



# Connecticut 20-pound Propane Gas Cylinder Stewardship Plan

*June 2023*

Submitted by:  
Propane Gas Association of New England  
Leslie Anderson  
President & CEO

Submitted to:  
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection  
Tom Metzner  
Environmental Analyst

## **Introduction**

In 2022, Connecticut passed the first statewide extended producer responsibility (EPR) law for certain gas cylinders in the United States, Public Act 20-27. This legislation came to fruition with support from gas cylinder manufacturers and input from stakeholders including local governments, retailers, propane distributors, state parks, private campgrounds, waste management service providers, and propane distributors. This legislation will create a safe and sustainable management system statewide for gas cylinders, funded by gas cylinder manufacturers who will ensure the safe and responsible refill of gas cylinders along with their ultimate disposal once they are unable to be viably reused.

In response to PA 20-27 manufacturers, distributors, and propane exchange service providers for 20-pound propane cylinders in Connecticut decided to form a stewardship program under the Propane Gas Association of New England for the collection and processing of 20-pound propane gas cylinders. This plan was developed exclusively to cover PGANE members' obligations to provide for the collection, transportation, processing, and outreach for 20-pound propane gas cylinders.

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## Minimization of Public Sector Involvement in the Management of Discarded Cylinders *(Attachment A)*

The Propane Gas Association of New England (PGANE) will be representing producers of 20-pound propane gas cylinders to ensure compliance with Connecticut's Extended Producer Responsibility for Certain Gas Cylinders law. PGANE is a non-profit regional alternative energy trade association representing members of the propane industry in six New England States. PGANE has a diverse group of members, from some of the nation's largest propane companies to numerous small, often family-owned and operated, propane companies. Some of PGANE's core activities include educating the public about propane's environmental and health benefits, lobbying on behalf of the propane industry in New England, expanding propane markets and use, ensuring compliance with standards, promoting thought leadership to encourage innovation in the industry, and helping implement sound business practices among their member companies.

PGANE's primary goal for this program is to minimize public sector involvement in the management of unwanted 20-pound propane gas cylinders by insuring that unwanted 20-pound propane cylinders are managed in the existing cylinder propane exchange programs. A robust infrastructure for the collection, exchange, refill, refurbishment, and recycling of 20-pound propane cylinders is supported in Connecticut by hundreds of exchange locations. One manufacturer alone currently has 671 exchanges locations in Connecticut. Directing unwanted cylinders into the exchange system via retail locations and requesting pick-ups from eligible entities as defined in PA 20-27 will ensure that cylinders are safely handled and refurbished or recycled.

PGANE's members have a strong environmental and economic incentive to collect 20-pound propane cylinders. Exchange systems reduce the carbon footprint of the propane industry by encouraging reuse of cylinders and ensuring proper recycling at end of life. New cylinders are expensive to manufacture, consistently in high demand, have a long service life (minimum of 12 years), can easily be refurbished, and when properly managed can be easily recycled. These economic and environmental conditions have

created the robust exchange network present at most outdoor recreation retailers, hardware stores, grocery stores, and convenience stores. All cylinders that enter PGANE members' exchange programs are properly transported, evaluated, and refilled, refurbished, or recycled.



Figure 1: Blue Rhino Exchange Cage

PGANE will work to educate the public and eligible entities about the importance and convenience of returning unwanted 20-pound propane cylinder to exchange locations. PGANE is also working with the Propane Education and Research Council and PGANE members to ensure the program has the initial funds needed to launch the program. PGANE will work to develop a membership model to support program operations during the first 2-year implementation period.

## Provisions for Free, Convenient, and Accessible State-wide Opportunities for the Receipt of Gas Cylinders *(Attachment B)*

The current number and distribution of exchange locations provides a convenient and accessible state-wide network for Connecticut. Many locations are open 24 hours a day 7 days a week and most have on-site staff. Currently PGANE members have at least one exchange location in all 169 towns of Connecticut. The primary means of collecting cylinders is via collection cages deployed outside of retail locations. PGANE is developing educational programming and materials to ensure exchange locations are aware that any 20-pound propane cylinder should be accepted at no cost to the consumer regardless of the cylinders manufacturer or exchange program branding. The list of current exchange sites can be found via the following links:

- [Blue Rhino](#)
- [Hocon Gas](#)
- [AmeriGas](#)
- [Paraco](#)

