

PROPANE TANK HANDLING

Propane as a liquid petroleum gas (LPG) is commonly used fuel for forklifts. It is a safe fuel when handled properly. When handled improperly, it can cause serious injury or death.

Potential Hazards

- LPG vapor is heavier than air and will seek the lowest lying area. If not adequately dissipated, it will collect in pockets and possibly ignite when exposed to a heat source.
- LPG is extremely flammable.
- LPG is extremely cold when exposed to the atmosphere. If your skin is exposed to LPG, you can get frostbite.

To Replace a LPG Cylinder:

1. Park the truck in a designated safe area and stop the engine.
2. Don appropriate PPE.
3. Close the cylinder valve and remove the coupling from the cylinder.
4. Remove the empty cylinder from the cradle holding device and store in a designated area.
5. Select a full cylinder and inspect it for damage. A cylinder with a fuel level gauge is preferred to allow the operator to quickly identify how much fuel is available.
6. Inspect the fuel lines and couplings on the truck. Inspection of the washers and o-rings for damage or signs of aging is critical.
7. Verify the cylinder valve is closed prior connecting.
8. Carefully install the filled cylinder in the cradle on the truck so the cylinder locator pin (if equipped) enters the locating hole in the cylinder collar and the pressure relief valve is oriented upward (see diagram). Note that a full forklift propane cylinder can weigh 50 to 70 pounds. Proper lifting techniques minimize the risk of a lower back injury. A “team-lift” is recommended.
9. Reconnect the fuel line to the cylinder valve and open valve slowly while still wearing appropriate PPE.
10. Check for leaks. If a leak is found, close the valve immediately and notify your supervisor.

To Properly Store LPG Cylinders:

1. Store LPG cylinders in a designated approved location.
2. Cylinders must be secured against tampering and damage.
3. Do not store cylinders or park propane forklifts near heat sources, sources of ignition, stairways, exits, or other egress areas.
4. Store LPG cylinders and unattended forklifts with their service valves closed.

