



DegreeDays

News from the Virginia Propane Gas Association

House Passes Landmark Propane Legislation

By Michael Baker



On November 5, the United States House of Representatives passed H.R. 3684, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which includes more than \$7 billion in funding for propane initiatives. With President Biden expected to sign the bill in short order, these incentives will be available to the industry in January 2022.

The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) worked diligently over the past three years urging Congress to include funding for propane in this comprehensive infrastructure package. The inclusion of propane highlights Congress' acceptance of the economic and environmental benefits of propane and its broad application across multiple sectors of the economy. This bill will provide NPGA members with an array of new funding opportunities to help the industry transition into the next generation.

Highlights of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act include:

- **Grants for Charging and Fueling Infrastructure**

Access to \$2.5 billion in grant funding for propane refueling infrastructure along the national highway system.

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2022 Meetings

SPRING MEETING

April 3–5, 2022

The George Washington, A Wyndham Grand Hotel, Winchester, VA



SUMMER MEETING

July 10–13, 2022

Marriott Resort Virginia Beach Oceanfront, Virginia Beach, VA



FALL MEETING

October 2–4, 2022

The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center, Roanoke, VA



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President's Message



Good Day To You All!

Fall is most certainly upon us and cooler weather has begun. While it has already been a strong year for most of us, the lower temperatures will surely bring increased activity with more potential challenges for everyone. Please always remember that safety must come first regardless of how busy we are. Whether you are out in the field or are primarily leading your team from an office, we all have a part to play.

My belief is that our Fall Meeting in Lynchburg was a resounding success. The location and the hotel were quite lovely – I must confess to being quite impressed at the fine renovation work that was done there and it was fascinating to learn the history of the building. Our attendance was strong during all phases and functions even with some Covid-19 concerns still lurking about. Delegate Kathy Byron did a wonderful job of informing us of some of the challenges that she has had to deal with under the current administration. It was surely not an enviable position that she found herself in. And it is always a pleasure to receive some words of wisdom and updates from Tucker Perkins. I

“Please always remember that safety must come first regardless of how busy we are. Whether you are out in the field or are primarily leading your team from an office, we all have a part to play.”

am grateful to our Committee Chairs for all of their hard work and guidance and this meeting was no exception. On Tuesday morning we conducted our two Board Meetings (VAPGA and VPREF) with quite a few issues being dealt with. Of note were the contract renewals for **Dennis Cruise** and **Mike O'Connor** (these were approved by the Board unanimously) as well some proposed changes to the By-Laws relating to Membership Categories, Membership Dues, and Voting rights. After thorough discussion and some minor changes, the alterations were approved for further submission to the General Membership at the upcoming Spring Meeting where the changes will be presented and voted upon by the entire Membership as stipulated in our By-Laws.

I am penning this note to everyone very shortly after the recent statewide election – and, my, my, what an outcome that was for our industry. While not a panacea, it most likely provides us with an opportunity to gain some audiences with certain groups who were not previously allowing us any access at all. However, we must continue to be proactive with all of our elected officials in educating them about our industry and about propane – a stellar fuel that can be an important part of the solution to the US energy question and emissions control.

I pray that everyone stays safe and has a wonderful holiday season.

Blessings,

Colin Wood-Bradley
President

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Please contact **Tami Guthrie** at tami@eameetings.com or **804.241.2232** for additional information or to request an application and pre-approval numbers.

Productive Fall Meeting in the Blue Ridge Mountains!



The City of Seven Hills proved a worthy host last month, as VAPGA members and guests came together October 10-12 at The Virginian Hotel in downtown Lynchburg, VA for the 2021 Fall Meeting. With over 60 Marketer and Supplier attendees from 41 different companies, this proved to be one of the most well attended fall meetings of the past three years!

The event kicked off Sunday morning with a Captain's Choice golf tournament at Ivy Hill Golf Club in nearby Forest, VA. We had a great turnout, with eight total teams combining both veteran players and several first timers. Congratulations to the team of **Tim Carlson, Nicole Sullivan, Greg Narron, and Adam Riggs** on coming in first place. Generously, the winning team elected to donate their prize money to the Young Gassers Scholarship Fund! Special thanks are also due to the Supplier Committee who once again sponsored the beverages during the tournament.

