



# Propane Bulk Plant Services



Extra propane storage is essential for a bulk plant, especially during winter and supply chain delays due to unexpected events like COVID-19. Extra storage can keep a company resilient even in the most difficult of times.

Sufficient propane storage is essential for propane marketers and retailers, as some locations have several deliveries a day. Unexpected issues such as pipeline problems, truck breakdowns, cold weather conditions, and refinery shutdowns can wreak havoc for propane marketers.

Retailers and marketers must pre-order propane based on their needs for the winter. This order typically gets placed during the warmer months, and refineries keep the propane in storage tanks until customers need it. Refineries export large amounts of propane worldwide, but an unusually cold winter could devastate the domestic industry. Skyrocketing prices could further exacerbate supply and demand issues, with the refineries unable to keep up.

This eBook will explain how to prepare for propane winter storage in worst-case scenarios, the long-term benefits of doing so, Industrial Propane Service, Inc.'s (IPS) capabilities, and a specific case study where we delivered the optimal solution to a customer.



# Propane Winter Storage Challenges

In the winter, it's especially important to have enough propane storage. Refilling trucks can line roads for miles, delaying much-needed deliveries. You don't want to have to rely on these deliveries to meet your customers' demands.

These are the main challenges associated with propane storage and transport in the winter:

## EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

Ice and snow can lead to bulk plant and regulator equipment damage. Transport delivery and bobtail vehicles are also susceptible to weather-related damage.

## POWER LOSS

Ice storms and heavy snow can disrupt the power supply, sometimes resulting in a total power outage.

## ACCESS

Ice and snow can disrupt delivery.

## DELAYED DELIVERIES

Extreme weather can significantly prolong delivery times.

## FLOODING

Once the ice and snow melt, it can cause flooding that can damage infrastructure or delay deliveries.

# Benefits of Adding Propane Storage

Being prepared for the worst-case scenario helps a bulk plant remain resilient throughout the winter. Adding additional propane storage tanks to a facility provides the following benefits:

## RESILIENCE:

Companies with ample storage capacity are better positioned to weather disruptions in propane supply than companies that rely on daily propane deliveries. When there are supply issues, businesses with large storage facilities can sell their stored propane directly to their competitors for higher profits.

## RELIABILITY:

You will be able to meet high demand without the hassle of having to look for additional storage at a moment's notice. Your customers know they can trust you to provide a steady propane supply, even in the winter or during supply chain delays.

## INCREASED BUYING POWER:

With larger storage capacity, you have the flexibility to purchase large quantities of propane when prices are lower in spring and summer.

## FUTURE GROWTH POTENTIAL:

Having extra propane storage ensures your facility can seamlessly handle more orders as your business grows.

# Solutions for Bulk Plant Facilities

Constructing a propane bulk plant can be difficult, but IPS makes it easy. We can take the hassle out of getting a new facility up and running by providing:

Design, construction, and installation of storage tanks with up to 120,000-gallon capacities



Turnkey installations



Adding storage to existing bulk plants

Underground tank installations



Propane standby systems for facilities such as hospitals, correctional facilities, and manufacturing facilities



Inspections, training, and maintenance of bulk plants



Propane vaporizer equipment for farm grain drying

24-hour emergency support services



# Unique Bulk Plant Construction Solutions

Our bulk plant construction features include:

**Bobtail load and transport unload bulkheads with pull-away protection**



**Welded & threaded piping options**

**Tank trim package featuring RegO® internal valves with pneumatic operators and relief valves**



**Blackmer® pump & bypass packages**



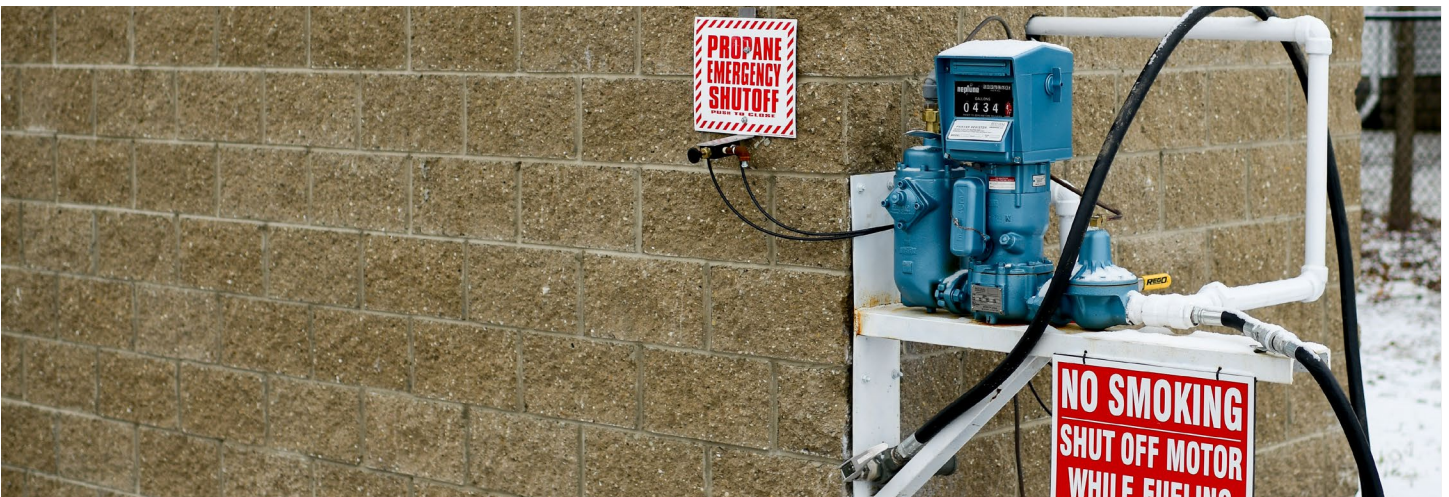
All our piping systems are designed and built with provisions for additional storage, pumps, bulkheads, and valving making repairs and maintenance more efficient



