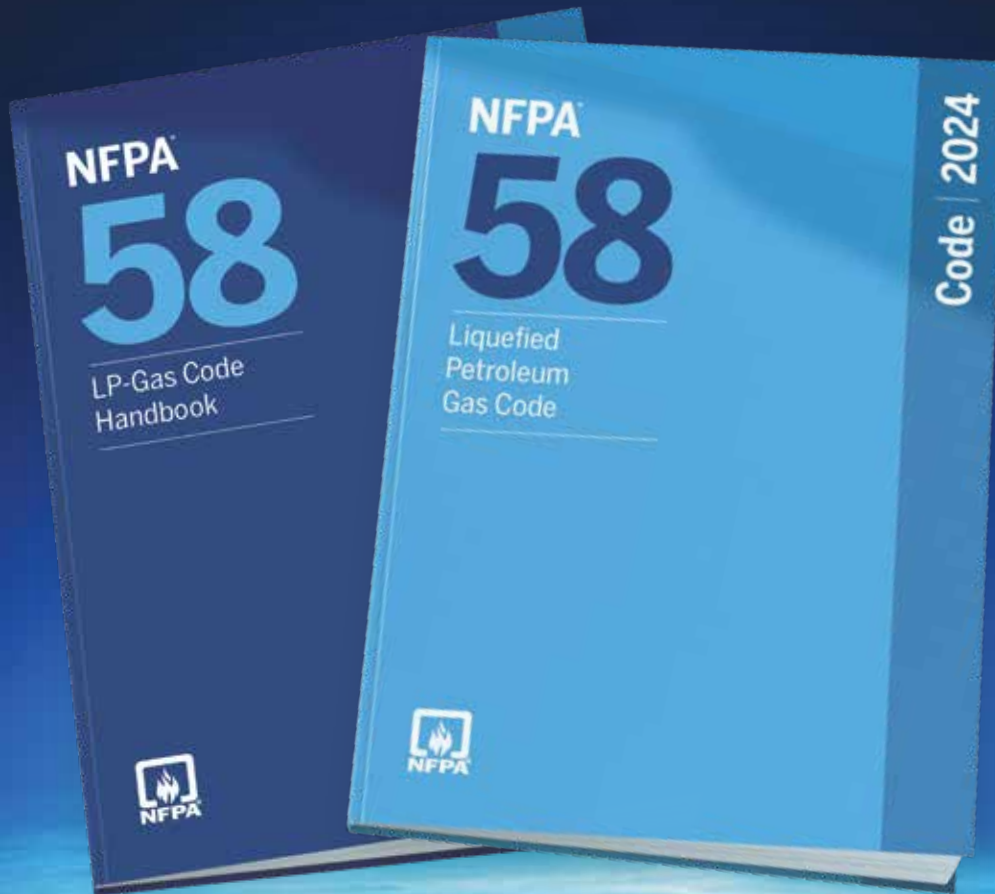


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NOVEMBER 2023

NEWS



2024 NFPA 58 IS NOW AVAILABLE

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BY TYLER MISEL,
SEPA CHAIRMAN

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

GREETINGS, MEMBERS!



With Thanksgiving right around the corner, it's always nice to think about being thankful for what we have and what we can share with those we care about. We're just about fully engaged in the winter months. All sorts of holiday traditions are right around the corner. We will have smoked three turkeys at my house by the time you receive this issue.

We have holiday festivities in each state coming up through December. If you've always wondered what the alliance is up to or want to network with other professionals in your state, the various holiday celebrations are a great place to start. In Georgia, I know we've invited close industry partners, including folks from an energy assistance program, members of the Insurance Commissioners Office, officials from the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the AHJ in Georgia.

There are always ways to get involved in our wonderful industry. I hope everyone has a safe and prosperous holiday season! 🔥

Thanks!

