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Gray, Gray & Gray 2022 Energy/Propane Survey

WELCOME TO OUR SURVEY

This year marks the 31st anniversary of Gray, Gray & Gray's Energy Industry Survey. In celebration of this milestone, we are pleased to bring you a special edition that we hope will provide you with more valuable benchmarking data for your present and future success.

As always, your participation in this important survey is critical. Your responses enable us to develop a "snapshot" of the retail oil and propane industry, helping us to establish industry benchmarks and the standards by which company performance is measured.

Please complete this year's survey with information from your company's April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022 results.

Note: While completing the survey, you can save your responses by clicking the "Next" button on each page. Click the "Done" button on the final survey page to submit your responses.

Gray, Gray & Gray 2022 Energy/Propane Survey

GENERAL COMPANY INFORMATION

* 1. What type of company are you?

* 2. In what states does your company primarily do business?

- [ ] AL Alabama
- [ ] AK Alaska
- [ ] AZ Arizona
- [ ] AR Arkansas
- [ ] CA California
- [ ] CO Colorado
- [ ] CT Connecticut
- [ ] DE Delaware
- [ ] DC District of Columbia
- [ ] FL Florida
- [ ] GA Georgia
- [ ] HI Hawaii
- [ ] ID Idaho
- [ ] IL Illinois
- [ ] IN Indiana
- [ ] IA Iowa
- [ ] KS Kansas
- [ ] KY Kentucky
- [ ] LA Louisiana
- [ ] ME Maine
- [ ] MD Maryland
- [ ] MA Massachusetts
- [ ] MI Michigan
- [ ] MN Minnesota
- [ ] MS Mississippi
- [ ] MO Missouri
- [ ] MT Montana
- [ ] NE Nebraska
- [ ] NV Nevada
- [ ] NH New Hampshire
- [ ] NJ New Jersey
- [ ] NM New Mexico
- [ ] NY New York
- [ ] NC North Carolina
- [ ] ND North Dakota
- [ ] OH Ohio
- [ ] OK Oklahoma
- [ ] OR Oregon
- [ ] PA Pennsylvania
- [ ] RI Rhode Island
- [ ] SC South Carolina
- [ ] SD South Dakota
- [ ] TN Tennessee
- [ ] TX Texas
- [ ] UT Utah
- [ ] VT Vermont
- [ ] VA Virginia
- [ ] WA Washington
- [ ] WV West Virginia
- [ ] WI Wisconsin
- [ ] WY Wyoming
- [ ] Other (please specify)

* 3. Employees

Total Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees

Total Number of Full-Time Equivalent Service Technicians

Total Number of Full-Time Equivalent Delivery Drivers

4. What percentage of your delivery drivers are also cross-trained as HVAC technicians?
(Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 15% should be entered as 15)

5. What is the HOURLY rate you pay? (Please be honest and accurate. All responses are confidential. Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $22.50 per hour should be entered as 22.50)

Delivery Drivers	
Service Technicians - Heating	
Service Technicians - Air Conditioning	
Dispatchers	
Service Manager	
Customer Service Representatives	
Accounts Payable/Receivable Staff	
CFO/Controller	
Bookkeeper/Accounting Manager	
General Manager	
Operations Manager	
Office Manager	
Sales Manager	
IT Manager	
HR Manager	

6. How much do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a **new heating account** (in dollars)?(Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

7. What **commission** do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a **new equipment installation** (in percentage)? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example -15% should be entered as 15)

8. Outside of payroll what operating expenses have increased the most in the last 1-2 years and why?

- [ ] Updating software
- [ ] Liability insurance
- [ ] Health insurance
- [ ] Cybersecurity insurance
- [ ] Environmental
- [ ] Vehicle
- [ ] Other

Please explain why.

