

Say goodbye to gas cylinders – their sale and use are banned throughout the state – this is the deadline

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Attention all campers, California is banning one of the most useful tools for you. The single-use propane tank is going to be completely banned by this state.

Anyone camping in California will have to find an alternative to the portable propane canisters that are typically used to fuel camping stoves and heaters.

New Law

A new bill proposed by Governor Gavin Newsom last month will make California the first state to ban these single-use propane tanks (the dark green ones sold under the Coleman and Bernzomatic brands).

But don't panic too soon, this law will go into effect next January... 2028! You still have time to use up the ones you have in reserve.

According to the California Product Stewardship Council (a non-profit coalition that sponsored this bill), between 4.5 and 7 million of these cylinders are sold annually in California, which is why they propose that new products appear in the coming years and these cylinders be eliminated from stores.

Josh Simpson, co-founder of Little Kamper (a company that exchanges refillable propane cartridges) explained in his interview that with this measure they have tried to come up with alternatives that have a lower impact on the environment.

Tips and alternatives

Two experts have given their advice to help Californians prepare for this change, offering alternatives to propane for camping and which products will be the best on the market.

Simpson, whose company has multiplied its sales and expanded from 10 states to 48 in the last two years, and Doug Kobold (executive director of the California Product Stewardship Council) will be the two experts to clarify the information regarding this new law proposal.

First of all, regarding the Coleman or Berzomatic canisters used for camping, they recommend using refillable cylinders.

Of course, for those that are not refillable, these experts place special emphasis on taking them to recycling plants, since propane is a dangerous material, and, with these materials, they are safely disposed of so that they do not pose a danger to the environment.

As for refillable on the market, experts recommend Fuel Keg (Mr. Heater), Flame King and Little Kamper (which uses the same container as the one mentioned above). Each one costs about \$20 on the market, and its useful life is estimated at 12 years (once its cycle is complete, it would have to be retired or recertified to see if it works or not).

Both experts agree that, after this law, more purchase options will probably appear on the market so that people can refill their gas cylinders and also save money.

On the other hand, the initial cost of each can is different, a Coleman can be sold for \$5 and \$10, which is significantly cheaper than the refillable options, however, refilling one of these can costs between \$2 and \$4 in various centres.

If we talk about how much it costs to recycle single-use containers... There you can clearly see the difference between one and the other.

Can 1-pound cylinders be refilled at home?

Yes, as long as you have the necessary materials, which are nothing more than a special valve that connects the cylinder to a larger propane tank (for example, the 20-pound one costs about \$25).

Depending on the material of the canister you buy, refilling will not take more than 1 minute, although it requires a fair amount of care, attention, and external safety measures (such as gloves or masks) just in case.

Where can you go to refuel?

There are over 100 refueling locations in California (such as at the Sport Basement and Ace Hardware stores). RefuelYourFun.org offers a map of refueling locations, but make sure you're still on the refueling program before you go.

In the Bay Area, Flame King canisters will be refilled for free for Sports Basements members (non-members will be charged \$2).

It is worth remembering that there is also an exchange for one-pound cylinders, which has a lot of affiliated locations spread throughout the country.

This program is based on barbecue tanks, and for a price of \$12 you can exchange an empty cylinder for a filled one.

For now, California is the only state that has proposed this alternative, but they hope that other states will soon join and share this alternative to lead the country towards a place with fewer emissions.