Tyler Misel

SEPA Chairman

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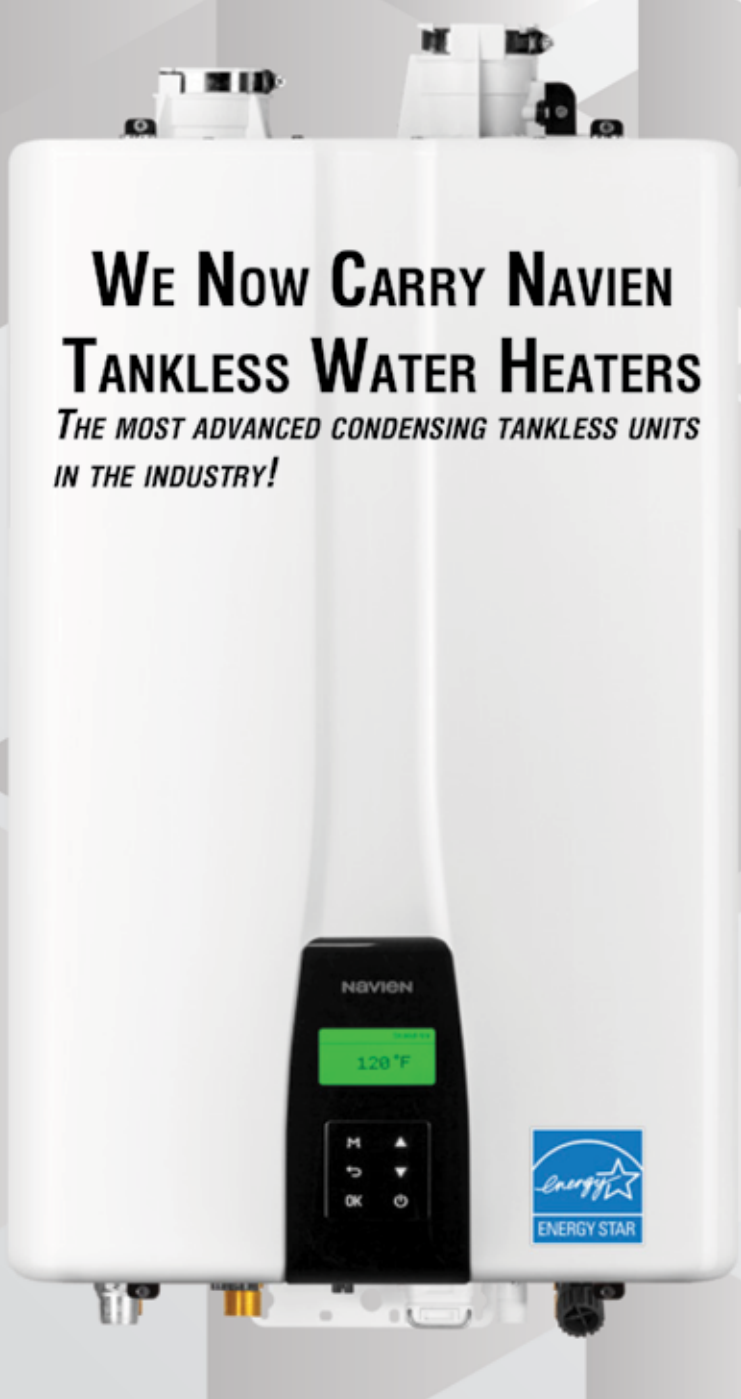
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TRAVELING IN OCTOBER TO RAISE PROPANE AWARENESS




It was a busy but productive month of travel in October.

My first stop was Livonia, Michigan, to tour the ROUSH manufacturing facility and talk autogas. It's an awesome facility. Amazing to see 1,000 bus engines run by propane stacked up and ready to go in a warehouse. It was great to see some of our other state executives in attendance at this event, such as Steve Ahrens, Dave Wager, Mike Rudd, and Tom Clark, and did some benchmarking with them and steal each other's good ideas good ideas.

