

Turner Gas Co.

Former propane retailer grows wholesale and trucking operations

BY BRIAN RICHESSON | Senior editor

Turner Gas Co. covers a vast part of the western United States, traveling thousands of miles, over mountains and through bad weather, to deliver promised gallons.

Faced with these extreme circumstances, the three-generation family company considers it a requirement to run a quality wholesale propane operation.

“We don’t just sell gallons in the summer and not come through in the winter,” says Jim Turner, company president and one of four brothers to whom the Salt Lake City business was passed from their father. “Our thing is pride in taking care of the customer and making sure they have gallons year-round. We’re moving gas long distances and promising people it will be there.”

Turner Gas says it has the resources to offer the best in wholesale propane and trucking services. Without much pipeline or rail available in the western region, the company relies on its fleet of 40 transports, about 30 suppliers and 60 pickup points to service customers in 17 states. The company moves about 100 million gallons of propane per year, including common carry.

“We have a reasonable amount of storage and numerous suppliers in all directions,” Turner says. “We also have our sales staff throughout the region, out where our customers are. Other companies promise the same thing, but if they don’t have equipment in the area and the sales staff, they can run into problems. We’re



hands-on throughout.”

Turner Gas, celebrating 70 years in the propane industry, used to combine retail and wholesale operations, developing seven retail locations throughout California and Nevada. But in 1996, the company sold its retail operations and focused solely on growing the wholesale business.

“We served customers better than the majors did at the time, and we said, ‘Let’s just concentrate on wholesale,’” says Turner, noting supply and trucking as the most significant portions of the wholesale business. “The opportunity came and we made the move. We felt we could really service customers [propane retailers] and not compete with them.”

Turner Gas is eyeing several expansion projects. It plans to begin servicing customers in Arizona and New Mexico, and is even considering a new wholesale propane operation in North Carolina, where a member of the family moved. The company also

TEAM: Turner Gas is a family owned company. Jim Turner is president; Mike Turner, VP

LOCATION: Salt Lake City

FOUNDED: 1939

EMPLOYEES: 50-65, depending on season

SPECIALTY: Sells and delivers wholesale propane in 17 western states, moving about 100 million gallons per year, including common carry

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www.turnergas.com



expanded its business model recently to include wholesale diesel, opening a central Nevada rail terminal – a venture to help it maintain year-round cash flow, Turner says. **LPG**

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