upright at all times. Make sure they stand vertically and firmly secured so they don't roll over on their side or shift position. A bungee cord or rope can help keep your cylinders in place.
- Place the cylinder in a well-ventilated area of your vehicle and never leave a full propane cylinder in a hot car since propane expands with heat which may lead to a gas leak or explosion.
- Even if the propane cylinder is empty, you should always turn off the valve and securely close it.
- If you're running several errands, make sure unloading your cylinder is first on the list. Go directly to your destination and unload the cylinder from your vehicle right away.

When Refilling Propane Cylinders ...

- When refilling or exchanging your cylinder, visit an authorized propane retailer to have a trained professional assist you.
- Each propane cylinder should have an overfill protection device which prevents filling the cylinder in excess of the maximum permitted filling limit. An over-filled tank may not allow for any propane expansion which could lead to uncontrolled release of propane.
- Make sure the propane cylinder hasn't been damaged in any way. This includes dents, bulges, cracks, burns, excessive rust or pitting. Your Paraco refill/exchange facility can assist you with questions as well as tips on properly disposing of damaged cylinders. Our article on [propane cylinder disposal](#) also offers useful information.

When Storing Propane Cylinders ...

- Always select an outdoor space on a level and preferably non-combustible surface. Never keep propane cylinders indoors or in an enclosed area like basement, shed or garage.
- Choose a cool place away from any source of ignitions such as flames, flammable or combustible material; and never expose propane cylinders to heat above 120° F. It's also a good idea to keep them stored away from high-traffic areas where they can be bumped, damaged and/or topple over.

Detecting a Leaky Cylinder

Propane is extremely safe. Manufacturers deliberately add an odorant called Ethyl Mercaptan which smells like sulfur (aka rotten eggs) to alert customers of the presence of a potential propane leak. If you smell that distinct sulfur smell or hear a hissing noise near your cylinder, shut the valve if safe to do so, leave the area and call [Paraco](#), your local fire department or 911. Never restart your system until your cylinder and all propane appliances have been inspected by an authorized technician.

Always check for leaks before using a propane cylinder if it hasn't been used in a while. It's easy to do this by applying a soapy water solution to the connector valve and outlet. Open the cylinder valve, and if bubbles form, close the valve and tighten the connection. Wait a minute, then slowly open the valve once again. If bubbles continue to form, [contact us](#). Don't use the cylinder.



We encourage you to read and watch a short video on [What to do if You Suspect a Gas Leak](#) in the event you ever do smell gas in your home.