The next stop was Providence, Rhode Island, for the PERC Advisory Council Meeting. It was a well attended meeting and covered way too many topics to cover in this short article. Along with the working groups, Tucker Perkins and his team are working very hard to promote awareness and create new ways to utilize propane. The most exciting and long time coming is the Heat Pump Helper. This proven hydronic, home-heating solution has been in the works for almost 10 years, and we are excited to see it finally ready for commercialization.



The last stop was Louisville, Kentucky, for the National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) Board Meeting. NPGA President and CEO, Steve Kaminski, and his team have their hands full with all the regulatory agencies trying to regulate us out of business. SEPA State Directors, Dan Richardson, James Harris, and Amy Dean are representing SEPA well on the NPGA Board. 

Thank you,

John Jessup

SEPA President and CEO



BY JOHN R. JESSUP,
SEPA PRESIDENT/CEO

REMINDER OF THE CODES FOR SAFE FILLING OF CYLINDERS



BY DAVE DONAHUE,
DIRECTOR OF
CODE COMPLIANCE

➤➤ **The start of the fall season** also signals the start of the second push for filling cylinders. This is a good time for you to review with your employees and dispenser operators some of the NFPA 58 code requirements for filling cylinders.

NFPA 58 Annex C—Design, Construction, and Requalification of DOT (ICC) Cylinders is a good area on the code for you to review. This section covers those items required by the CGA C-6, Standard for Visual Inspection of Steel Compressed Gas Cylinders.

There are other sections of the code that get less attention but are just as important.

NFPA 58 7.2.2.10

Prior to refilling a cylinder that has a cylinder sleeve, the cylinder sleeve shall be removed to facilitate the visual inspection of the cylinder.

This requirement was added to solve a problem created by the use of plastic sleeves by cylinder exchange companies. The sleeves contain product information and the necessary consumer warning information. It was discovered that many of the sleeves were being left on during the refilling process, making it impossible to see if the cylinder was corroding under the

sleeve, as shown in Exhibit 7.4. The sleeve can allow water to collect between it and the cylinder, causing corrosion. Requiring the sleeve to be removed before filling is a simple way to identify any corrosion.

NFPA 58 7.2.2.7 Damage.

- (A) Prior to filling cylinders with CGA 791 or CGA 793 connections, the face seal shall be visually inspected for visible damage.
- (B) If visible damage on the face seal is found, the cylinder shall not be filled.

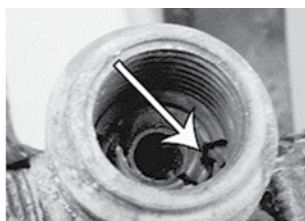
Section 7.2.2.7 was added in the 2020 edition. This inspection is intended to identify visible damage to the face seal, not just confirm whether the CGA 791 or CGA 79 connections are within tolerances.

Training materials on the pre-fill inspections of cylinders, including the face shields, can be found in the Propane Education and Research Council (PERC) program “Dispensing Propane Safely.”

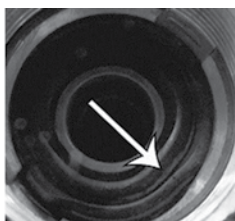
Cylinder safety begins with anyone who refills propane cylinders. Refresher training is not only a code requirement but the most important part of ensuring everyone has a safe and happy Autumn. 🔥