The Monday meeting was kicked off by VAPGA President, **Colin Wood-Bradley**, who welcomed everyone to Lynchburg and reviewed the days schedule. One of the featured speakers of the morning was Delegate Kathy Byron who represents the 22nd District in the General Assembly (which includes Lynchburg) and has been a longtime advocate and friend of the propane industry. Kathy offered some advice to the membership on engaging local legislators and the importance of personal relationships and targeted education to influence legislation. Many thanks to Kathy for her time and willingness to speak to the group.

In addition to speakers, the association's committees held their quarterly meetings and solicited feedback and ideas from those in attendance to better hone their work. Other speakers throughout the day included Tucker Perkins from PERC, who provided an update on new initiatives of the organization. Outreach Coordinator **Dennis Cruise** spoke

continued on page 5 >

Fall Meeting, continued from page 4 >

on safety and training, and lobbyist **Mike O'Connor** provided his thoughts on the 2021 election and the upcoming General Assembly session. **Brian Atwood**, who was recently re-elected as our NPGA State Director, offered some updates on the work of NPGA and ways in which the membership can best utilize NPGA's resources. The day's meetings were capped by an informal discussion on propane supply and potential challenges, facilitated by **Tom Krupa** and a handful of other Suppliers.

After a long day of meetings, attendees and guests gathered in the hotel's Grand Ballroom for a reception and banquet dinner to toast the culmination of another successful meeting, and to promote fellowship amongst long time members and first-time attendees alike. It was a great evening filled with good food, cold beverages, and lots of laughs! I would also be remiss if I didn't take

a moment to thank **Darrell St. John**, who won the 50/50 raffle during dinner and donated his winnings to the Young Gassers Scholarship Fund.

The event concluded with the VAPGA and VPREF Board Meetings on Tuesday morning. In addition to meeting on Tuesday, Board members had arrived a day early on Saturday to review and update the association's strategic plan. Both the VAPGA and VPREF Board of Directors continue to lead the organization with competence, passion, and thoughtful guidance. Many thanks to all attendees, volunteers, and hotel staff who made the event a success. We look forward to seeing everyone again in 2022 and please mark your calendars for our Spring Meeting, April 3-5, 2022 at The George Washington Hotel in Winchester, VA!

Infrastructure, continued from page 1 >

- **Clean School Bus Program**

Access to \$2.5 billion in grant funding for propane school buses.

- **Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities**

Access to \$1.6 billion in grant funding for propane low-emission transit vehicles.

- **Apprenticeship Pilot Program**

Based on the DRIVE-Safe Act, this pilot program seeks to address the nationwide driver shortage by permitting a trial group of drivers ages 18-21 to participate in interstate commerce.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act also includes many other beneficial provisions for the propane industry, including federal funding for emissions reductions at port

facilities, workforce development, and propane-powered ferries. For more information about provisions in this legislation, see the section-by-section of the bill.

In the coming weeks and months, NPGA will provide additional updates to association members regarding the legislation and how to take advantage of the newly authorized funds and programs.

With the traditional infrastructure bill now complete, negotiations on the budget reconciliation package, Build Back Better, will begin a new phase. NPGA will continue to push for the inclusion of provisions beneficial to propane.

Questions about the bipartisan infrastructure package or budget reconciliation? Contact NPGA's Senior Director of Legislative Affairs **Michael Baker**.

Advertise in Degree Days in 2022!

Degree Days is the official publication of the Virginia Propane Gas Association. It is published bi-monthly in a digital format and has a circulation of approximately 500 members and industry contacts. Advertising with VAPGA is an easy, valuable, and cost-effective way to get your company in front of the movers and shakers in Virginia's propane industry. Both full- and half-page advertisements are available and ads may be purchased for a full year or on a per-issue basis.

The 2022 Advertising contract is included on page 17 of this newsletter and is also online [here](#).

Contact Zach Eisenman at zach@eametings for more information.



Governmental Affairs Update

On October 19th several VAPGA members and I hosted a Zoom Meeting with General Assembly Speaker of the House, Eileen Filler-Corn, and Gerica Goodman, the Speaker's Legislative and Policy Director. Our goal was simple...we wanted to clearly explain our position – that we are FOR decarbonization and that it needs to be a multi-prong approach and we would like to be part of the total solution. We spoke to Propane buses in the Commonwealth – they remembered us from last year. We spoke about small businesses and their role in VA. We asked how we might be privy to efforts that would impact our industry coming up in the future.

