

Why Underground Tanks?



For propane retailers talking to builders and homeowners, underground propane tanks can equal strong sales. Homeowners and builders both appreciate the cleaner landscape you get when you install tanks underground, and more and more are taking advantage of below-ground storage.

In a survey released in Spring 2006, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Research Center, in collaboration with the Propane Education & Research Council, found that:

- Once builders understood the benefits of underground propane tanks, their intention to use propane in the next 12 months jumped from 18 to 29 percent.
- 34% of homes built by surveyed builders over the last 12 months in locations with partial or no access to natural gas feature an underground propane tank.
- Overall awareness of underground propane tanks was high with eight out of ten builders surveyed noting they are aware of the use of underground tanks.

According to the same survey, the greatest gains for propane and underground tanks were in regions without access to natural gas, but even in regions with access to natural gas, the likelihood of builders using underground tanks increased, with interest driven by outdoor living areas and stand-by generators.

Community underground tanks fuel entire developments, and are becoming increasingly popular in communities being built off the natural gas mains. Community tank systems allow all the homes in a community to be supplied with propane from one or more large-scale underground tank. The gas is then distributed, metered, and serviced, like natural gas. Tank size can be as large as 30,000 gallons and can fuel thousands of homes.

About the NAHB Research Center Survey

The Web-based survey was conducted by the NAHB Research Center on behalf of the Propane Education & Research Council in March 2006. A nationally representative sample of 294 builders participated in the survey. The NAHB Research Center promotes innovation in housing technology to improve the durability, affordability, and environmental performance of homes and home building products.

Underground Propane Tanks Appeal to both Homeowners and Builders

Homeowner Appeal

- Underground tanks allow homeowners to have all the luxury gas appliances they desire – cooktops, outdoor rooms, pool heaters and much more.
- Underground tanks are environmentally friendly – non-toxic to ground water or soil -- and fuel energy efficient appliances like new tankless water heaters.
- Underground tanks are a hidden asset – no unsightly tanks in the yard.

Builder Appeal

- Outdoor living rooms and stand-by power generators are top drivers for builder interest in underground propane tanks.
- Custom builders are far more likely to use underground propane tanks, with outdoor living spaces playing a large role in driving use – 60 percent of the homes built by the custom builders surveyed feature propane by preference, and 44 percent of their homes feature an underground storage system to fuel outdoor room applications.



Underground Propane Tanks

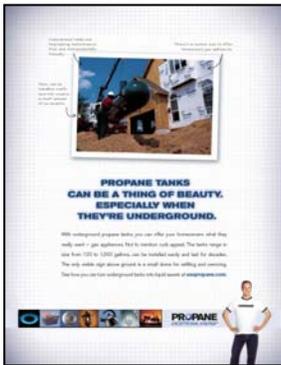
PERC's national builder program is highlighting the benefits of underground tanks throughout 2007 in print advertising, online advertising, tradeshow and media outreach. You can capitalize on these efforts in your marketing to builders. The Campaign Extension Program is designed to increase the impact of your campaigns and the sale of propane underground tanks. It does not replace the Outdoor Living Kit which is the primary consumer focus in the 2nd quarter, but is a compliment to your consumer marketing efforts and a major message to builders throughout the year.



What Tools Can you Use to Get Involved?

PERC provides you with the tools you'll need to launch this effort on the [Propane Marketing Resource Center](#) (MaRC). The materials below and many more are available on the MaRC. They are great for running local print campaigns, informing the media about the benefits of underground tanks, and distributing at local and regional builder trade shows and meetings. Here are just a few suggestions to get you started:

- **HGTV Pro Video** – Share the benefits of underground tanks with consumers and builders using this three minute video. After viewing the video, builders and homeowners will know more about underground propane tanks: how they're installed and how they work, why they're environmentally friendly, what sizes they come in, and what they're made of. This video is great for trade shows, on sales calls, or playing in your showroom.
- **Builder Individual Underground Tank Print Ad or Community Tank Print Ad** – Two great full page ads promoting the benefits of underground tanks and community tanks, to run in newspapers or magazines. You can contact your local builder association for inclusion in their newsletter, membership directories, or trade show programs. These ads, including a green version, are available in half page format as well.



- **TV Spot** – Customize the "Tanks A Lot" Energy Guys TV advertisement. This 20 second commercial includes a 10 second space for a customized visual and verbal message. You can include your company's logo, name or any special offers.
- **Article** – Customize this underground tank article with the name of your company and logo and send it to building newsletters and magazines.
- **Customizable Fact Sheet** – This fact sheet details the results from the 2006 NAHB Research Center Survey on underground tank awareness. It promotes the benefits and use of underground tanks to fuel appliances. Download the fact sheet from the MaRC and offer as a handout at your next homebuilder meeting or trade show.
- **Tank Aesthetics Brochure** – This brochure has everything a builder needs to know about installing and maintaining an underground propane tank. This is a great piece to use at builder meetings, sales calls and trade shows.
- **Vertical Builder Screen** – Do you have an upcoming trade show focusing on the builder market? Used at the 2006 International Builders' Show, this backdrop could be a great addition to your booth. There is also an underground tank floor graphic and dome available to reserve for your booth.

Resources:

MaRC

<http://members.propanecouncil.org>

MaRC Help

Kelly Harris (202) 452-8975 or kelly.harris@propanecouncil.org

Resource Catalog

www.propanecatalog.com

Resource Catalog Help

Alicia Dunn (202) 452-8975 or alicia.dunn@propanecouncil.org

