

NPGA State Director Update



As your elected State Director, I wanted to provide you with important updates and a summary of activities that took place at the most recent NPGA Board of Directors meeting.

NPGA's committees and task forces held meetings and discussed issues of importance to all propane industry members. I encourage you to take the time to read my report below.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you.

Sincerely,

Kara Tucker

Kopy's Propane Inc.

Williamstown, Pennsylvania



The NPGA Board of Directors meets three times a year and brings together more than 200 leaders from every industry sector. During these meetings, the Board sets association policies and advocacy objectives, identifies ways to grow the industry, and participates in numerous networking events.

Last week, the NPGA winter committee and section meetings took place via Zoom, and the Board of Directors meeting took place via webinar.

Winter 2021

NPGA-PERC Unified Environmental Campaign

The NPGA/PERC Joint Officer Task Force is developing a framework for a unified messaging and outreach campaign to define the role propane can play in the low carbon future and fight the "Electrification of Everything" movement. The target audience for the campaign will be influencers, decision makers, consumers, and marketers. Leadership on the task force includes:

Michelle Bimson Maggi, AmeriGas
Jeff Stewart, Blue Star Gas
Casey Cramton, Dead River Company
Stuart Weidie, Blossman Gas

The campaign will challenge the prevalent narrative around the main causes of climate change. It will also define propane as one solution to reducing a home or business' carbon footprint. The "Electrification of Everything" movement is also gaining momentum, and is a threat to the propane industry. The campaign will dispel some of the myths around the "clean" electricity movement and identify multiple paths to a low carbon future.

Governmental Affairs

With the new Biden administration focusing on climate, green energy, and environmental issues, NPGA's governmental affairs team is preparing for the challenges ahead in Congress, at the federal agencies and at the state level with expected pushes on decarbonization and the electrify everything movement.

At its meeting, the Governmental Affairs Committee discussed a variety of important issues with updates from its three committee task forces. The Legislative Task Force discussed 2021 legislative priorities for the new, 117th Congress and also highlighted the 2020 year-end omnibus legislation that contained a number of wins for the propane industry in the areas of appropriations and tax credits. Also, the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act was significant because it calls for a pilot program for Department of Defense facilities to transition to alternative fuel vehicles for their fleets where propane was specifically referenced in the Act.

The Regulatory Task Force discussed a series of Executive Orders issued by President Biden, which included a list of regulations issued under the Trump administration that the new administration will be reviewing. Also, NPGA plans to submit petitions to both DOT and DHS that would affect the operation requirements for the propane industry for, respectively, propane gas pipeline systems and the CFATS regulations. In another important victory, the Department of Energy withdrew a rulemaking activity that would have eliminated an entire product class of standard efficiency gas furnaces.

In the State Engagement task force, it was noted that many states are aggressively addressing climate change with more than 100 bills in state legislatures ranging from carbon tax proposals to incentives for heat pumps to complete statewide bans on the use of propane in new construction. However, NPGA is also supporting bills that would prohibit cities or counties from passing laws that would force homes and businesses to only use electricity, which are referred to as “Ban the Gas Ban” bills. Finally, many states are proposing their own requirements for health insurance, workers compensation and limiting liability for businesses as it relates to the pandemic.

Marketers Section

A new year brings new opportunities for propane marketers. In 2021, NPGA will offer two new services: one to help relieve the administrative burden of entry-level driver training; the other are apprenticeships in a variety of fields, including service technicians and bobtail drivers. Additional details for each will be available soon.

The audience heard from Tucker Perkins, the President and CEO of the Propane Education and Research Council (PERC) on the organization’s recent activities and projects. He touched on the results of PERC’s recent sales survey and highlighted elements from PERC’s online learning center. The Learning Center was created to assist marketers in CETP training, sales, and CRS training, and how to incorporate environmental messaging in their marketing.

NPGA Tools and Resources Available for Peak Demand Season

With extreme cold weather currently in many parts of the United States expected to persist for the coming weeks, peak demand season has finally arrived. The propane industry, through the National Propane Gas Association and state/regional propane associations, are communicating with state and federal governments to ensure propane customers can be refueled safely despite challenging weather conditions. NPGA, along with our partners at IHS Markit, continue to monitor the propane production, exports, and available inventory. At the NPGA Winter Board Meeting, Darryl Rogers of IHS Markit reported the U.S. propane market has tightened, with days of supply falling sharply to hit the 20-day mark. IHS Markit expects the propane market to bottom out in February. [Click here for the IHS Markit presentation.](#)

As a reminder, NPGA offers a number of resources to facilitate your ability to responsibly plan for supply during these times, including:

- Access to NPGA’s [Propane Logistics Analysis Network](#) tool on your desktop or through the NPGAction app. Submit wait times at terminals and help inform the industry!
- Updated information on state and federal [hours of service waivers](#).

- Supply and logistics information on [NPGA's Member Dashboard](#), including a supply planning white paper, the handy ABCs of Supply Preparation, access to last summer's "Preparing for Peak Demand" webinar series, and updated supply and demand information from IHS Markit.

