



Pennsylvania Propane Gas Association

908 N. 2nd Street
Harrisburg, PA 17102
717-441-6040

www.PApropane.com

For Immediate Release
January 28, 2014

For more information, contact:
Shelby L. Metzger
Shelby@papropane.com; or
[Kathy Speaker MacNett](mailto:Kathy.Speaker@macnet.com)
ksm@skarlatoszonarich.com

PAPGA Helps Consumers Better Understand Current Propane Supply Concerns

Harrisburg, PA – Many Pennsylvanians as well as people from neighboring states are concerned due to recent media reports of a Propane shortage. The Pennsylvania Propane Gas Association today announced that the frigid temperatures, high demand in the Midwest and exports are the main cause of the current shortages in Pennsylvania.

In the late fall of 2013 and early winter of 2014, a number of separate events occurred that have led to the current propane supply concerns.

First, the frigid temperatures associated with the unusual Polar Vortex have caused an unusually high demand for propane. The high demand comes at the end of unusually high fall use of propane in the Midwest. Many Pennsylvania distributors have spent the winter sending trucks into the Deep South to get supply which has contributed to a sharp rise in prices along propane systems like the Dixie pipeline. Ability to move product is limited by regulations on the “hours of service” any propane driver can drive in a given day or week.

Second, an unusually wet harvesting season and a bumper corn crop in the Midwest meant farmers were requesting significantly more propane for crop drying than they normally use during the harvest season. The Midwest’s supplies were impacted by pipeline maintenance and changing pipeline flow patterns are a factor. The Cochin pipeline, which services a number of Midwestern states and runs into Ohio, was closed for maintenance most of December. The pipeline reopened on December 20.

Third, supplies of propane are being exported to other world markets, including Japan and Latin America, where it commands higher prices per gallon than it would in the United States. Ironically, Europe is having a warmer winter than the U.S. with demand running below normal. Even if supplies originally destined for Europe are returned to the United States, our federal laws make it difficult for foreign flagged ships to move the propane from one port to another within the United States.

These factors, combined with the increased demand for propane and other infrastructure changes during the continued record low temperatures in our region, have led to the current supply concerns.

PAPGA has been working with the Governor's office, PENNDOT, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), as well as the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to keep propane supplies moving into and around the Commonwealth, as such supplies become available. At present, three federal emergencies are in effect, easing hours of service restrictions for propane and other products, in major portions of the country, including Pennsylvania until February 11, 2014.

PAPGA's efforts have included requests for emergency declarations to ease the "hours of service" restrictions applicable to propane's CDL drivers in both interstate and intrastate routes. State relief was granted originally by the Governor and PennDot on January 10th, and some federal relief was granted on January 19th. Relief for shipments within Pennsylvania has now been extended until February 11, 2014 or the end of the emergency period whichever is less. Federal relief for the region including Pennsylvania was granted for shipping between states in the Northeast region until February 11, 2014. Hours of Service limitations restrict the delivery and transport of propane from one location to another both inside and outside the Commonwealth [Click Here](#) to learn more about the emergency declarations.

PAPGA asks both residential and industrial consumers to keep the current temporary supply difficulties in mind, and to appropriately conserve propane. Pennsylvania propane distributors are already taking actions to import propane into the Commonwealth from other states, and are attempting to meet customer needs by a variety of methods including purchases on the open market at higher prices, sharing of propane supplies, and when necessary partially filling tanks until additional supplies of propane become available.

PAPGA hopes that propane distributors will be able to begin to rebuild inventories as soon as possible. The current prolonged period of sub-freezing weather in our region complicates this supply situation. PAPGA and its member distributors throughout Pennsylvania appreciate consumer support for our industry as we strive to meet both the residential and commercial needs of our propane customers.

The Pennsylvania Propane Gas Association is a member-focused trade association providing services that communicate, educate and promote the propane industry in Pennsylvania. The association was formed in 1947 to offer opportunities to learn through training and networking with peers, and to aid with legislative issues that contribute to operating a safe and successful industry.

[Click Here to Follow Us on Facebook](#)

[Click Here to Follow Us on Twitter](#)

[Click Here to download our Mobile APP](#)