9. Retaining good employees over the past year has been:

- [ ] Easy
- [ ] Somewhat difficult
- [ ] Very difficult
- [ ] Nearly impossible
- [ ] Other (please specify)

10. What are you doing to retain employees? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Raising wages
- [ ] Converting hourly employees to salaried
- [ ] Improving benefits
- [ ] Paying bonuses
- [ ] Deferred compensation/"Golden Handcuffs" plan
- [ ] Increased 401k/pension contribution
- [ ] Health insurance
- [ ] More input in management decisions
- [ ] Growth and promotion opportunities
- [ ] Other (please specify)

11. What did you do this year to retain employees that you did not do last year?

12. Finding qualified new employees over the past year has been:

- [ ] Easy
- [ ] Somewhat difficult
- [ ] Very difficult
- [ ] Nearly impossible
- [ ] Other (please specify)

13. What steps have you taken to hire qualified workers? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Offering higher wage
- [ ] Signing bonus
- [ ] More benefits
- [ ] Flexible hours
- [ ] More paid vacation time
- [ ] Remote work
- [ ] Training program
- [ ] Tuition reimbursement
- [ ] Other (please specify)

14. Where have you had the most success in finding new workers? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Word of mouth referrals
- [ ] Newspaper advertising
- [ ] Online websites (ex: Monster, Indeed, etc.)
- [ ] Social media posts
- [ ] Vocational and trade schools
- [ ] Job fairs
- [ ] No luck at all
- [ ] Other (please specify)

15. What percentage of the health insurance benefit is paid by the employer vs the employee?

- [ ] 100%
- [ ] 50%
- [ ] Other (please specify)

16. If you lost customers last year, to what do you most attribute their leaving?

- ◯ Lost to competitor with similar pricing
- ◯ Lost to competitor with lower prices
- ◯ Lost to gas conversion
- ◯ Lost to heat pump conversion
- ◯ Lost due to other reasons (please specify)

17. At what point do you consider a customer "lost" and remove them from your customer list? Check only one.

- ◯ After no deliveries in 6 months
- ◯ After no deliveries in 12 months
- ◯ After no payment in 12 months
- ◯ When they notify us in writing
- ◯ We never take customers off our customer list
- ◯ Other (please specify)

18. How are you protecting your business against a cyberattack and data loss? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Encrypted cloud-based data storage
- [ ] Anti-malware software/Endpoint protection
- [ ] Secure data backup for disaster recovery & business continuity
- [ ] Written information security plan (WISP)
- [ ] Staff training
- [ ] Cybersecurity insurance
- [ ] Not sure what I should be doing
- [ ] Other (please specify)

19. Are you considering any of the following? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Acquiring a company
- [ ] Selling your company
- [ ] Transitioning to the next generation
- [ ] Conducting a business valuation
- [ ] Developing a new bulk plant
- [ ] Retiring
- [ ] Merging into a joint venture
- [ ] Updating accounting software
- [ ] Diversifying into a new product line (ex: generators, pest control, plumbing, etc.)

20. If conducting a business valuation, what is the purpose? Check all applicable.

- [ ] External sale
- [ ] Internal sale/gift
- [ ] Family issues/divorce
- [ ] Financing
- [ ] Other (please specify)

21. What products or services are you considering adding in 2022? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Generators
- [ ] Plumbing
- [ ] HVAC
- [ ] Propane
- [ ] Fuel Oil
- [ ] Electricity
- [ ] Pest Control
- [ ] Water Delivery
- [ ] Other (please specify)

22. What are the three largest permanent business changes you have made in the last 12 months?

23. How has your business adapted with the challenges posed by the Russia/Ukraine conflict? Check all applicable.

- [ ] Maintained margin
- [ ] Lowered margin
- [ ] Communicated to customers via email
- [ ] Posted communications on company website
- [ ] Extended credit terms
- [ ] Increased line of credit
- [ ] Other (please specify)

24. Given environmental concerns and the political climate, how confident are you in your company's ability to remain a viable energy provider?

- ( ) Highly confident
- ( ) Confident
- ( ) Somewhat confident
- ( ) Not confident
- ( ) Unsure

Additional Comments

25. Are you a member of your state and/or regional industry associations?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

If you answered "no," are you planning to join this year?

