

How to tell if your propane tank is expired and what to do next

How long are propane tanks good for?

In the United States, a bottle is qualified for 10 years from the date of manufacture. A recertified tank is good for 5, 7, or 10 years, depending on the method and type of recertification.

How to tell if your propane tank is expired

The simplest way is to inspect the collar or handle area of your propane tank. This won't give you a direct answer to the question "when do propane tanks expire?" but it will tell you when the tank was manufactured or last certified. That, with a little background information, can help you determine how much useful life remains, or whether it's time to requalify your tank.

How to read the markings on a propane tank

Near the handle, you'll find a series of stamped markings. These provide important information about your tank's origination and capacity rating. A date should appear on the handle, near the valve indicating the manufacture date. It most often reads in a standard Month-Year format. So if your tank was built in January of 2024, it would read "01-24."



Each tank also comes stamped with a unique identification, similar to those stamped onto vehicles. This helps the United States Department of Transportation and propane dealers to effectively track and keep safety records for each tank in circulation.

Additional markings indicate the empty weight of the cylinder, listed as “TW.” This is helpful if you want to weigh the tank to gauge how much propane is left available for use. The stamp “WC” indicates the water storage capacity, which helps dealers know the precise amount of propane that can be safely stored inside the tank.

It's also not uncommon to see a requalifier's identification stamped into the handle area of your tank. Once you know the manufacture or recertification date, you'll be able to determine how close the tank is to reaching its expiration date.

Propane Tank Markings Overview

MARKING	MEANING
06 20	Month Year of manufacturing date
TW	Empty weight of cylinder in pounds (lbs)
WC	Water storage capacity in pounds (lbs) for refilling purposes

How to determine a propane tank's recertification date

A propane tank's recertification date is most often indicated by a letter instead of numbers. The letters A, B, C, and D, correspond with a quarter of the calendar year. The letter "A" would mean the tank had been recertified in January, February, or March, followed by the two numbers of the year. In this case, a tank stamped with "A 24" would indicate the first quarter of 2024. Additional letters indicate the type of recertification, which helps determine the frequency of follow up inspections.

Of course, if you notice evidence of damage or excessive wear, such as dents, bulges, or cracks, or if you notice the valve isn't working correctly, take the tank to your local propane/gas dealer (Hicksgas) for inspection. Although these tanks are certified for 10 years of use, misuse or neglect can shorten their useful life.