
PROPANE STOVE SAFETY

“Stoves made for the outdoors can also extend the range of your travels by giving you a reliable way to generate heat anywhere and in any weather.” This is a quote from the 2014 edition of the *Fieldbook (Scouting’s Manual of Basic and Advanced Skills for Outdoor Adventure)*. A propane camp stove has a lot of versatility. Two-burner propane stoves tend to be used more for base camping where the stove is set up and used in one location during the camping trip. There are some single-burner propane stoves, although they tend to be a bit bulky and not always suitable for long backpacking trips.

In this **BSA Safety Moment**, we’ll discuss the following ways to stay safe while using propane stoves:

- Always read the manufacturer’s instructions before using a stove and follow those instructions.
- Never use a stove inside or near a tent, not even under a dining fly.
- Use only the manufacturer’s windscreens, and never place a single-burner stove inside a large pot to block the wind (could lead to an explosion of the canister).
- Don’t overload the stove with a heavy pot, and never leave a stove unattended.
- Let the stove cool completely before you open it, change fuel canisters, or put it away.
- Keep all propane canisters away from sources of heat, even if they are empty.
- When changing canisters, or if you suspect a problem, test for leakage by using a solution of 1 tablespoon of dish soap mixed with 1 cup of water. Lightly sprinkle the soap-water solution over the connection and fittings between the propane canister or tank and the stove. If you see bubbles from any connection, turn off and disconnect the propane canister or tank and reconnect properly. Most connections should be hand-tightened.
- Small propane canisters should not be refilled. Many states have laws regulating the types of propane tanks that can be refilled. Visit a local authorized propane dealer for details.

RESOURCES

- *Fieldbook*, 5th edition (items 614985 and 619044 at www.scoutshop.org)—
Stove Safety, page 79
- *Guide to Safe Scouting*—Chemical Fuels and Equipment