IPS takes great pride in its designs and installations. We focus on building a solid, professional propane bulk plant designed with safety, dependability, and performance



Pneumatic emergency shut-off systems



# Case Study: **Plant Construction**

One of our proudest accomplishments involved a client with a facility located in a remote area on Michigan's Upper Peninsula. They wanted us to install a 30,000-gallon propane tank they could use as a satellite facility. The project was challenging since IPS is located eight hours from the job site and the nearest crane was over 100 miles away. There were also cost concerns with the concrete installation.

IPS provided concrete support plans for properly installing the post holes needed for the Sono tubes, anchors, and concrete. We instructed the customer to install flat-top piers so that the tank could be rolled from the trailer to the piers.

IPS developed a skid-mounted piping system that included the Blackmer® pump, bulkhead, hoses, RegO® safeties, valves, and all necessary piping for loading bobtails and unloading transports. In our own facility, our team assembled, pressure tested, shop painted, and pre-drilled the system to speed up installation on-site.





When we arrived at the job site, the concrete work was finished, allowing us to position the 30,000-gallon tank and the truck tightly against the supports.

Using a backhoe, we rolled the tank onto the supports. Our specialized system enabled us to slide and spin the tank so we could level and center it appropriately. Our team then used the semi-trailer's air suspension to raise each end of the propane tank and lower it into the aligned saddles. IPS used the client's crane truck to unload the piping assembly and place it on the installed Sono tube anchors. Setting the tank and piping skid took about two hours.



Lastly, we fitted the tank with RegO® internal valves, relief valves, and gauges. We then connected the piping on the tank to the piping skid. The entire on-site piping project took two installation technicians eight hours to complete.

Our unique system saved the client thousands of dollars. They did the concrete work themselves before we arrived, substantially reducing on-site installation costs.

# IPS Service Capabilities

In addition to our bulk plant capabilities, IPS also offers several other services to the propane industry. Here is an in-depth look at those capabilities:

**Bobtail design and build, re-chassis, repair, DOT inspections, hydrotesting, and meter proving**



**Transport repairs, DOT inspections, and hydrotesting**



On-site meter proving and bobtail inspections & repair



Propane Autogas design, installation, and service featuring Gilbarco Encore dispensers as well as Gasboy Atlas dispensers



## Cylinder fill station design, build, and service



Cylinder evacuation systems allow a safe and efficient way to recover propane liquid and vapor from a cylinder that needs to be repaired. All the propane goes back into the storage tank. The recovered propane and the labor savings make for a quick return on investment.



## Storage Solutions From IPS

IPS maintains warehouses and facilities strategically placed in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio to service our customers' needs. As a leader in the industry, we offer complete bulk plant design, construction, installation, and expansion services with the necessary equipment to support propane marketers and retailers throughout the country.

We work closely with our customers to ensure they have enough bulk propane storage at their facilities. As the propane industry grows and demand increases, the team at IPS works hard to develop innovative solutions for a cleaner environment. [Contact us](#) to learn more about our capabilities or to discuss your specific application.

Industrial Propane Service, Inc. was established in 1968 by Charles and Helen Vandemark. The company's main focus in the beginning was propane and anhydrous ammonia service and construction.

As the propane industry grew, so did IPS, eventually expanding to focus on service work, building new bobtails, and installing all types of propane storage facilities. In 1980, IPS, already being a distributor for LC meters, Blackmer pumps and many other products, became a full line distributor for RegO products.

In 1996, under the ownership and direction of Robert Vandemark, IPS was divided into two separate companies, IPS Equipment, Inc. (IPSE), and Industrial Propane Service, Inc. (IPS). IPSE is responsible for all wholesale activity and is a full line distributor for propane equipment and heating and hearth products, while IPS performs plant construction, bobtail sales and service, transport service, and pumping stations.

Currently, the third generation of the Vandemark family manages the daily operations of IPS and IPSE. Jeff Vandemark, Rob Vandemark and Kim Godlewski and their employees are dedicated to upholding the premise of service which the company was built on – to offer quality service and superior customer support. IPS and IPSE offer a “family of solutions for the propane industry”.

[Contact Us](#)

[Resource Library](#)

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