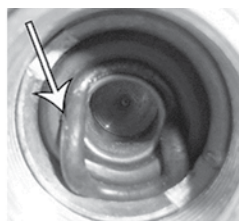
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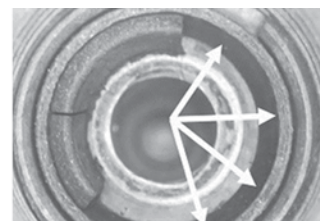
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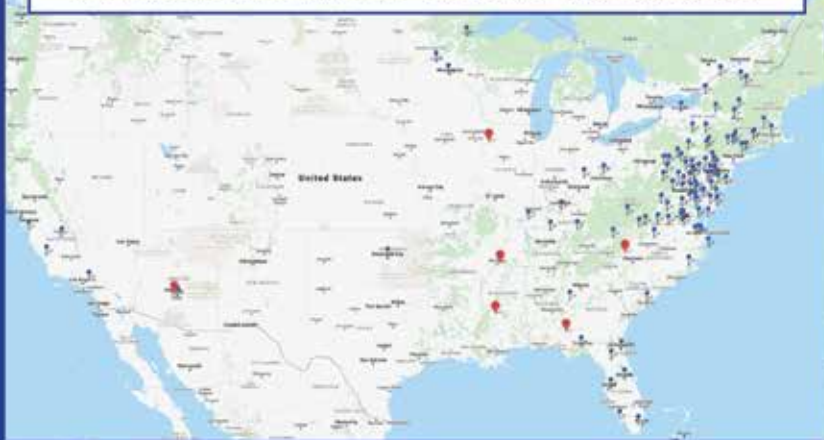
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BY RICHARD FREDENBURG,
NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES

EMPLOYEE SELF-CARE AND SAFETY GO HAND IN HAND

>> **This month**, I'm elaborating on a topic raised at the September Southeast Propane Alliance meetings in Asheville, NC. That topic is employees taking care of themselves while doing their jobs. I raised a concern at the Safety and Education Committee meeting involving a recent preventable death and got full support for taking on this safety issue. Here are some of the things discussed at that meeting.

Management must never insist or imply that an employee should take shortcuts that violate code requirements, traffic laws, DOT regulations, etc. I expect that there is never a written instruction that suggests that a cylinder examination not be conducted prior to filling. Similarly, suggestions to violate

the speed limit or to take a shortcut across an improper bridge to complete a route more quickly would never be documented. But has management ever given such instructions verbally, either directly or implied? We have heard rumors of such.

Instead, employees should be advised to properly perform their jobs with full attention to detail for safety requirements. It should be stressed that they must protect themselves (Watch out for No. 1!) so they can go home at the end of their shift. Management and employees must realize that a single "Aw, crap!" moment that results in an injury, accident, or death can wipe out months of shaving time and expense by ignoring requirements. And that

doesn't begin to address the suffering and anguish experienced by the employee, other staff members, and their families.

Chairman Donald Godfrey of the SEPA Education and Safety Committee also stated that all the injuries and deaths are preventable. That may be a stretch if you consider traffic accidents, but it's not far off. Some of the preventable incidents follow.

In August, there was a death of a bobtail driver who was asked to fill a forklift cylinder while he was filling some tanks for tobacco drying. It was an old, out-of-qualification steel cylinder. He was standing over the cylinder as he filled it. The bottom blew out because of corrosion, the cylinder launched and hit him, and he died. There was no fire. Some companies forbid filling small cylinders from bobtails because of the higher pressure imposed on the cylinder and wear on the pump. This death could have been prevented by examining the cylinder for corrosion before filling, likely leading to a refusal to fill it and by not standing over the cylinder while filling it.

We received a report several years ago that a 100-pound cylinder on its side in a pick-up truck bed covered by a camper shell blew out its bottom while it was being filled, filling the camper shell with propane, which flowed out onto the people. This cylinder was also improperly examined before filling, possibly because they didn't want to lift it back into the truck bed. I can't conceive how they would know when it was full since the bleed valve wouldn't indicate properly, and no scale was used. If they knew it was empty, then a meter would be an indicator. This also raises the question of how they would properly transport the cylinder with the relief valve in communication with the vapor space under this short cover.


These 100-pound cylinders are in use in so many ways, including:

- They serve part-time residences at the coast or mountains for fireplaces and stoves.
- They are on food trucks and trailers.
- They often serve labs and jewelers for their torches.
- They serve the needs of small loads at many residences.

They are heavy when empty (~75 pounds) and more so when full (~175 pounds). Moving them off or out of their mounted position should be a two-person job for back safety. This makes it easy to ignore the bottom of these cylinders, as they are often mounted, so viewing the bottom is difficult to impossible to see without significant effort. Does that relieve the filler from examining the bottom before filling? No!


