ENERGY MATTERS

Propane: The Energy Source That's Reliable

(NAPSA)—When things go bad—storms, blackouts, falling trees—it can be good to have a back up plan. For an increasing number of Americans, the reliable, cost-effective answer is propane.

One reason may be the availability and ease-of-use of propane-powered water heaters, stoves and generators. Another, the new propane-based technology coming along. In addition, residential propane storage tanks not only provide a clean and reliable off-grid energy source, they can also help reduce energy expenses.

"Energy is essential to the American way of life—it touches everything from heating our homes to keeping us in touch with loved ones," said Roy Willis, Propane Education & Research Council president. "Using alternative energy sources, such as electricity generated by propane at the point-of-use, can provide greater reliability and flexibility."

Through partial funding from the propane industry, Marathon Engine Systems has developed Ecopower Micro-CHP, a propane-fueled, engine-driven appliance that offers consumers a reliable heating and power source anytime, anywhere, in existing or newly developed houses.

Ecopower Micro-CHP helps consumers enjoy this dependable and self-sufficient power, whether the house is being built in such extremes as the Nevada desert, the Adirondack Mountains or more conventional points in between.

Because the primary power, heat/hot water and standby power are competitively priced, consumers using Ecopower Micro-CHP will be able to enjoy this benefit for far less than it would cost to bring the wire from the grid to the construction site.

Propane generators are reliable and cost-effective energy sources for emergency and everyday needs.

Research efforts funded by the propane industry may also help cell phone users. IdaTech, with funds provided by the propane industry, developed and tested a propane-powered fuel cell system that uses the hydrogen in propane fuel to generate electrical energy.

Successful testing of the fuel cell system proved that the National Forests and other areas where combustion generators are not allowed can use this eco-friendly fuel system to improve cell phone coverage in remote locations. With this technology, all cell towers can be constantly served by a reliable, remote power source.

The fuel cell system can also be used as part of a hybrid battery charging device so families and companies in remote areas—and those in places where power outages occur—have one less thing to worry about.

To learn more about the industry's commitment to meeting consumers' needs, visit the Web site at www.usepropane.com.