



By Leslie Siegman, General Manager, Public Affairs, Propane Gas Association of Canada

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## A Message from the Energy Caucus – Speak Up About Propane

Since the 2006 election, the Conservative Party has been working to demonstrate that the environment is a priority. In recent months, the propane industry has had the opportunity to contribute to the success of this priority. As part of an ongoing dialogue with government on how the propane industry can play a bigger role in Canada's greener future, I approached Member of Parliament (MP) Brad Trost with a number of questions.



Mr. Trost is the MP for Saskatoon-Humboldt and also serves as a member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources. As well, Brad is Chair of the Conservative Party's Energy Caucus,

an important forum that helps the Conservative Party keep abreast of energy concerns, including propane as an alternative energy, by bringing energy issues to the attention of the rest of caucus, and facilitating discussion with energy experts and stakeholders.

Following are some of the questions I presented to Brad. The message that comes through clearly is the value in educating MPs in every constituency about propane—its benefits and opportunities. The onus is on industry to mobilize our elected officials to bring forward industry ideas for consideration and action. Industry has been on the right track with the provincial Propane Government Days (Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec) and the upcoming Ottawa Propane Government Day on May 31. For those serving propane consumers, more can be done to promote the environmental benefits of this clean alternative energy in order to differentiate it from other energy choices.

**Q: As chair of the Conservative Party's Energy Caucus, what role does your caucus play in shaping the government's overall environment and energy strategies?**

**A:** Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn is responsible for formulating energy policy. However, the Energy Caucus plays an important role by providing a forum in which Conservatives MPs can discuss a wide range of topics with energy experts... Naturally, it is up to each individual MP to decide which issues he or she wants to discuss with Minister Lunn or any other Minister in Cabinet.

**Q: The International Energy Agency suggests that alternative fuels such as propane will play a more important role in meeting global energy needs in 2050. What role do you see alternative fuels, like propane, playing in Canada's energy future?**

**A:** I think that alternative fuels like propane will play a crucial role in Canada's future. As the global demand for oil increases, alternative

of fuel is for our economy. The increased availability of alternative fuels like propane is not only good for farmers, it is good for all Canadians.

**Q: The economic and environmental benefits of propane have been widely and frequently published. What can the industry do to better promote, with federal and provincial governments in Canada, propane as a clean and efficient energy solution?**

**A:** First of all, it is important for propane dealers across Canada to use their local press to educate the public on the advantages of using propane. The Canadian public is keenly interested in alternative fuels and I think there is no better time for the industry to inform everyone about the benefits of using propane. Industry representatives, especially

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fuels will become more economical. Regarding transportation, I think the use of alternative fuels will really take off when average drivers can pull up to any service station and purchase the alternative fuel of their choice for the same price or cheaper than gasoline.

**Q: Alternative fuels like propane are playing an important role in the agriculture sector with several new technologies introduced in the US over the last few years. What impact would lower energy costs have for Canadian farmers, and do you see alternative fuels playing a bigger role in that sector?**

**A:** Fuel and fertilizer are the two biggest input costs in a farmer's budget. Using alternative fuels like propane to lower fuel costs for farmers will increase profitability and help stabilize farm incomes. The recent diesel fuel shortage in Ontario illustrates just how important a reliable supply

the propane dealers (in each constituency across the country), should talk to their MPs and be vocal about the benefits of propane. Let me provide two examples.

First, how many MPs, provincial legislators or municipal councilors know propane is used by lots of farmers in the United States to reduce energy costs?

Secondly, I was talking to a propane industry representative a couple of years ago about the future of the hydrogen economy. I mentioned that getting a viable transportation system fuelled by hydrogen set up had been referred to as a "chicken and an egg problem." That is, what comes first? You need thousands of hydrogen-fuelled cars on the road in order to make it economically feasible for someone to switch his/her gas station over to hydrogen. However, a nationwide network of hydrogen fuel stations has to already be in place in order to make the use of hydrogen-powered vehicles viable in the first place.

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**Propane**  
CANADA



### Focus on the Recreational User

Every remote location in North America, from ski hills to fishing lodges, relies to some degree on propane for heat, cooking, power or light.

### Feature on the Transporter

It takes highly trained personnel and specialized equipment to get product from the producer to the retailer – you are an important link in the LPG chain. Here's an opportunity to tell your story.

### Post-Conventions

Thorough coverage of both the PGAC's National Convention in Ottawa and the OPA's conference in Guelph.

Space Deadline: June 21

Material Deadline: June 28

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**May 30 to June 1** – PGAC National Convention at Ottawa's Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites. To find out more, contact Linda Kool of the Propane Gas Association of Canada at: (403) 543-6503 (phone); (403) 543-6508 (fax); lkool@propanegas.ca (e-mail); www.propanegas.ca (Web site).

**June 13 & 14** – OPA'07, the Ontario Propane Association's annual conference, at Guelph's Holiday Inn. For more information, contact René Chartier at the OPA's Oakville office at: 905-469-1941 (phone); 905-469-1942 (fax); or opa@propane.ca (e-mail).

**September 6 - 8** – AQP's 18th Annual Conference in Sherbrooke. For more information, get in touch with Lorraine Beaudoin of the AQP at: (450) 654-3737; (450) 654-3723 (fax); association@propanequebec.com (e-mail); www.propanequebec.com.

**September 7** – PGAC's Alberta Seminar in Red Deer. To find out more, contact Linda Kool of the Propane Gas Association of Canada at: (403) 543-6503 (phone); (403) 543-6508 (fax); lkool@propanegas.ca (e-mail); www.propanegas.ca (Web site).

**October 24 - 26** – 20th World LP Gas Forum in Cape Town, South Africa. For more information, contact the World LP Gas Association in Paris, France at: worldlpgas@colloquium.fr (e-mail) or visit www.wlpgasforum2007.com.

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At this point in our discussion, the propane representative mentioned that technology already existed in Japan, which easily took hydrogen off of propane. In other words, current technology could allow every propane dealer in Canada to become a fuel supplier for hydrogen-powered vehicles.

At the time of my conversation with the propane representative, the Liberals were in power. Their future plans for Canada's hydrogen economy called for just a few hydrogen stations, to be funded as pilot projects.

How many legislators and bureaucrats interested in establishing a hydrogen economy in Canada know of this Japanese technology, or

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that our existing network of propane dealers possess the potential to set up a ready-made distribution network for hydrogen?

This is why I think that it is vital for industry representatives to get their message out about the benefits of propane—whether it be to MPs in rural ridings about the cost advantages of using propane in agriculture, to policy-makers and bureaucrats about using existing propane technology to speed up the advent of the hydrogen economy or to their local customers about using high efficiency propane products. □