26. Do you blend biofuel?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If yes, what percentage blend of biofuel? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

27. Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

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Propane and Fuel Oil Continued 1

28. If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers? Check all applicable.

- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Newsletters
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Not communicating it to our customers
- ☐ Other (please specify)

29. How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

- ☐ Very confident
- ☐ Somewhat confident
- ☐ Not confident
- ☐ Not sure

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Propane and Fuel Oil Continued 2

30. How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended? (Please enter number of gallons without symbols. Example - 1,000,000 gallons should be entered as 1000000)

Fuel Oil - Residential	
Fuel Oil - Commercial	
Heating Propane - Residential	
Heating Propane - Commercial	

31. What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

32. What was your average margin for sales during the **heating season** just ended? (Note: Please enter your answer in cents per gallon. Example - 75 cent margin should be entered as .75, $1.25 margin should be entered as 1.25)

Fuel Oil - Residential	
Fuel Oil - Commercial	

33. What was your average margin on the following for PROPANE gallons sold during the heating season that just ended? (Note: Please enter your answer in cents per gallon. Example - 75 cent margin should be entered as .75, $1.25 margin should be entered as 1.25)

Heating Propane - Residential	
Heating Propane - Commercial	
Grills	
Pool Heaters	
Autogas	
Agriculture	
Home Use (cooking, laundry)	
Generators	
Other	

34. What percentage of active customers use a budget plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

35. What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

36. How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 1,000,000,000 should be entered as 1000000000)

Fuel Oil	
Propane	

37. What is your company's average gallons **delivered per stop** and average **tank size in gallons**? (Note: Please enter number of gallons without symbols. Example - 1,000 gallons should be entered as 1000)

Fuel Oil - Residential Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Fuel Oil - Residential Average Tank Size (in Gallons)	
Fuel Oil - Commercial Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Fuel Oil - Commercial Average Tank Size (in Gallons)	
Heating Propane - Residential Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Heating Propane - Residential Average Tank Size (in Gallons)	
Heating Propane - Commercial Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Heating Propane - Commercial Average Tank Size (in Gallons)	

38. Do you offer tank monitoring?

	Yes	No
Fuel Oil	◯	◯
Propane	◯	◯

39. If you answered "yes" that you offer tank monitoring, what is the average annual fee?
(Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

Fuel Oil	
Propane	

40. If you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ NA

41. In the last 12 months, did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID and are you planning to keep this in place?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not Legal in My State
- ◯ NA

42. Do you charge a delivery fee to PROPANE customers?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

43. What is the average renewal price you charge for a service contract on heating equipment? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

Fuel Oil	
Propane	

44. What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $100 should be entered as 100)

Fuel Oil	
Propane	
Air Conditioning	
Plumbing	
Pipeline Gas	
Other	

45. What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

Above ground	
Underground	

46. Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

47. Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

48. How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks (in percentages)?
(Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

For Above Ground Tanks

For Underground Tanks

49. How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks (in years)?

For Above ground Tanks

For Underground Tanks

50. Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

51. If your PROPANE customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- ◯ Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- ◯ Gained due to an acquisition
- ◯ Gained due to better use of the internet or e-commerce
- ◯ Gained due to other reasons (please specify)

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FUEL OIL ONLY

52. Do you blend biofuel?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If yes, what percentage blend of biofuel? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

53. Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

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Fuel Oil Only Continued 1

54. If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers? Check all applicable.

- ☐ Word of Mouth
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Not communicating it to customers
- ☐ Other (please specify)

55. How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

- [ ] Very confident
- [ ] Somewhat confident
- [ ] Not confident
- [ ] Not sure

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Fuel Oil Only Continued 2

56. How many gallons of fuel oil did you sell during the heating season just ended? (Please enter gallons of fuel without symbols. Example - 1,000,000 gallons should be entered as 1000000)

Fuel Oil - Residential

Fuel Oil - Commercial

57. What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

58. What was your average margin for fuel oil sales during the **heating season** that just ended? (Note: Please enter your answer in cents per gallon. Example - 75 cent margin should be entered as .75, $1.25 margin should be entered as 1.25)