Speaker Filler-Corn suggested we have a representative in every district and the importance in meeting with representatives and developing personal relationships. She did say that even if we don't have a member in a district, although it's not ideal, that we could still have a member meet with the representative as the small, family business nature of our industry resonates with all representatives.

In other news, our Executive Director, Zach Eisenman, was on a NPGA/PERC call last week and learned the Des Moines City Council has passed tax abatements and is considering additional measures to tie tax abatements to electrification. Des Moines set a goal back in January for, "...100 percent, 24/7 carbon-free electricity by the year 2035 for Des Moines and net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050."

Essentially, an all-electric requirement would mean that an eligible property's heating and cooking appliances could no longer use gas to qualify for the property tax breaks in the future. Lesley Garland from NPGA described this as a "back door" tactic that they believe is going to become more and more frequent as it's another thing we will need to keep an eye out for going forward. No matter our wins, big or small, we must remain vigilant on the Governmental Affairs front.

I tell you all this because we are starting a 4-year term with a new Governor and delegates (we hope) are finally ready to listen to what we have to say. All advice we have gotten consistently comes back to the same message - we need to meet with our representatives and senators to help educate them on the benefits of using propane in addition to other clean energy sources to aid in the fight for decarbonization. We need to meet with as many representatives as possible with regularity and we need to be unified with our message! I urge you to take the initiative and do your part in educating your local, state and federal officials that a multi-faceted approach is the best approach for decarbonization today! This is our best approach to push back this behemoth threatening our businesses.

If you have not done so already, I encourage you to download the infographic and talking points linked below. It's a great resource to share with your employees, customers, community contacts, and legislators.

Elizabeth McCormick
Governmental Affairs Chair

VAPGA Partners with PriMedia for Environmental Messaging



VAPGA has partnered with PriMedia, a leading advertising and marketing company in the energy sector, to design a 2-sided infographic with [talking points](#) highlighting propane's impact on the Virginia economy, its environmental sustainability, and energy security.

Many thanks to Governmental Affairs Chair, **Elizabeth McCormick**, for helping to spearhead this effort! A PDF of the infographic, pictured to the left, is available for download by clicking [here](#).



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| Around the Capitol

Under New Management at the Virginia Capitol

As this is written there remains the possibility of recounts for two seats in the House of Delegates. While unlikely, the possibility of a reversal of fortune for two incumbent Democrats could mean a 50-50 tie in the House and two years of gridlock. As things stand now, likely that there will probably be a 52-48 Republican majority in the House of Delegates. The present composition is 55 Democrats and 45 Republicans.

A positive outcome from the election is that it should preserve Virginia's tradition of a citizen legislature for at least the next four years. For 400 years, legislators have come to Richmond for the session and returned to their districts and jobs in the private sector after adjournment. There have been growing calls among Democrats to make the General Assembly a full-time job, and recently we have even seen some members with no other jobs beyond their \$18,000 Delegate's salary. A full-time legislature is a horrible idea that is hopefully off the table for the near future.

It is safe to say that there will be major issues to watch as we await the beginning of the 2022 session and the inauguration of Glenn Younkin on January 15 .

For as long as anyone can remember Dominion Energy has been the most visible company on capitol square and has spent the most on both political contributions and lobbyists. A major question for 2022 and beyond is the impact on Dominion after they didn't support the Governor Elect's campaign and in fact gave money to third parties opposing his election. As a result, it is likely that their policy positions will receive added scrutiny and no longer be taken at face value. Legislation like the electric school bus bills they supported in each of the last two years (the state pays for the bus, but Dominion gets free electricity when students are not being transported) will be exposed for the overreach that they propose. Dominion worked in the last two sessions to assure that their transition into renewables is paid for by ratepayers, not shareholders. Last week Dominion increased their expected cost for offshore wind to \$10 billion dollars, or a minimum of \$4 per month paid by each ratepayer. Investments made by propane marketers to expand must be self-funded and all efforts by monopoly utilities should be held to the same standard.

