

PRIMARY ENERGY STORY: The Tale of Little Big Fuel



My name is Little Big Fuel. It's a strange name, I know. Lots of people think I'm strange. I think I'm magical. This is my story.

I've been underground for millions of years. No one knew I was there. I'm invisible – you can't see me. You can't smell me. You can't feel me either; I'm a gas. I hide in rocks with petroleum and natural gas.

Ninety years ago, Dr. Snelling found me. He named me **propane**, but my friends call me Little Big Fuel. Here's the reason why.

When everything is normal, I'm a gas. You can't see me, but I'm full of energy. You can burn me to make heat.

I can heat your house. I can cook your food. I can run lanterns and tractors. I can help make things you use everyday. I can run big machines inside buildings because I'm so clean. I can even take you for a ride in a hot air balloon.

All these things I do are very good. But they aren't the thing that makes me special. This is my secret: you can turn me into a liquid and make me very, very small. If you squeeze me – **compress** me – I'll turn into a liquid.

See the big picture of me? That's my size as a gas. The little guy is my size as a liquid. I'm 270 times smaller! I still have the same number of molecules and the same amount of energy. I'm just squeezed together.

People squeeze me into small bottles so they can carry me with them. They take me camping to cook their food and light their lanterns. People put me into tanks on their barbecue grills.

Farmers fill big tanks with me as a liquid. I can heat their barns and houses for a long time. Big trucks take me to farms to fill the tanks. When I leave the tanks, I'm not under pressure anymore. I turn into a gas again and get big; I **expand**. Then I am burned to make heat.

That's why I'm called Little Big Fuel. I am amazing, don't you think?