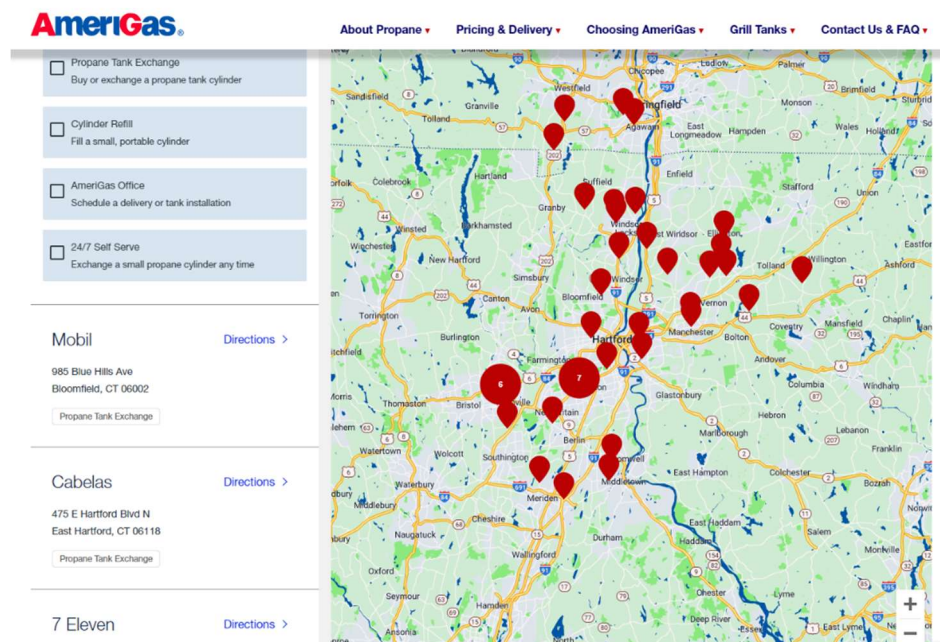


Figure 2: AmeriGas Online Exchange Locater Map

PGANE is developing materials (flyers, posters, social media post) that will be distributed to eligible entities to educate 20-pound propane cylinder users about how they can return their unwanted cylinders. Towns wishing to collect 20-pound cylinders will be able to contact PGANE directly to determine how collection services could be provided. PGANE is aware that there is slight leakage of 20-pound cylinders from the exchange system and that unwanted cylinders may end up in the possession of transfer stations, HHW facilities, state parks, and scrap metal yards. PGANE will maintain and promote a single point of contact via a toll-free number and website for eligible entities to directly contact PGANE staff to schedule a pick-up of unwanted cylinders.

### **Provisions for Pick-up of Discarded Gas Cylinders from Eligible Entities**

*(Attachment C)*

Eligible Entities that have unwanted 20-pound propane cylinders will be able to contact PGANE via a toll-free number, or electronically through the website/email. PGANE will schedule a pick-up of the cylinders by one of its members within three to four weeks of receiving the request. Eligible entities will be educated by PGANE on how to store the cylinders while waiting for pick-up (upright, outside, away from other materials NFPA 58 5-2.1.1). All unwanted cylinders requested for pick-up will be loaded and transported by an existing exchange program. PGANE's exchange members will ensure tanks are secured on a flat surface or in racks, and in an upright position to minimize movement to each other or the vehicle. Tanks are determined to be leak free before loading into vehicle (NFPA 58 6-2.2.6). PGANE's members trucks are placarded with the international propane symbol as required by the Department of Transportation to transport more than twenty-five 20-pound propane cylinders. All deployed drivers for pick-up request will have the required CDL with Hazmat endorsement.

### **Provisions for the Transport and Management of Discarded Gas Cylinders**

*(Attachment D)*

PGANE staff will handle incoming requests for pick-up of unwanted cylinders in possession of eligible entities. PGANE staff will assign the pick-up to a certified propane exchange service provider. Propane services that will provide pick-up service include Blue Rhino, AmeriGas, Paraco Gas, and Hocon Gas.



Figure 3: AmeriGas Cylinder Exchange Truck

### **Provisions for Refilling or Recycling Cylinders and Capturing Residual Gases for Reuse** *(Attachment E)*

Cylinders managed by PGANE’s program will be transported to the facilities used by the owner of the exchange cage or pick-up service provider they are returned to. All residual gases are captured before refurbishment or recycling. Local refurbishment and refill facilities are maintained by exchange company members in Connecticut and nearby states. A small percentage of tanks that are not refurbished and refilled are sent to recycling centers in Connecticut and nearby states.