A major question mark for Propane members in the composition of the House Labor and Commerce committee. For the past two years committee membership



has been dominated by Northern Virginia Delegates with zero connection to Virginia domiciled energy providers. When he makes his committee appointments on January 12, we are hopeful that new Speaker Todd Gilbert will appoint new members from a more diverse geographic area, who are open minded, who share a "all of the above approach" to cleaner energy.

With regard to natural gas, readers may remember that it was just a few years ago that we were engaged in pitched battles with them over unfair competition. This changed somewhat under Democratic control as we worked together to defeat language that would convert low-income propane, oil, and gas heating, to heat pumps subsidized by the state. It remains to be seen where the gas companies will fall out with a new Governor and Republican control of House of Delegate. Members need to remember that these companies have invested heavily both in campaign contributions and lobbyists and it is certain that they will continue to be an active participants in energy legislation.

2022 Energy, Building and Fire Code Review

Early in 2022 the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development will open the stakeholder process to consider changes to the state's energy, building and fire codes. This is a highly deliberative process featuring dozens or interest groups reviewing proposed new language line by line in all day meetings. In some other states "electrify everything" movement has used this process to limit the use of fossil fuels in residential and commercial construction. While this is less likely in Virginia, we will be participating in these meetings and will be seeking your assistance should problematic language arise. You may view the specifics of the code development process and sign up to participate here.

Mike O'Connor
VAPGA Lobbyist

It's almost time for to renew your VAPGA Membership!

2022 Dues Renewals will be sent out around the first of the year. Please note that there will be some changes this cycle:

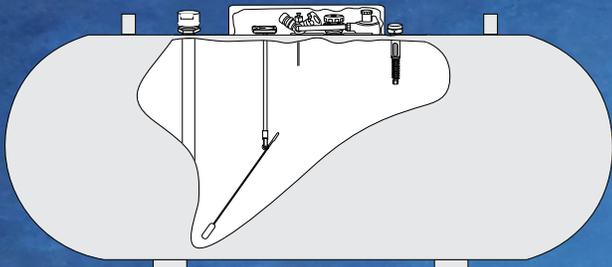
1. **The Associate Member rate has been lowered from \$150 to \$50 for next year.** As we work to maintain our membership rolls more accurately, we will be reaching out to each Marketer and Supplier organization to confirm their individual members and remove any former or retired members from their company membership. We can also process any address, email, or phone number updates. As a reminder – each Marketer gets 1 complimentary member per bulk plant. Any additional member would be charged the \$50 Associate dues. For Suppliers – each organization has 1 complimentary member, and each additional member would be assessed the \$50 Associate dues.
2. **NPGA Membership Dues have changed for 2022.** All Marketer and Supplier members of NPGA should have received advanced notification of this, and a one pager was included in the September newsletter –



the infographic can also be found [here](#). While Supplier members pay their NPGA dues outside of VAPGA, all Intrastate Marketers NPGA dues are billed along with VAPGA dues. These dues will be higher than they have in the past, as NPGA has raised dues for the first time in several years. You will see this change reflected on your invoice.

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Gas Equipment Co. TV - www.youtube.com/GasEquipmentTV



Steve Barton

Gas Equipment Company, Inc. Announces Gijs Majoor as New CEO

Gas Equipment Company (GEC) is entering a new era with a change in top leadership. Gijs Majoor was appointed CEO of the company effective October 1, 2021. He succeeds M.J. "Skeeter" LaDue who will retire early 2022.

Gijs brings a strong business acumen to GEC. He earned MBA's in both Logistics and Finance during his 12-year military career in the Royal Netherlands Navy. For the last four years, Gijs has been VP of Supply Chain & Sustainable Fuels with Pinnacle Propane, LLC headquartered in Texas, an SHV Energy company – a global leader of propane supply.

"I am honored to be entrusted with carrying on Skeeter's legacy and leading this renowned company forward. There is a lot to live up to, but with our excellent team, and the support of our MAKEEN Energy colleagues around the world, I am certain that we will achieve great things together."

– Gijs Majoor

Skeeter is the last of three generations of LaDues to guide and grow GEC. While Skeeter is retiring, he will still have a role in the company. He will move into an Advisory



position which will allow the company to still access his vast knowledge accumulated over the many years.