We have many reports of these cylinders launching from dispensers and beside houses as they are being filled. One of these out-of-date cylinders on a food truck in Philadelphia launched, remarkably not while it was being filled, and the propane left behind immediately ignited, severely burning and eventually killing the two cooks inside.

Another death occurred some years ago when an ASME tank set into a notch in a hill slipped down the hill, probably from the weight added during filling. The tank trapped the driver against a tree. This was a substitute driver who didn't know that the regular guy always approached from above the tank. The earth beneath the concrete blocks had been eroded by rain, so the tank was not on a stable surface. A note in the record for this tank could have prevented this death. Better yet, a thorough examination of the tank and its footing condition should have been conducted before filling it.

 **Employees should be advised to properly perform their jobs with full attention to detail for safety requirements.**

I had a personal grill cylinder filled many years ago before I had this job or knew anything about the risks involved in dispensing. The convenience store was busy, and a customer friend of the clerk offered to fill my cylinder for the busy clerk's convenience. Was this volunteer properly trained? I don't know, but likely not. I could have been one of those people standing beside a cylinder when Murphy's Law kicks in.

I have often witnessed lackadaisical attitudes by dispenser operators. Maybe they had to come out in bad weather to fill a grill cylinder. Maybe the fill request was interrupted, helping an important customer. I'll share again a quote from an inspector some years ago. The dispenser operator told him, "I would have paid more attention [to my training] if I'd known I'd be tested."

Are you seeing a trend here? I'm alluding to these events almost always happening when the container is being filled. That means the driver or dispenser operator is likely standing beside the container when something goes bad. Being right there, they are the ones most likely to be affected. Do the drivers and fillers think about this? They should. One equipment supplier created a label after the SEPA meeting for the back of bobtails to remind drivers of their duties to protect themselves. It should be emphasized in their training, along with ways to help ensure they don't become a statistic. Managers, are you willing to conspicuously take this positive step? 



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MIC DROP



BY JESSICA JOHNSON,
SEPA AMBASSADOR FOR THE
WOMEN IN PROPANE COUNCIL



JOHN PENA SITS DOWN WITH WOMEN IN PROPANE TO DISCUSS LEADERSHIP, EMPOWERMENT, AND WHAT HE KEEPS IN THE TRUNK OF HIS CAR...

>> No stranger to taking the lead, John Pena has spent most of his life serving his family, his country, and now the Southeast Propane Alliance Technical Education Center (SEPATEC) as the Director of Education. His passion for communication and leadership is clear in everything he does, which is evident in SEPATEC's latest student housing initiative, which supports SEPATEC students with free housing while they are enrolled. Pena and his team have worked tirelessly over the past year to secure housing for SEPATEC students while they are enrolled in the training program. This five-bedroom uptown retreat in Burlington, NC, is a much-needed support for service members, veterans, and all students attending classes at the training center.

Pena recently sat down with hosts Freddie Ridler (Rural Computer Consultants) and Bridget Kidd (PERC) on a new episode of the Women in Propane Council's podcast, "Through the Leadership Lens," to talk about his life experiences and how they have shaped and inspired his leadership journey.

As the oldest of five siblings, Pena was a natural-born leader from the start, which prepared him for his incredible 30-year career in the military. In this episode, Pena shares how his military deployment was pivotal in shaping him as a leader and how he empowers his team and those around him at SEPATEC today. He shares, "It's easy leading when all the conditions are perfect. I really feel that leaders don't embrace the opportunities they have when they have setbacks, shortcomings when they fall and fail." He also shares lessons he has learned from his mentors and what he focuses on during his day-to-day activities, which allow him to continually evolve as a leader.

To hear this episode and more like it, you can stream "Through the Leadership Lens" on YouTube and Spotify and visit www.womeninpropane.org. To learn more about NPGA's Women in Propane Council and the "Through the Leadership Lens" podcast, visit www.womeninpropane.org or email info@npga.org.

