

Protect Propane and Natural Gas Equipment

B.C. residents living in a flood zone should take precautions to protect propane equipment and natural gas piping and appliances in the event of a flood.

- If severe flooding is expected, and time allows, residents are advised to:
 - have a licensed contractor remove hot water tanks, clothes dryers and ranges;
 - cap gas piping leading to appliance shut off valves;
 - have a licensed gas contractor remove the electric motor, burner and controls from your furnace and shut off the gas or propane and the electrical supply; and
 - ask your propane supplier if your propane tank should be moved to higher ground or placed on blocks and secured to protect it from floodwaters. As propane is considerably less dense than water, even a full tank of propane is extremely buoyant. Tanks must be secured in flood conditions and only your propane supplier should move the tank.
- If there is no advance warning of flooding, or a licensed gas contractor is not available, residents should:
 - secure propane tanks and cylinders with wire rope or chain to stationary objects, such as a pole or building to prevent them from floating away;
 - turn off the service valve at the gas meter/propane tank and the gas or propane shut-off valve on all appliances;
 - turn off the electrical power to each appliance;
 - shut off the gas or propane supply valve to each appliance; and
 - shut off the water leading to and from the hot water tank, but leave the tank undrained.
- When returning home after a flood, residents are cautioned to check for a gas odour or other evidence of a gas leak. If a leak is suspected, extinguish all smoking materials and open flames and exit the building immediately. Do not touch electrical switches, light matches or use the phone. Turn off the gas valve on the meter or propane valve on the outside tank, meter or service area. Telephone the gas utility, propane supplier or the fire department from a neighbour's phone and, above all, do not re-enter until the building has been inspected. The natural gas or propane should only be turned back on by a qualified professional.
- A propane supplier or licensed gas contractor should inspect propane or natural gas powered vehicles or household appliances that have been underwater. Water damage to gas and propane equipment and appliances is not always readily apparent. A complete inspection of the entire system by a professional must be carried out before attempting to operate equipment.
- For additional information on natural gas, propane and flood safety contact your natural gas utility, local propane supplier or the Provincial Emergency Program in your region.