"I've been in GEC for almost 5 decades, and in charge of it for about half that time, and now is the right time to hand the wheel over to someone else. Gijs is absolutely the right person for the job, and I look forward to offering my support to him as we grow and develop in the future."

– Skeeter LaDue

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VAPGA/ABC Partnership a Success!

VAPGA's partnership with Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) to include propane into their plumber, HVAC, and gas fitter education has made significant progress. In the past year, our partnership equipped ABC's lab with a propane system and various appliances. CETP training materials were also shared. VAPGA has developed an excellent relationship with ABC's training staff and management.

The expected benefits from this important VAPGA partnership with ABC include:

1. Plumbers, HVAC, and gas fitter professionals are properly trained about propane. This will help ensure their safe installations. Also, these trade professionals will be more confident to speak about propane's benefits.
2. VAPGA member companies with access to a well-equipped, hands-on training facility. The Safety and Training Committee will be looking at customizing training classes for your propane technicians.
3. Propane marketers in Virginia will be provided with a list of qualified plumbers, HVAC, and gas fitters who can be reliable subcontractors.

Our progress was made possible by the teamwork and volunteerism of the VAPGA membership and PERC. I am thankful for the contributions from the following:

- **Valley Energy** - Propane container and product
- **Holtzman Propane** - Propane equipment, consultation, and training
- **Anderson Propane Service** - Consultation



- **Bergquist, Inc.** - Propane equipment, consultation, training, and installation
- **Bradford White, Rinnai, and Empire** - Appliances
- **Dennis Cruise** - Consultation
- **PERC** - \$10,000 grant for the lab

Shoutout to **Trent Johnson** and **Randy Doyle** for their leadership and hard work in forging the relationship with ABC. They have donated their time and expertise not just to the benefit of VAPGA, but to the industry as a whole.



Make a PAC Donation Today!

The mission of VAPGA's PAC is to distribute contributions to candidates for the state legislature who, by their acts, demonstrate support of the propane industry and the private enterprise system. Your donations help VAPGA gain visibility and leverage access to promote our industry. Now more than ever, we need your support to combat the electrification and fuel ban efforts which threaten our industry. Please consider making a donation to the PAC today.

If you'd like to make an investment in the future of Virginia's propane industry, contact **Zach Eisenman**, Executive Director, at zach@eameetings.com, or **John Phillips**, VPAC Committee Chair, at jphillips@peifuels.com.

In addition to PAC donations, please let us know if you would be interested in hosting and/or meeting with a legislator this fall.



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Welcome New Member!

Gray, Gray, & Gray LLP (Supplier)
Canton, Massachusetts
Carl Kaplan

Strategic Planning Proves Productive

Members of the Board of Directors and committee chairs met on Saturday, October 9th, in Lynchburg, VA to review, discuss, and update the association's strategic plan. A practice that is done every 3 years, reviewing, and updating the strategic plan is a great exercise for the association's leadership to review ongoing initiatives, existing responsibilities, and ensure resources are aligned with the direction of the organization. Many thanks to all the volunteers who worked on this important project!

2022 Scholarship Opportunities

Keep an eye out for two scholarship opportunities that will go live in February of 2022. The first is the VAPGA Young Gassers Scholarship, which is offered to current VAPGA members and dependents of current VAPGA members who are enrolled full-time in an accredited two or four-year academic institution or trade school (as of Fall 2022). This application closes in May and is awarded in June/July. The second is the Virginia Propane Gas Association Endowed Scholarship within the John Tyler Community College Foundation. This scholarship, awarded via JTCC, has qualifications that give members or dependents of VAPGA members who are enrolled at JTCC preference. More information can be found on the [JTCC website](#) and will be sent out next year.

Thomas Jefferson Institute Video

In September, the Thomas Jefferson Institute hosted a "Virginia Energy Consumer Conference" which featured a cameo by our very own **Elizabeth McCormick**. Feel free to review the [conference video via YouTube](#) to learn some information about the true cost of electrification and alternative "green" energy in Virginia.

Updates to your Membership Info

As mentioned in the due's renewal announcement, we will be reaching out to all Marketer and Supplier members in the coming weeks to have you review and update your membership information and profiles. An accurate membership database is essential to helping us better serve the membership and ensure accuracy in communications, engagement, and billing.