Regards,

Jessica Johnson

ThompsonGas
SEPA Ambassador for the
Women in Propane Council

Jessica Johnson is the administrator of growth projects at ThompsonGas, where she is active

in their Emerging Leaders program. Johnson is also the chair of the Women in Propane Council's Communications & Marketing Committee. She is the creator and executive producer of Women in Propane's podcast "Through the Leadership Lens." Johnson also serves as a Women in Propane State Ambassador to the Southeastern Propane Alliance.



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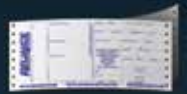
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BY TODD MOUW,
PRESIDENT,
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12

TRUTHS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PROPANE AUTOGAS

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>> In the ongoing conversation about clean transportation, we continue to see push-back from various players on the true value of anything but electric vehicles as the right choice for businesses and schools to green their fleets.

At Roush, we are heavily involved with all emerging clean mobility options, from battery electric vehicles to hydrogen fuel cells, propane, natural gas, and a variety of hybrids. From a technical and engineering perspective, we're in a great position to understand and share the pros and cons of each fuel type.

I can confidently tell you that the false sweeping statements about propane autogas don't hold up. With that in mind, I think it's important to share 12 truths that fleet operators working directly with Class 4 to 7 vehicles should know about propane autogas.

1 Propane is affordable. It costs about 50% less than diesel and 40% less than gasoline per gallon.

2 Propane loves cold weather. With propane autogas, there is no risk of "gelling" like with diesel.

3 Propane vehicles, such as school buses, can have a range of up to 400 miles on a single fueling without sacrificing towing capacity or reliability.

4 Propane vehicles fuel up at a similar rate to gasoline and diesel vehicles—about eight gallons per minute.

5 Propane is classified as a clean alternative fuel. Propane vehicles reduce smog-producing emissions, virtually eliminate particulate matter, and lower nitrogen oxides by 95% compared with diesel.

6 Vehicles powered by propane are safe to maintain. In fact, the American

Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees recommends replacing diesel-fueled engines with propane-fueled engines to improve the safety of work environments.

7 Propane is popular around the world and has staying power. There are currently 27 million propane-powered vehicles operating across the globe.

8 Propane vehicles offer the lowest total cost of ownership of any fuel—conventional or alternative.

9 The purchase price of a propane vehicle isn't much higher than a diesel vehicle. The initial additional expense is quickly recuperated through fuel and maintenance savings and access to incentive programs, including the 2021 infrastructure bill, government grants, VW settlement funding, market-based incentives and alternative fuel tax credits.

10 Propane autogas has an established public fueling infrastructure across the country, with fueling stations in every state. On-site and mobile fueling options are also available at low- and no-cost.

11 Finding a technician for propane vehicles is easy. There are more than 750 service centers across the United States and Canada.

12 Maintenance teams can easily be trained to work on propane vehicles. Many technicians who work on propane vehicles report a more enjoyable work experience compared with diesel.

I truly believe that most emerging fuel types should and will play a vital role in transforming the future of the transportation landscape and creating energy resiliency. But when we talk about the most important step we can take right now, it's this: remove as many outdated diesel vehicles from the roads as soon as possible.

Propane can help us take that next step—today. Propane is a readily available, affordable, and uncomplicated vehicle fuel solution for today's economy. 🔥

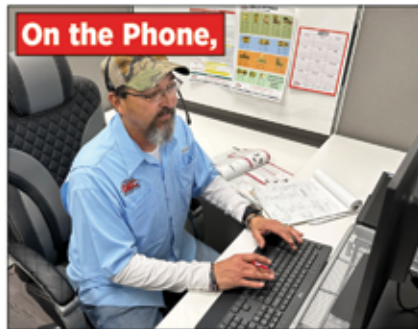
Todd Mouw is the executive vice president of sales and marketing of ROUSH CleanTech, an industry leader in advanced clean vehicle technology. Mouw has more than two decades of experience in the automotive and high-tech industries. As former president of the NTEA Green Truck Association, Mouw helped set standards in the green trucking industry. To learn more, visit ROUSHcleantech.com.