Fuel Oil - Residential

Fuel Oil - Commercial

59. What percentage of active customers are on a budget plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 30% should be entered as 30)

60. What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 30% should be entered as 30)

61. How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 10,000 should be 10000)

62. What is your average customer tank size (in gallons)? (Note: Please enter gallons of fuel without symbols. Example - 1,000 gallons should be entered as 1000)

Fuel Oil - Residential

Fuel Oil - Commercial

63. Do you offer tank monitoring?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If you answered "yes," what is the average fee? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

64. If you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ NA

65. In the last 12 months, did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID and are you planning to keep it in place?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not Legal in My State

66. What is the average renewal price you charge for a service contract on heating equipment? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

Fuel Oil

Propane

67. What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $100 should be entered as 100)

Fuel Oil	
Air Conditioning	
Plumbing	
Pipeline Gas	
Other	

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PROPANE ONLY

68. How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended? (Please enter gallons without symbols. Example - 1,000,000 customers should be entered as 1000000)

Heating Propane - Residential	
Heating Propane - Commercial	

69. What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

70. What was your average margin for sales during the **heating season** that just ended? (Note: Please enter your answer in cents per gallon. Example - 75 cent margin should be entered as .75, $1.25 margin should be entered as 1.25)

Heating Propane - Residential	
Heating Propane - Commercial	

71. What was your average margin on the following for PROPANE gallons sold during the heating season that just ended? (Note: Please enter your answer in cents per gallon. Example - 75 cent margin should be entered as .75, $1.25 margin should be entered as 1.25)

Grills	
Pool Heaters	
Autogas	
Agriculture	
Home Use (cooking, laundry)	
Generators	
Other	

72. What percentage of active customers are on a budget plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 30% should be entered as 30)

73. What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 30% should be entered as 30)

74. How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 10,000 should be 10000)

75. What is your company's average gallons **delivered per stop** and average **customer tank size** in gallons? (Note: Please enter gallons without symbols. Example - 1,000 gallons should be entered as 1000)

Heating Propane - Residential Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Heating Propane - Residential Average Customer Tank Size (in Gallons)	
Heating Propane - Commercial Average Gallons Delivered Per Stop	
Heating Propane - Commercial Average Customer Tank Size (in Gallons)	

76. Do you offer tank monitoring?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If you answered "yes," what is the average annual fee? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example -$200 should be entered as 200)

77. In the last 12 months, did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID and are you planning to keep it in place?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not Legal in My State

78. If you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ NA

79. What is the average renewal price you charge for a service contract (on heating equipment)? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

80. What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for propane service? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $100 should be entered as 100)

81. What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own? (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - 20% should be entered as 20)

Above ground	
Underground	

82. Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

83. Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

84. Do you charge a delivery fee to propane customers?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If "yes," how much do you charge on average (Note: Please enter your answer without symbols. Example - $200 should be entered as 200)

85. How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks (in percentages)?

For Above ground Tanks

For Underground Tanks

86. How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks (in years)?

For Above ground Tanks

For Underground Tanks

87. Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

88. If your propane customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- ◯ Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- ◯ Gained due to an acquisition
- ◯ Gained due to better use of the internet or e-commerce
- ◯ Gained due to other reasons (please specify)

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CONTACT INFORMATION

89. If you'd like a copy of the results of this survey, please provide your contact information below.

Name	
Title	
Company	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

90. Please check if you would like to learn more about our services:

- [ ] FuelExchangeTM (merger & acquisition service for the energy industry)
- [ ] Transaction Advisory services
- [ ] Strategic business planning consulting
- [ ] Tax and accounting services
- [ ] Cyber security consulting
- [ ] Private wealth management
- [ ] Accounting software

By clicking the DONE button below you will be submitting the information entered in the survey. *Be sure to visit Gray, Gray & Gray's website at www.gggllp.com for previous survey results and industry trends reports.*