LP GAS SAFETY

What is LP Gas?

LP Gas (or Liquified Petroleum Gas) is derived from 2 principal sources. It is extracted with crude oil/gas from the earth, or it is produced during the refining process.

The two most common LP gases are Propane and Butane. LP Gas is widely used as a domestic fuel because it is convenient, relatively inexpensive and safe when handled correctly. As with any fuel however, certain simple safety precautions must be observed in its use.

LP Gas is Flammable

Characteristics of LP Gas

LP Gas is usually stored as a liquid under pressure. When released into the atmosphere at any temperature above its boiling point (-42oC for Propane and 0oC for Butane) it will change from a liquid to vapour. Liquid LPG on bare skin causes frostbite.

LP Gas is heavier than air. In both its liquid and vapour states, it is colourless and odourless. Odourising agent is usually added to it to ensure that any leakage can be detected by smell.

LP Gas is considered to be non-toxic, but may have some anaesthetic effect if inhaled in high concentrations.

Safety Tips

1. When using LP Gas appliances or equipment, always follow manufacturer's directions and maintain in a clean and undamaged condition.

2. Before operating equipment, ensure connections are tight. If there is any leakage, turn off and check connections. Do not operate until leak is fixed.

3. Be aware that if a leak has occurred, LP Gas is heavier than air and will therefore settle in low spots such as cellars or drains. Ventilate well.

4. Do not overfill cylinders. The usual maximum filling ratio is about 80% of volume. LP Gas expands as the temperature rises, and unless sufficient space is available to permit this expansion, the container could become over-pressurised.

5. Keep cylinders upright, even when empty, to ensure the pressure relief valve can operate effectively. A cylinder lying horizontally and involved in fire is more likely to burst.

6. Ensure that the pressure relief valve is pointed away from the structure supporting the cylinder, in case the relief valve operates and the discharge ignites.

7. Protect cylinders from direct sun. On extremely hot days, if the relief valve operates, cool the cylinder with water.

8. Keep cylinders clear of rubbish or brush. Any fire around the cylinder will increase the pressure within.

9. When using a gas barbecue or other LP Gas equipment outdoors, be sure the area is clear and free from any ground fuel or litter that may ignite in the event of a fire.

10. Where possible, secure portable cylinders. If the relief valve operates, unsecured cylinders could move about rapidly and erratically due to jet reaction.

Follow these simple precautions to ensure your safety when using LP Gas. If a leak or a fire occurs when using LP Gas equipment, call 000 (triple zero).