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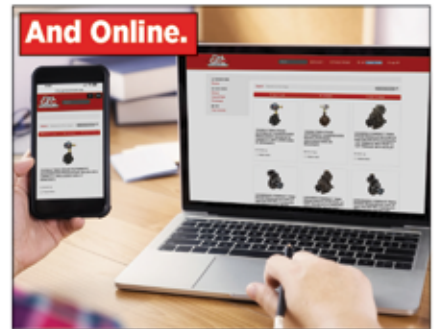
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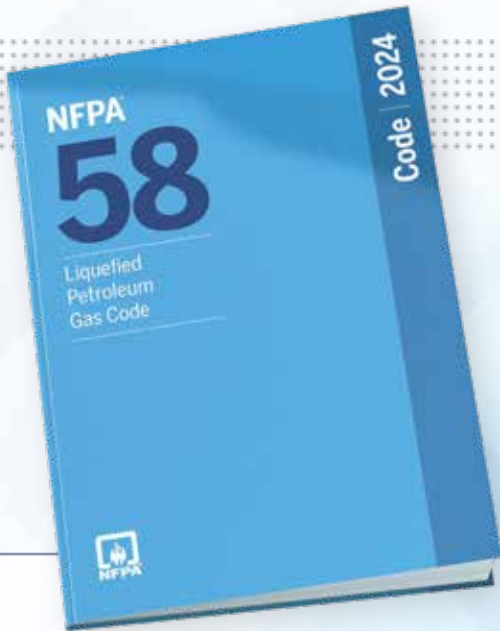
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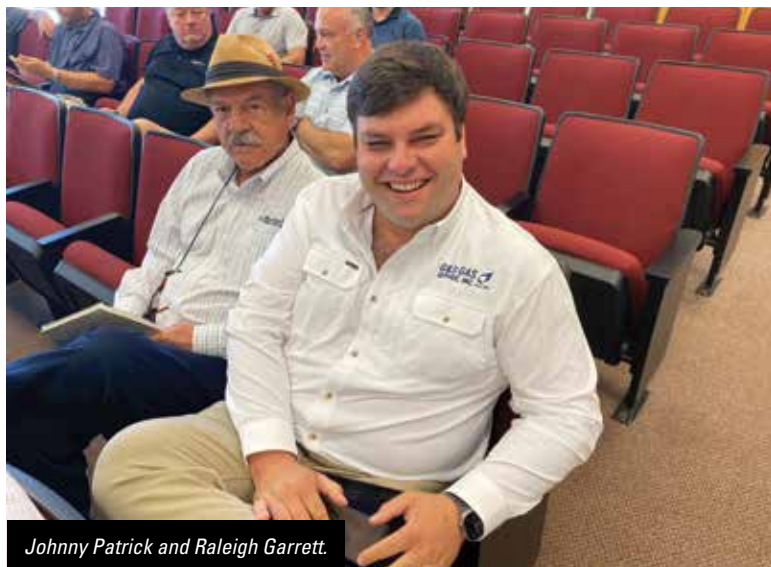
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SEPA HELPING MEMBERS WORK WITH LOCAL AHJ'S

>> SEPA staff David Donahue and Jason Pritchett from the State Fire Marshal Office along with several members met with Green County officials on the subject of the county restricting the use of CSST within their jurisdiction. We would like to thank Robert Shepperd for bringing this issue to our attention. Please reach out to the association with any such issues you may be having within your service areas. 



Robert Shepperd and the crew from Liberty Propane.



Johnny Patrick and Raleigh Garrett.



Bill Ard, Raleigh Garrett and Robert Hernandez.

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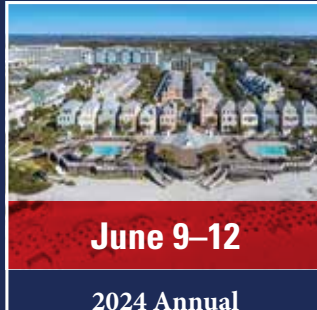
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