

Hassle-Free Service.

by Joe Montroy

Just the right thing to do.

At Bergquist, we take customer service seriously. We've attended trainings and webinars on the subject. We've listened to speakers and presentations that focus on it. And we talk a lot about putting ourselves in the customer's shoes. When we get right down to it, what we are trying to do is be hassle-free for our customers. *It helps you, and that's great for us.*

“Our warehouse crews sweat the details to make sure your order ships quickly and accurately. Our accounting team puts in the work to make sure you never worry about inventory or billing issues. And we all work together to make sure doing business with Bergquist is easier than with any other vendor.”

Everyone at Bergquist is responsible for the hassle-free service you receive. You expect that from the Area Sales Manager who stops by your office. And from the Inside Salesperson you call with your order. But we understand it has to go deeper than that. Our warehouse crews sweat the details to make sure your order ships quickly and accurately. Our accounting team puts in the work to make sure you never worry about inventory or billing issues. *And we all work together to make sure doing business with Bergquist is easier than with any other vendor.*

People don't always want the same things. So we have to ask questions and listen. That helps us tailor our service to each customer. And we like it that way. We strive to provide every customer with the relationship and interactions they desire. *There is no cookie cutter approach to customer service at Bergquist.*

Nobody is perfect. Even we make mistakes. Nobody wants to admit it, but they happen. And when they do

that's an opportunity to show how far we will go to make it right. Because we know if the mistakes are rare, and we go to extraordinary lengths to make it right by you, *we can prove our commitment to hassle-free service.*

Our goal is to provide our customers with a hassle-free relationship. That takes effort on our part. It starts with training new employees and continues through every day of their careers at Bergquist. We encourage everyone on our team to prioritize the customer experience, and consider how we would like to be treated in similar situations. *For us it's just the right thing to do.*

From all of the team here at Bergquist, thank you for your continued business. *We truly enjoy helping you succeed, and we think of you more like good friends than customers. We wish you, your staff, and your family healthy and happy holidays, and look forward to giving you hassle-free service throughout the year to come.*



Top photos: A few of the people behind the scenes who make sure you get your order on time, complete, and correct (taken last year — we are all practicing CDC health guidelines now.)

Bottom: A blast from the past — our booth at the last NPGA Expo. We look forward to a return to these times!



Why Rinnai?

by Dale Aldrich
Director of Inside Sales



AFTER DABBLING with early versions of tankless water heaters some 25-30 years ago, we decided to get back into the tankless water heater market after seeing the market more receptive to new technologies.

Around 10 years ago, we took a look at two or three different manufacturers and decided to go with **Rinnai**, because of their commitment to supporting their products as well as the industry.

Next to heating, water heating is one of the biggest users of propane in both the residential and commercial markets. If propane is good enough for heating the home or building, then propane is definitely the right choice for heating water and saving money in the long run. If a propane marketer does not want to be directly involved in installing and servicing appliances, a marketer could get familiar with a local contractor that does. Educating a contractor and the homeowner on the benefits of propane is a big part of making propane powered appliance sales, and the subsequent increased use of propane gallons successful.

Rinnai has been very involved in developing and adding new designs and technology.

- Rinnai's RUR models have re-circulation built into them and use a specially designed cross-over valve that allows the cold water lines to act as the return line. This allows the water heater to fire up, start recirculating, and provide hot water ready at the faucet once the pump is activated via a remote device, rather than having to wait for the hot water to arrive after faucet is turned on.
- Their new Sensei models have wifi capabilities which can help with remotely setting the temperature, and also the re-circulation process, which can be started via Amazon's Alexa or other remote methods.
- Rinnai also has the Demand Duo hybrid commercial water heater that is perfect for emergency replacement situations. These have connection locations and venting similar to popular high-efficiency tank-style water heaters.

With the help of Rinnai's engineering department, commercial water heater jobs are no longer intimidating. Rinnai can help engineer almost any large commercial water heating job using their common vent-rack systems. These use a bank of 2-6 condensing water heaters that can

be factory assembled, and give installers just one cold water inlet, one hot water outlet, one gas inlet, and one venting connection to deal with.

Tankless water heaters are becoming more popular because they provide endless hot water and much improved efficiency.

In this day and age of multiple-bathroom homes with luxury spa like showers (with multiple shower heads), endless hot water and efficiency are high on the list of "must haves" for homeowners. Another big advantage is the space savings over a tank-style water heater. Commercial customers also benefit from the efficiency. And if it's a common vent-rack system installation, problem units can be taken out of the system for service without interruption to their customer's water supply.

Rinnai currently assembles many of their HE and HE+ tankless water heaters in Griffin, GA and they have now finished construction of a much larger, fully integrated manufacturing facility in Griffin to produce their tankless water heaters with locally sourced components.

More than just water heaters.

As the cold winter months approach we want to remind you that Rinnai also produces a line of Direct-Vent Wall Furnaces and Vent-Free Fan Convectur Heaters that feature cool-touch cabinets. Their heater lines feature technologies that use only the exact amount of gas needed to optimize efficiency along with variable-speed blowers that circulate the warm air evenly throughout a space.

Rinnai's line of condensing boilers and combination boiler/water heaters are becoming increasingly popular as they take up little space and are very efficient. Rinnai also recently started manufacturing air handlers for hydronic heating which use a Rinnai tankless water heater (or boiler) to pump heated water through their coil system which is built into a building's ductwork. It helps deliver high quality heat while maintaining the level of humidity needed to add comfort to the home and is also easy to use in conjunction with air conditioning.