Questions? Contact NPGA's [Lesley Garland](#).

Technology, Standards and Safety Update

The Board of Directors took action on two proposals from NPGA's Technology, Standards and Safety (TS&S) Committee.

First, the Board approved a committee proposal that would be submitted to the National Fuel Gas Code (NFPA 54). The proposal will allow NFPA 54 to harmonize with NFPA 58 with respect to venting regulators. NFPA 58 permits the use of rigid PVC that conforms to UL 651 to be used as a means to vent regulators and to be installed indoors, which is a practice currently prohibited by NFPA 54.

The Board also approved a proposal to the NFPA Standard for Powered Industrial Trucks (NFPA 505). The proposal will bring NFPA 505 into alignment with NFPA 58 with respect to the refueling of containers mounted on industrial forklift trucks. NFPA 58 permits refueling to take place while the container is still on the vehicle, whereas NFPA 505 currently requires the container to be removed prior to it being refilled.

Finally, it was noted that the processing of the 2023 edition of NFPA 58 will begin this month and that the International Codes Council will be entering a new development cycle that will result in the 2023 editions of those codes.

Manufacturers Section

The Manufacturers Section met with Chairman Rick LaDue presiding and discussed several current topics related to technical and regulatory activities. The section members were informed on NFPA 58 entering a revision cycle, and issues related to food trucks, fuel gas detectors, cannabis processing and unvented heaters.

PAC Report

PropanePAC Steering Committee Chair Chad Kroening highlighted the PAC's recent success, noting that in light of the challenges brought on by COVID-19 the 2020 election cycle was the best fundraising period in nearly two decades. He invited all to review the PAC's annual report, [which can be found here](#).

The success of 2020 indicated that there is an enthusiasm within the association for political action. Seeking to build on the momentum of the previous year, Mr. Kroening announced that NPGA is launching a new political affairs program which seeks to better align political action, grassroots advocacy, and volunteer engagement in federal affairs. This new program is open and free to all NPGA members, and enrollment in the program can be done on PropanePAC's website, www.npga.org/propanepac.

Mr. Kroening also notified the Board the steering committee had decided to pause all political giving for 30 days. This suspension is due to recent political fallout against business and trade association PACs from the events of January 6 on Capitol Hill. The steering committee will revisit this issue soon and fully expects to again have the PAC be a vital tool in NPGA's advocacy.

PropanePAC

PropanePAC was pleased to welcome Lisa Kontoupes of KDCR Partners to be its premiere *Propane, Politics, and Coffee* speaker of 2021. A seasoned veteran of Washington, D.C. and Democratic priorities, Ms. Kontoupes painted a thorough picture of the political make up of Congress and the new administration to members of NPGA's new political affairs program. Given the incredibly thin margins of Democratic control in both the House and Senate, she noted that it is highly unlikely significant legislation tackling climate change (Green New Deal) is forthcoming. While important for the party, climate change legislation was never a defining issue for President Biden when he was a senator. Additionally, the moderate Democratic senator from West Virginia, Joe Manchin, is a vocal defender of his state's coal industry and its workers. Therefore, action to address climate change will most likely occur through executive orders and administrative action. This gives the propane industry time to promote its benefits to lawmakers.

Member Services Committee

The Member Services Committee heard from NPGA staff about an ambitious plan to contact all association members in 2021. Additionally, all lapsed members from 2015 to the present will be contacted to determine why they left the association and to invite them to rejoin. NPGA has added Andrea Pavon, Manager, Member Services, Recruiting & Retention, to coordinate these efforts.

The NPGA Board of Directors approved the addition of four new affinity programs, which will begin in March.

AssociationStores.com – NPGA branded gear
A.R.M. Solutions – debt collection
Colonial Life – supplemental insurance
Constant Contact – email marketing for small businesses

Conventions Committee

The Conventions Committee reviewed the shifting of the 2021 Southeastern Convention & International Propane Expo from April to October 18-20, taking place at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme is: ***United in Meeting Today's Challenges: The Promise of Propane.*** Additionally, the group discussed the education program which will include the 2020 speakers who were selected by the education task force last year. A keynote speaker search is currently underway.

The group reviewed the challenges of holding the Expo in October as opposed to April, and the possibility of it being a smaller event than pre-COVID times. Exhibitor and sponsorship sales are expected to start in mid-spring, with the opening of registration and housing to follow shortly thereafter.

Women in Propane

The Women in Propane Council had a great turnout for their Power Hour session "Measure to Manage." Steven Abbate, owner of Cetane Associates LLC, gave an engaging presentation which focused on important business measurements while avoiding paralysis by analysis. Attendees learned about making their businesses more profitable and increasing its overall value.

Thanks to our Sponsors!



NPGA is grateful for contributions received from our sponsors in support of the NPGA Winter Board of Directors Meeting and related Committee & Section Meetings.