



**KENT COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC WORKS**

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## **Safe Propane Tank Disposal Important for Worker Safety**

**Grand Rapids, MI** – Kent County Department of Public Works (DPW) is reminding people that propane tanks should not be placed in trash or recycling carts once empty.

The arrival of summer marks the start of grilling and camping season when people will be using small, portable propane tanks often. Whether using the larger style for bar-b-que grills or the small style used for camping lanterns, empty one-pound and twenty-pound propane tanks should never be disposed of in trash or recycling carts.

“For the safety of our facilities and our staff and those of others in the waste and recycling industry, it’s critically important that empty propane tanks be transported directly to an appropriate propane handler,” said Kent County DPW Communications Manager Kristen Wieland. “Even though the propane tanks seem empty, there are always some vapors left inside that can cause an explosion at our facilities or in waste collection vehicles.”

Kent County’s Recycling & Education Center has experienced two explosions in the last two years, both in June, from propane tanks. One staff person was sent for evaluation but no injuries resulted from the explosions. Propane tanks also pose risks to waste collection drivers and vehicles when the waste is collected and then compacted inside the truck.

Empty propane tanks should be taken to a local drop-off center for safe disposal since they still contain explosive vapors. Kent County DPW lists participating locations on their website, [www.reimagnetrash.org](http://www.reimagnetrash.org). Locations include Alto, Wyoming, Grand Rapids, Cedar Springs, Rockford and Byron Center.

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*Editor’s Note: Videos showing the explosions from the baler at Kent County Recycling & Education Center can be found at <https://youtu.be/n9JZdztEfyU> (2016) and <https://youtu.be/kLm0h0Z3JZA> (2017).*