

OPD Fact Sheet

This fact sheet provides information on the requirements for Overfilling Prevention Devices (OPD's). OPD's were required in the 1998 edition of NFPA 58, Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code. The requirements were modified in the 2001 edition to exempt certain horizontal cylinders.

What is an OPD? An OPD is a safety shutoff device incorporated into the filling valve of a propane cylinder. It is intended to prevent overfilling of the cylinder, which can result in propane release, fire, and possibly injury. It is required on all propane cylinders between 4 pounds and 40 pounds propane capacity. The common gas grill cylinder holds about 20 pounds of propane.

How do I know if my cylinder has an OPD? All cylinders manufactured after September 30, 1998 were required to have an OPD. If your cylinder has a triangular valve wheel, it has an OPD. If it has a round wheel, it does not have an OPD.

What happens if my cylinder does not have an OPD? Cylinders not equipped with an OPD can be filled until either:

- April 1, 2002, or
- The cylinder is requalified. Requalification is required by the U. S. Department of Transportation for all cylinders 12 years after the date of manufacture, and 5 years after the last requalification. The date of manufacture is stamped on the cylinder collar. When requalified, the requalification date is stamped on the cylinder collar near the date of manufacture with an "E" after the date.

Who can requalify my cylinder? Many propane dealers will requalify cylinders. The cylinder valve will be replaced with a new valve incorporating an OPD. There is a charge for requalification. It may be more economical to replace the cylinder with a cylinder equipped with an OPD, especially if it is rusty.

What about horizontal cylinders? The 2001 edition of NFPA added an exemption for horizontal cylinders manufactured before October 1, 1998 do not need an OPD, and can be continued in use. They must be requalified when required. They must have label to indicate that they are not equipped with an overfilling prevention device. Anyone can make the label.

Are any other cylinders that do not require an OPD? Yes. Cylinders used for industrial trucks, and cylinders used for industrial welding and cutting gases are not required to have an OPD. These cylinders must be labeled with their use.

This fact sheet is intended to answer commonly asked questions about OPD's. If this sheet does not answer your question, contact NFPA at thastings@nfpa.org, and put "OPD question" in the subject line of your E-Mail.

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