

Safety Tip of the Month: June

RV SAFETY

NPGA Tips Help to Smooth Out the Road of Hard Knocks

The [Recreation Vehicle Industry Association \(RVIA\)](#) reports that there are nine million RVs on the road today. An additional 100,000 people become RV users each year. Many of them rely on propane gas for cooking, heating, water heating and engine fueling. NPGA recommends that RV owners use the following checklist to ensure a safe and worry free RV vacation season.

Step One: Have Your RV Inspected by a Professional.

No matter how many times much or how little the RV is used during the year, it should be taken to a qualified propane gas or RV dealer for an annual checkup to keep the system running properly.

The RV dealer or propane supplier will inspect the regulator, valves and fittings and check the system for leaks. Suppliers will also inspect the propane tank(s) for excessive rust and dents. Seriously dented or rusted tanks must be replaced immediately.

Become familiar with the odor of propane gas. Propane suppliers can teach RV owners how to recognize the 'rotten egg' smell of propane gas. Those who suffer from allergies or a poor sense of smell may want to install a gas detector.

Have your RV dealer inspect the appliances, air intake and exhaust vents. If the access doors and vents were covered to prevent insect infestation during the fall and winter, RV owners must remove the covers before using the appliance. If the covers are not removed, the gas will not burn properly, or it may not light at all because of improper ventilation.

Step Two: Take Care Of Your Tank.

Paint the propane tank a light, reflective color. If the tank has passed inspection by a propane supplier by a qualified professional, minor rust touchups can be performed by RV owners. Sand away the rust until the metal beneath is white and shiny, then prime and touch up with paint. Do not paint over the warning labels.

Always use the propane tank in its proper position. Arrows indicating the correct position are embossed in the metal of the tank. A horizontal tank should never be used in the vertical position and vice versa.

Step Three: Be Attentive While On The Road.

Follow proper refueling procedures at all fueling filling stations. When refueling, turn off the engine, all appliances and the electronic re-igniters. All passengers should exit the RV. After refueling is completed, turn on the gas and listen to the gas regulator. A continuous hissing sound indicates the presence of a leak. RV owners who believe their tank has a leak should follow the instructions on the tank and contact a propane dealer as soon as possible.

If you smell gas: (1) exit the camper/trailer and do not use any electric switches or appliances; (2) leave the door open to air out the vehicle; (3) shut off the propane tank; and (4) call a propane gas supplier or the fire department from a nearby phone.