



By
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Guest Columnist

Working As One

I am a second-generation propane marketer, servicing customers in Maryland and Delaware on the Delmarva Peninsula that is located between the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. My wife Darlene and I live approximately 90 miles from Washington, D. C., which makes it extremely convenient to the National Propane Gas Association (NPGA) headquarters. This year I am honored to serve NPGA as its chairman-elect.

In my current position as chairman-elect, one of my responsibilities is to attend Propane Education & Research Council meetings. My participation in these meetings has given me the opportunity to see how each organization

works. And I know first-hand as a marketer the importance of the Mid-Atlantic Propane Gas Association to address the needs in my area.

Historically, marketers have viewed NPGA, PERC, and their state propane associations as separate entities when they think of “propane industry organizations.” But that’s no longer an accurate way of looking at these three industry engines of action.

Partnership Plan

There is a new partnership plan for the propane industry that jointly clarifies and unifies the different roles of NPGA and PERC. Each of these contribute distinct and worthy ideas for the well-being of the industry, and prove that while working together each can achieve its own individual goals as well as those of the industry at large.

Our state associations are critical to the success of both NPGA and PERC. I am happy to see that there are already examples of the 38 state associations multiplying the value of NPGA and PERC efforts. State partnership grants, such as those found within PERC advertising resources, help amplify the good value of propane at the local level. And the state rebate programs provided by PERC help local marketers in many different ways, each reflecting the unique needs of an individual state or region.

NPGA is heralded as a grass-roots powerhouse by the industry and on Capitol Hill. But we could not enjoy our significant successes without the support and hard work of our state associations. Just this fall, the state associations were a key player in urging members to submit comments to the Department of Transportation opposing the “bobtail tax.” They are the conduit of information from members to NPGA and PERC, and we depend on them to help the national organizations stay close to the needs and respond to our members and the public’s concerns. I believe with the new industry partnership agreement in effect we will see this focus enhanced in the coming year.

A leadership summit for NPGA-PERC staff and state association professionals held last month in Washington began to reflect this coordinated effort. This meeting drove home the idea that each organization’s staff can work together to implement the partnership plan. Our industry’s leaders have responded enthusiastically to this arrangement and are eager to begin this new era of synergy.

We’re entering a new phase of the industry, where NPGA, PERC, and our state associations have a more clearly defined role. Our industry will start to see the benefits of this new partnership as the months unfold.