Bergquist & Rinnai

As you can see, 10 years ago we made a decision to get "back into the game" when it comes to tankless water heaters. We think we made a great choice in choosing Rinnai. *What do you think?* Please feel free to give us a call to answer any of your Rinnai tankless water heater and direct-vent or vent-free heater questions.

UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, heating fuel dealers can predict their customers' delivery needs with some degree of accuracy. After March and April 2020, one wonders if the phrase "under normal circumstances" should be struck from the English language.

As discussed at length in the May 2020 issue of *Oil & Energy*, heating fuel associations, wholesalers, retailers, and the companies that support them have responded admirably to the COVID-19 crisis. They've stepped up to assist their fellow essential businesses and local first responders while making unprecedented changes to their daily operations in order to protect the health and safety of employees and customers.

It's easy to see and understand how COVID-19 demands changes to in-home service protocol; after all, following recommended guidelines like maintaining six feet of distance, wearing a mask, and regularly washing one's hands are the "new normal" for most everyone. What's more difficult to process, let alone predict, is how this new business environment affects customers' energy usage — especially when it comes to liquid heating fuels.

As the COVID-19 crisis swept across the nation, all states in the region had some form of stay-at-home order in effect. Millions found themselves "stuck inside" their residences longer, more often than usual, and just as the heating degree day season should have been winding down.

Did the increase in homebound customers and this past winter's overall decrease in heating degree days balance each other out? One certainty is this: K-factors, degree day schedules and conventional automatic delivery programs were not created to work amid a pandemic. On the other hand, tank monitors and remote monitoring programs have never been more vital to heating fuel businesses and consumers.

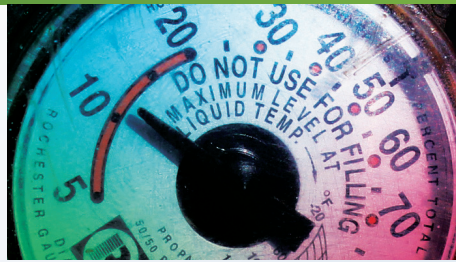
For a better understanding of how this technology has helped fuel sellers adapt to today's new and unpredictable circumstances, *Oil & Energy* spoke with several of the industry's leading tank monitoring providers.

LPGame Changer

Perhaps no company is better suited to assess the pandemic's impact on propane equipment usage than Bergquist, Inc.

"We definitely saw an increase in orders, especially at the beginning of the pandemic," says Bergquist Tank Monitor Sales Specialist Scott Gaudet. "Many propane marketers weren't doing inside service work, so it was a perfect time to get monitors installed without coming in contact with customers."

Ironically for a customer-service and safety-driven industry, one of the ways propane businesses can safely serve their



Tank Monitors Aid Dealers & Customers Amid COVID-19 Crisis

With stay-at-home orders affecting consumers' fuel usage patterns, remote monitoring provides much-needed oversight and reassurance.

customers during a pandemic is by never seeing or coming into direct contact with them at all. Tank monitoring makes that easier. "It has helped propane marketers by eliminating unnecessary deliveries, which in turn has limited exposure through customer interactions," says Gaudet.

Streamlining Essential Services

Indeed, the versatility tank monitors allow has truly come in handy for the fuel dealers who serve first responders and other essential service providers.

Not surprisingly, Bergquist saw increasing interest in tank monitors among its clients' municipal and commercial customers. "Propane marketers wanted to ensure there were no interruptions of service for critical or essential businesses," Gaudet says.

One change that some tank monitoring companies are considering making permanent is keeping remote monitoring salespeople working remotely.

"We have moved our inside sales and accounting teams to work from home," shares Gaudet. "We also put a number of protocols in place for our warehouse crews to limit their exposure to the virus. It took an investment to get our teams up and running remotely, but it has paid off. Our customers tell us we haven't missed a beat in customer service. Looking ahead, we will probably have more people working from home, at least part of the time."

The Bottom Line

Should a resurgence occur this fall, as most experts predict, heating fuel dealers and distributors who haven't yet deployed tank monitoring might reconsider the potential benefits for their businesses or be left trailing in the dust. If this past heating season is any indicator of the technology's potential, tank monitors can:

- Mitigate the impacts of quarantined customers' unpredictable and varying fuel usage;
- Identify unused residential and commercial accounts for possible closure; and
- Provide a service add-on or up-sale that does not require an in-home visit;
- All while delivering much-needed transparency, reliability and efficiency that will continue to benefit the provider long after the pandemic ends.

The bottom line: if not now, then when?

Energy
business

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Jake's Famous Mac & Cheese

- 1 lb. cooked macaroni
- 1 lb. shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 lb. shredded cheddar cheese

Slurry: 1/4 cup corn starch
1/4 cup water

Sauce: 1 quart heavy whipping cream
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Make slurry by mixing the corn starch and water in a small pan.

Add the sauce ingredients to the slurry. Heat slowly for 10-15 minutes.

Combine the heated sauce with the pasta and cheeses. Place in 9"x13" pan. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

Serves 8. Enjoy!

We didn't get to hold our Open Houses this year, but we still wanted to share one of our very favorite dishes with you!