### **Performance Goals for Years One and Two of the Gas Cylinder Stewardship Program** *(Attachment F)*

PGANE’s primary goal for this program is to decrease the leakage of 20-pound cylinders into the municipal waste/recycling stream. PGANE will track the number of requests for cylinders to be picked up from covered entities and the number cylinders picked up from each location. PGANE will set a baseline based on the for first two years or program implementation for requests for pick-up and number of unwanted cylinders collected. Any cylinder entering the program will be evaluated and either refilled, refurbished, or recycled. The vast majority of 20-pound cylinders collected in the Northeast are sent to regional exchange centers for refurbishment and recycling, making it difficult to track the refurbishment and recycling rate for Connecticut cylinders alone. In addition, tanks sold in Connecticut often travel out of state and other state sales may enter Connecticut, due to the portable nature of these tanks and their usage in mobile vehicles such as RVs.

PGANE proposes the following performance goals for the first two years for the program.

1. Establishment of a website and toll-free number for the program.
2. Deployment of cage signage and staff education materials to all exchange’s locations.

3. Development and deployment of educational and promotional materials to eligible entities.

PGANE proposes the following performance goals for the first program year following the 2-year implementation period.

1. A 25% reduction from the 2-year initial baseline in the number of requests by eligible entities for pick-up of unwanted cylinders.
2. A 25% reduction in number of cylinders requested for pick-up from eligible entities.

### **Eligible Entities** *(Attachment G)*

Any Connecticut resident can drop off cylinders at any exchange location at no cost. Eligible entities including towns, other political subdivisions, transfer stations, HHW facilities, state park campgrounds, and private campgrounds will be able to contact PGANE to arrange pick-up for 24 or more cylinders.

### **Promotion for the Collection of Discarded Gas Cylinders** *(Attachment H)*

PGANE is working with Propane Education and Research Council to develop signage and training for exchange locations that clearly states that any unwanted 20-pound cylinder can be returned to any exchange location in Connecticut. PGANE is aware that staff turnover at many exchange locations can be high, and that training will need to be simple and ongoing. Additionally clear signage on cages will not only educate consumers but help remove confusion from exchange location staff about accepting unwanted cylinders from manufacturers other than the manufacturer that hosts that exchange site.

PGANE will fund and maintain a website for consumers to find information about properly disposing of their unwanted cylinders and provide links to collection/exchange location finders. Language on the website will clearly state that unwanted cylinders will be accepted at any exchange/collection location, regardless of the manufacturer. The website will be modeled after PGANE's current "[Propane Tank Recycling](#)" webpage.

### **Public Education** *(Attachment I)*

PGANE intends to increase consumer knowledge of the program by:

1. Installing signage directly on exchange cages that communicate that any unwanted 20-pound propane cylinder can be returned to any Connecticut exchange location.
2. Providing eligible entities with posters, factsheets, and promotional materials to educate their residents and users about the program.
3. Develop outreach digital materials to promote on websites and on social media.



## List of the Manufacturers Participating in this Plan *(Attachment J)*

### Exchange Service Providers

- All-Gas
  - Contact (800) 255 4277
  - Location: 3150 Main St. Hartford, CT 06120
- AmeriGas
  - Contact: Chris Wagner – [Christopher.wagner@amerigas.com](mailto:Christopher.wagner@amerigas.com)
- Hocon Gas
  - Contact: David Gable – [dgable@hocongas.com](mailto:dgable@hocongas.com)
- Paraco Gas
  - Contact: Dave Latourell – [David.Latourell@paracogas.com](mailto:David.Latourell@paracogas.com)
- Pioneer Gas & Appliances Co.
  - Contact: (203) 924 1618
  - Location: 3 Haviland Drive, Beacon Falls, CT 06403
- Blue Rhino
  - Contact: Jeff Dean – [jdean@bluerhino.com](mailto:jdean@bluerhino.com)
- U-Haul
  - Contact: Konrad Pilatowicz – [Konrad\\_Pilatowicz@uhaul.com](mailto:Konrad_Pilatowicz@uhaul.com)

### Manufacturers

- Worthington
  - Contact: Annie Lane – [annie.lane@worthingtonindustries.com](mailto:annie.lane@worthingtonindustries.com)
  - Location: 780 James P Casey Rd, Bristol, CT 06010
- Manchester Tank
  - Contact: Frank Lane – [frank.lane@mantank.com](mailto:frank.lane@mantank.com)
  - Location: No locations in CT
- Flame King
  - Contact: Sam Newman – [snewman@flameking.com](mailto:snewman@flameking.com)

### Retailers

- During the next six months, PGANE intends to reach out to retailers of 20-pound cylinders in Connecticut and encourage them to join our Product Stewardship Group. We request that the State of CT provide any inquiries from retailers to PGANE to assist us with the identifications of these entities.