

PROPANE PRESSURE VESSEL OPERATING PERMIT AND FEE POLICY FOR ALTERNATIVE SAFETY APPROACHES CLIENTS
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This information bulletin outlines Technical Safety BC's (TSBC's) new policy for propane pressure vessel (propane tank) annual operating permits and fees for clients who have an approved Safety Management Plan (SMP) under the *Alternative Safety Approaches Regulation* (ASAR).

Why is the new policy required?

Propane tanks store large quantities of combustible fuel and present a significant safety risk to owners, surrounding properties, and the public. Tens of thousands of propane tanks are used throughout BC in both residential and commercial sites. The existing incident investigations data and case examples highlight the risks of poor management and operation of these vessels. TSBC also lacks reliable data on the number and state of propane tank installations and maintenance in BC. This oversight gap cannot be overlooked and must be addressed. Operating permits for propane tanks will enable TSBC to provide the necessary safety oversight, assess hazards, and effectively communicate safety information to owners so they can effectively manage the safety of the propane tanks and protect themselves, their equipment, and those around them.

This information bulletin will clarify TSBC policy with respect to propane tanks and provide a level playing field for all propane companies.

The new propane tank operating permit and fee policy for ASA clients with an approved SMP

1. The ASA clients must provide TSBC with a **complete listing of all propane tanks in service**, regardless of size.
2. Annual operating permit fees will be applied as the following:
 - For tanks equal to or less than 2500 USWG, operating permit fees will be waived regardless of purpose or use.
 - For tanks over 2500 USWG, operating permit fees will be invoiced in accordance with this information bulletin and the [Alternative Safety Approaches fee schedule](#).

Implementation and administration of the new policy

ASA clients must provide TSBC with a **complete listing of all propane tanks in service**, regardless of size. This list is to be provided:

- on an **approved bulk load spreadsheet**, which can be obtained from TSBC; and
- when submitting their SMP annual report, either on the date specified by the Notice of Determination for the SMP, or upon request from the Provincial Safety Manager, Safety Management Approaches.

The client must maintain safety oversight through proper documentation and an asset management and safety oversight program for the propane tanks. TSBC will ensure compliance through regular conformance audits as subject to the ASAR and the approved SMP.

TSBC will issue a single invoice annually for all propane tank operating permit fees

- For tanks equal to or less than 2500 USWG, operating permit fees will be waived regardless of purpose or use.
- For tanks over 2500 USWG, operating permit fees will be invoiced in accordance with this information bulletin and the ASA fee schedule flat rate for pressure vessel operating permit fees.

When a new propane tank is placed into service, the ASA client must:

- add it to the bulk load spreadsheet
- report it on the following annual report submission

When a propane tank is permanently removed from service (see directive [D-BP 2024-02: Decommissioning Requirements](#)), the ASA client must:

- remove it from the bulk load spreadsheet
- report it on the following annual report submission

Failure to provide TSBC a complete list of the propane tanks, to obtain the required operating permits, and to pay the annual operating permit fee may result in the revocation of the approved SMP or enforcement actions under the *Safety Standards Act* and associated regulations.

The operating permit policy and fee exemption offered in this Information Bulletin for ASA clients applies only to those with an approved SMP.

Operating Permits and Fees for non-ASA clients:

There are no changes to the requirements of operating permits and fees for propane tank owners without an approved SMP under the ASA program.

- The non-ASA client must obtain operating permits and pay an annual fee.
- An operating permit is required for each propane tank in operation in BC with pressure above 15 pounds per square inch gauge (PSIG) in accordance with [section 62 of the Power Engineers, Boiler, Pressure Vessel and Refrigeration Safety Regulation](#). These requirements, including implementation and compliance timelines, are further clarified in [directive D-BP 2015-01: Operating Permit Requirements for Propane Pressure Vessels](#).
- An annual operating permit fee is applicable to each propane tank based on the physical dimensions of the pressure vessel in accordance with the [boiler, pressure vessel and refrigeration fee schedule](#).

For information related to the ASA program, visit www.technicalsaftybc.ca or contact asa@technicalsaftybc.ca.

Provincial Safety Manager – Safety Management Approaches

References:

Safety Standards Act

Safety Standards General Regulation

Alternative Safety Approaches Regulation

Power Engineers, Boiler, Pressure Vessel & Refrigeration Safety Regulation