

Propane in the Neck

by Earth 911 on June 2nd, 2008

[Post a comment](#)

Advertising Partner [Advertise with Earth911.com](#)

So you just bought a brand new grill in time for summer barbecues and outdoor eating. You're now left wondering what to do with that old propane tank that *can't* be good for the environment.

You know the one. Typically referred to as a five gallon propane tank or BBQ cylinder, it's filled with flammable liquid propane that is potentially explosive. Even worse, if you have the "old style" valve that nobody will legally refill, reuse isn't even an option.

Here's a few options for what to do with that old tank:

1. Exchange It

This is your best option. If you've yet to buy a new tank, ask about take back options at time of purchase. Major retailers like Wal-Mart and Ace Hardware feature these programs.

In addition to retail, here's two manufacturer exchange options:

- [Amerigas](#)—takes back most tanks in exchange for a new one
- [Blue Rhino](#)—takes back Blue Rhino tanks in exchange for a new Blue Rhino tank

2. Recycle It

News flash: your propane tank is a great example of scrap metal. This represents the most recycled product in North America. Your old propane tank is **very** recyclable.

Unfortunately, it's unlikely that propane tanks will be accepted at the curb with the rest of your [steel cans](#). They may be considered household hazardous waste because of the flammable contents. You can find an event that will take these tanks using [Earth 911's recycling locator](#).

You'll have a *much* easier time disposing of the tank if it is empty. So have one last BBQ with your old grill to use up all the propane.

A recycler probably will insist that you prove the tank is empty by removing the valve or putting a hole in the tank. Some places might even require you cut it in half.

Make sure you bring the valve with you to recycle. It is likely made of brass, and is more valuable than the tank itself.

So enjoy your summer grilling, but keep propane and its containers out of landfills!