

RECOGNIZING THE SMELL OF PROPANE

Propane has a strong, unpleasant smell like rotten eggs, a skunk's spray, or a dead animal. Propane manufacturers add the smell deliberately to help alert customers to propane leaks, which can create a safety hazard.

TAKE THE SNIFF TEST. Teach everyone in your home or building what propane smells like. You can use the blue circle on the page opposite of the inside front cover. Or, ask your propane retailer for a demonstration.

CAN YOU SMELL IT?



It may be hard for some people to smell propane for the following reasons:

- They have a cold, allergies, sinus congestion, or another medical condition.
- Their sense of smell is reduced due to use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
- Tobacco smoke, cooking odors, and other strong odors can mask the smell of propane.
- As people age, their sense of smell can become less sensitive.
- If the smell of propane is present in the air over a period of time, “odor fatigue” can occur. The nose “gets tired,” and a person no longer smells the propane odor.
- The propane smell may not be strong enough to wake up someone who is sleeping.
- The propane smell may be in a location (basement or attic) where it is not detected by people in other areas of the building.
- A phenomenon called “odor fade” can occur—an unintended reduction in the concentration of the odor of propane (as explained on page 8).

ODOR FADE

ODOR FADE ALSO CAN DIMINISH PROPANE'S SMELL.

Odor fade is an unintended reduction in the concentration of the odor of propane, making it more difficult to smell. Although rare, several situations can cause odor fade:

- Air, water, or rust in a propane tank or cylinder can reduce propane odor concentration.
- If the propane is leaking underground, its passage through soil may reduce the smell of propane.
- The propane odor may stick to the inside surfaces of gas piping and distribution systems and possibly other materials.



Since there is a possibility of odor fade or problems with your sense of smell, you should respond immediately to even a faint odor of gas.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED that you or others in your home may have difficulty smelling propane, consider buying one or more propane gas detectors.

PROPANE GAS DETECTORS



CONSIDER INSTALLING GAS DETECTORS.

- Propane gas detectors are designed to sound an alarm if they sense the presence of propane. Their operation does not depend on the concentration of odorant in the air, just the propane concentration at the detector.
- We recommend that you consider installing one or more propane gas detectors. This is important if you or others in your home have difficulty smelling propane, or if appliances are in little-used areas in your home where the smell of propane might not be detected. Detectors can provide an additional measure of security.

DETECTOR QUALITY IS IMPORTANT. Be sure the units you buy are listed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). To be sure propane gas detectors operate properly, install and maintain them as the manufacturer recommends.

TRUST YOUR NOSE. Never ignore the smell of propane, even if no detector is sounding an alarm to signal the presence of propane. However, if a detector is sounding an alarm, treat it as an emergency and act immediately, even if you do not smell the propane.

CHECK YOUR PROPANE SYSTEM. Even if you install gas detectors, have a qualified service technician inspect your propane system and propane appliances periodically.