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Contact:

Kelsey Kemper | lookthinkmake
kelsey@lookthinkmake.com
(512) 402-6861

Sustainable, Low-Maintenance Outdoor Spaces Increasingly Popular, Profitable in Texas

Propane offers green, efficient alternative – fueling everything from pool heaters, outdoor kitchens, space heating and more

AUSTIN, Texas – July 7, 2014 – According to the Texas Association of Realtors' [2014 Texas Remodel Valuation Report](#), creating a backyard oasis or a livable outdoor space is one of the most popular and profitable home renovation projects among Texas homeowners – recouping almost 112% of the total project costs in added home values. Increasingly though, homeowners want more than just comfortable and attractive outdoor spaces, according to a 2014 study from the [American Society of Landscape Architects](#), they want their outdoor spaces to be sustainable and low-maintenance. And, to this end, propane can offer a valuable solution.

[Sharp Propane](#) – a propane service provider in five markets across Texas – realizes the potential for propane to power its customers' outdoor spaces and they use their expertise to help motivate and assist with their customers' outdoor renovation projects. In each of Sharp's service areas – Austin, Bastrop, College Station, Fort Worth and La Grange – Sharp works with homeowners and their landscape contractors to safely and efficiently incorporate outdoor appliances into customers' primary propane system. This includes every step of the propane installation process, from a review of your site plan to coordinating with the city on permitting and working with your contractor to ensure your project comes in on time and on budget.

By hooking up these propane appliances to the home's primary propane tank or installing a new tank, homeowners can relax and entertain in their outdoor living spaces without any stress or concern, because the propane seamlessly moves from tank to appliance with no homeowner thought or effort. Propane also gives homeowners peace of mind in that they are using a safe, green alternative energy source for all their outdoor needs. If measured by carbon footprint, propane is one of the greenest forms of energy available – it's cleaner burning than other petroleum-based products and emits less than half as many greenhouse gases as electricity generated in coal-based power plants. Additionally, propane is low-maintenance, energy-efficient and versatile enough to accommodate many aspects of outdoor spaces – from outdoor kitchens and lighting, to pool heating and more.

Some of the benefits of using propane over other energy sources in outdoor spaces include efficiency and speed. By using propane to heat a pool for example, homeowners enjoy a swimming season that stretches throughout the whole year, and propane heaters that warm water two times faster than electricity. Additionally, outdoor kitchens and grill features that use propane heat up faster than charcoal, and release less carbon monoxide and soot in the process.

A recent example of a backyard renovation project Sharp Propane helped complete is Patrick and Misty Watkins' outside of Austin in Bee Caves.

The Watkins' Austin-based outdoor landscaping contractor, Mark Bichler of [Pearson Landscaping](#), spent six months working on The Watkins' backyard renovation. "The Watkins' project was a full-scale upgrade to their backyard – essentially we built them a second outdoor house." Bichler said. "What they told me was, 'when the kids are here, we don't want them in the house,' so we built them an outdoor space that was virtually self-sufficient."

The Watkins' newly upgraded backyard features an outdoor bathroom that is plugged into the home's septic system; a complete outdoor kitchen with large burners, a grill, crawfish boiling pot and fireplace, all fueled by

propane; a pool and spa, both heated by propane; as well as landscaping and a stone deck that integrates and pulls together each of the backyard's disparate spaces.

"Because The Watkins' project incorporated so much propane into the design, we coordinated and met with Sharp eight or nine times over the course of the project and every experience was right on point," Bichler said. "Sharp even went above and beyond for the Watkins'. When we ran propane lines through the trenches below the kitchen, Sharp ran an extra line of pipe under the slab just in case they might want a fire pit over to the side or some other propane-related product there in the future."

The Watkins' home project is just one recent example of the outdoor renovations Sharp has helped coordinate and make a reality for their customers. In Justin, Texas, just outside of Fort Worth, Jenn and Joe Washam worked with Sharp to help make their pool and outdoor kitchen project a reality. "In our backyard we now have fire features thanks to propane, a fireplace run by propane, an outdoor kitchen run on propane with an outlet off the back for hooking up burners for crawfish boils and a pool and spa both heated with propane," Jenn Washam said. "Our builder [Klapprodt Pools](#) did a [time lapse video](#) of the entire project too. Sharp coordinated with Klapprodt on the blueprints and the initial plans for our backyard, kept in contact throughout the process and came out whenever they were needed. Such a seamless process."

Sharp's availability and willingness to help with their customers' outdoor renovation projects demonstrates the company's attentiveness, service and support for their customers. They've made the customer experience one of the hallmarks of their company, and differentiate themselves from others in the industry with the services they offer their customers and their engagement with their clients and the communities in which they operate.

About Sharp Propane

For more than 60 years, [Sharp Propane](#) 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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