2021-2022 VAPGA Leadership

OFFICERS

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Colin Wood-Bradley, *Tarantin Industries*

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Meghan Kulinski, *Valley Energy*

TREASURER

Tony Hogue, *Anderson Propane*

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Tripp Greene, *Woodfin*

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Tripp Greene, *Woodfin*

Hayley Karicofe, *AmeriGas*

Tom Krupa, *NGL Supply*

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Scott Turner, *Sharp Energy*

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Trent McKenzie, *Woodgate Petroleum*

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COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Emergency Temporary Standard

The U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) published an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) for all employers of 100 or more employees to receive full vaccination or undergo periodic testing with mandatory face coverings. In parallel to the ETS, OSHA is initiating a normal rulemaking process to formalize the vaccination mandate. The Occupational Safety & Health Act authorizes OSHA to issue an ETS, but the agency must also administer a normal rulemaking where the public is able to review the proposal and provide responses.

Below are several key provisions from the ETS, which is available online [here](#).

Employers with 100+ employees corporate-wide must:

- Develop, implement, and enforce a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy; or
- Develop, implement, and enforce a policy for weekly COVID-19 testing and mandatory face-coverings

The definition of employees includes:

- Seasonal and part-time workers as of November 5, 2021;
- The total of all employees corporate-wide regardless of work-reporting location.

For the purposes of meeting the 100+ employee threshold, employers must count all employees corporate-wide; however, there are employees who are exempt from the vaccination or testing and face-covering requirements. Employees exempt from the vaccination or testing and face-covering requirements include:

- Employees who work remotely;
- Employees who work exclusively outdoors on all days except for de minimis use of indoor spaces;
- Employers must provide four hours paid leave for employees to receive the COVID-19 vaccination as well as a reasonable amount of paid sick leave for



employees suffering from any symptoms related to receiving the vaccination.

- Employers are not required to pay the costs of testing unvaccinated employees.
- Employers must keep records of employee vaccination status, testing results, and policies. The ETS preempts any state or local law prohibiting face-coverings.

The ETS is effective on November 5, 2021.

- December 5, 2021 Compliance Deadline: Employers have 30 days to comply with the policy requirements, and
- January 4, 2021 Compliance Deadline: Employers have 60 days to comply with the weekly testing requirement for unvaccinated employees.

NPGA is developing more thorough guidance on the ETS as well as propane-industry templates that may assist in complying with the ETS. The materials will be available on the Member Dashboard. NPGA will hold an industry-wide webinar in the coming weeks to provide further guidance on the ETS and additional action we are taking on the rulemaking proposal. Details to follow. Please direct any questions to Mike Caldarera, Senior Vice President of Regulatory & Technical Services, or Sarah Reboli, Senior Director of Regulatory & Industry Affairs.

Tell Us Your Story!

Do you have any company news to share? Big anniversaries? Success stories? Philanthropic events? We'd like to know! Please send your news to **Zach Eisenman**, Executive Director, at zach@eameetings.com. Your news may be published in a future newsletter.



Virginia Propane Gas Association

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VAPGA CETP Training We Want To Hear From You!

For the foreseeable future, in-person training programs will continue to be on an individual company basis. While we work toward resuming a more "normal" CETP training schedule, we encourage members to reach out to Trent Johnson, Chair of the Education & Safety Committee and Dennis Cruise to make them aware of your needs. Please take a moment to advise the committee of all specific training or safety programs that will deliver the most value to you this year.

If you would be willing to host a VAPGA training at your company, please let us know that as well.

Trent Johnson
trent.johnson@bergquistinc.com

Dennis Cruise (434) 841-1636 or
propanetrainingservices@gmail.com



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It is published bi-monthly (6 issues) in a digital format and has a circulation of approximately 500 members and industry contacts.

Advertising Requirements

Advertisements must be sent via email in hi-resolution PDF, JPG, EPS, or TIF format.

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This form is an order and authorization to secure space in *Degree Days*, the official publication of the Virginia Propane Gas Association and may be used by advertisers or their agents.

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Executive Director: Zach Eisenman

Phone: 804-249-2241 | Fax: 804-747-5022

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