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Texas Propane Provider Trains Local Fire Departments About Propane and Propane Safety

*Sharp Propane Professionals Devote Time, Equipment and Expertise
to First Responders to Ensure Safety*

AUSTIN, Texas – May 2, 2013 – A major misconception about propane is that no matter what safety precautions are in place, it is a dangerous and explosive fuel in its natural state. Propane tanks do not explode because they get bumped or jostled, or because of an isolated leak, but instead require a source of ignition for any troubles to arise. When there is an issue, though, education and preparedness make all the difference, which is why Sharp Propane has made an active effort to educate and partner with local fire departments in both Bastrop and the Austin-area. This education complements other industry protocols put into place in order to manage situations involving propane, including the [Propane Emergencies Program](#) and the Propane Education and Research Council's [Certified Employee Training Program](#).

This spring [Sharp Propane](#) teamed up with the [Lake Travis Fire Rescue](#) department to provide a propane training and education program to more than 30 local first responders about the best ways to prevent, avoid and address the potential hazards of propane. At these training sessions, Sharp Propane provided the firefighters with information about isolating leaks and shutting off tanks, the locations of valves and other critical equipment on underground tanks and a run-down of the extensive safety features built into the bobtail trucks that deliver propane. Lake Travis Fire Rescue has participated in two Sharp Propane training sessions to-date, led by Sharp Propane professional, Frank Goree, along with Michael Bodine, Austin-based Sharp Propane area manager, and Propane Professional Cody Ruthven.

"We've developed relationships with these local departments because it's important that everyone be as educated about propane safety as possible in order to avoid and prevent something bad from happening," Goree said. "Oftentimes, firefighters are the first ones people call when they smell a gas or propane leak, and knowing how to properly identify and cut off those leaks can prevent a larger problem from happening. Whether it's our tank or anybody else's, we do this because we want to keep the industry from getting a black eye, and we want to keep everybody as safe as possible."

In 2012 Goree attended a hands-on education and training session through [Texas A&M's Engineering Extension Service](#) (TEEX) that was geared toward developing relationships between members of the propane industry and emergency responders. This training offered him further expertise on the importance of propane safety and education, and an understanding of how to best speak to firefighters about propane. "Education programs like that are really important because it gives both of us the chance to see and understand what the other one does," he said. "In an emergency, we deal with firefighters all the time. Through this training, the two different entities can work better together because we completely understand the other's protocol, and they understand aspects of the tanks that are important for them."

At this two-day training at A&M, Goree and other industry professionals learned about fire department protocol, different structures and their hazards, different spray patterns and more, while the firefighters were schooled on the aspects of a propane tank, bobtails

and pipe pinchers to better enable them to isolate and cut off a propane leak. The joint school combined traditional and hands-on experience, and, even though there were instructors for the course, the industry professionals soon became the teachers, just as Goree has gone on to utilize this experience for Sharp Propane.

Not only has Sharp Propane partnered with the Lake Travis Fire Rescue department, but they have also spent time educating the volunteer fire departments in Bastrop and Smithville. Most volunteer fire departments are at a disadvantage when it comes to training and education materials because they operate on a very limited budget, and sometimes cannot devote adequate funds to developing hazardous material training sessions. As such, Sharp Propane has been forthcoming with the Bastrop fire department, driving their trucks out to the fire station to go over the bobtail's safety features, and providing them with information about the basics of propane and propane safety.

Additionally, Sharp Propane employees volunteer at local fire departments and dedicate themselves to these efforts on a personal level outside of work as well. Goree serves as a volunteer with the Bastrop Fire Department, Cody Ruthven, a Sharp Propane employee that helped lead the Lake Travis Fire Rescue training session, is a volunteer with the Taylor Fire Department, while other Sharp Propane employees volunteer with the Pedernales Fire Department in Briarcliff and a local department in Bryan / College Station.

To learn more about Sharp Propane, please visit www.sharp propane.com or call 1-800-932-4315.

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About Sharp Propane

For more than 60 years, [Sharp Propane](http://www.sharp propane.com) has been supplying safe, energy-efficient propane and tanks to Central Texas. Sharp Propane is a leading service provider of residential and commercial propane systems providing customers an environmentally-friendly, safe, and reliable energy source for the way they live and work. The Propane Professionals® at Sharp are focused on putting customers first and setting industry standards for safety and service. Founded in 1949 in Smithville, Texas, Sharp is one of the largest propane dealers in the United States and the largest independent retailer of propane in Texas. Sharp is headquartered in Bastrop, Texas with operations also in Austin, Bryan, Fort Worth, and La Grange, Texas.

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