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Contact: Joe Ross (Call 24/7)
Cell: 517-281-3069

Photos and graphics available upon request

Michigan’s Cold Snap Makes It Challenging for State’s Propane Retailers

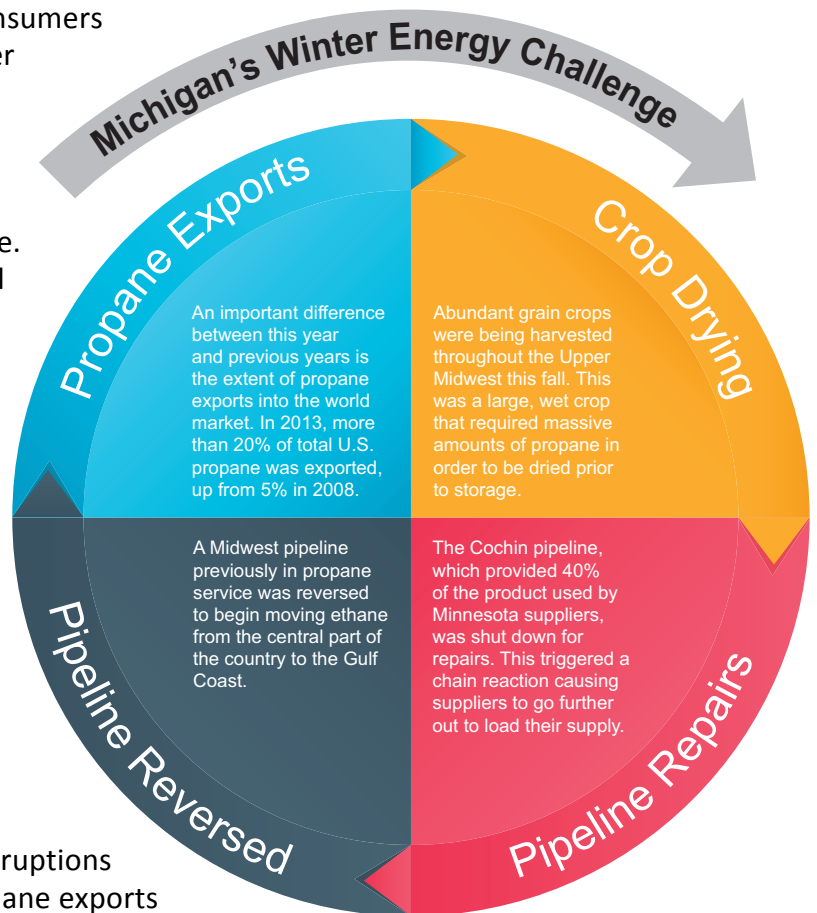
LANSING — More people heat their homes with propane in Michigan than in any other state. The members of the Michigan Propane Gas Association (MPGA) are working as hard as ever to ensure deliveries of propane continue as quickly, easily and safely as possible to the estimated 10% of Michiganians who heat their homes with propane. Customers are feeling the results of a strained transportation and infrastructure system. This cold weather has affected all fuels used by consumers – including natural gas, propane and heating oil – and the extreme cold temperatures has added to the challenges facing all propane companies.

The challenges in delivering propane for consumers during this prolonged period of cold weather started with a confluence of events in October. Abundant grain crops combined with a wet fall season resulted in a large, wet crop that required massive amounts of propane in order to be dried prior to storage. Additionally, it was a colder than normal fall followed by a brutally cold, early start to winter. All of this led to increased demand and reduced propane inventories throughout the Midwest.

"We're used to the cold here, Michigan propane companies are used to a lot of these issues, so Michigan was prepared; however, our neighbors out west were not," explained Derek Dalling, with the MPGA. "As their supplies dwindled, they came as far as Michigan to get their propane."

Other important factors include pipeline disruptions that send propane to the Midwest and propane exports into the world market. In 2013, more than 20% of total U.S. propane was exported, up from just 5% in 2008.

"These combined events have prevented regional inventories from recovering," noted Kim Godlewski, MPGA president. "This has resulted in longer driving distances and loading times, a scarcity of available product and delays in making deliveries to customers."



All propane companies are doing their best to make timely deliveries and keep homes heated. The MPGA encourages all propane customers to work with their propane companies.

Preserve Your Propane:

- Turn down your thermostat 5-10 degrees.
- If you have a propane hot water heater, reduce hot water usage.
- Do not heat any rooms or buildings that do not have to be heated.
- Reduce stove use if you have a propane stove.
- Avoid calling your propane supplier until your gauge shows you are below 25%.

Home Heating Safety:

- Do not use your grill cylinders inside your home for any reason.
- Do not try to hook your grill cylinder to your home heating tank. This exposes your home to an extremely unsafe and illegal situation.
- Clear snow and ice from around your propane tank, chimneys, flue pipes and vents. Use a broom rather than a shovel, and clear these areas frequently to reduce the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning. If pipes freeze and crack, gas can leak out and cause potential danger.
- Keep a path clear to your propane tank. This will help propane delivery drivers to get to your tank easily, refill quickly, and get to the next home.

Work With Your Propane Retailer:

- If you are out of propane or if your propane company is not able to provide propane, seek other options. There are multiple propane companies servicing every county of Michigan.
- Work with your propane company to get your home on a regular delivery schedule.
- Discuss payment plan options with your propane retailer. Some retailers will help you spread your projected annual cost of propane over many months, spreading out the cost of seasonally higher bills.

Visit the MPGA's HeatingMyHome.org

Easy access to all of the federal, state and local home heating assistance programs that can help at-risk home dwellers pay their heating bills and keep the heat on.

Visit the MPGA's website, UseMichiganPropane.com, for other resources.