

Energy Survey



2022

FULL REPORT
with **BREAKOUT BY COMPANY SIZE**

g³ gray
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THE POWER OF MORE

:FuelExchange[™]

Featuring analytical data from



2022 Gray, Gray & Gray Energy Survey Results - OVERALL

Total number of full-time equivalent Employees	28
Total number of full-time equivalent Service Technicians	7
Total number of full-time equivalent Delivery Drivers	8
Number of customers per Service Technician 	827
What percentage of your delivery drivers are also cross-trained as HVAC technicians?	16%

What is the HOURLY rate you pay?

Delivery Drivers	\$25.29
Service Technicians - Heating	\$28.40
Service Technicians - Air Conditioning	\$29.76
Dispatchers	\$26.55
Service Manager	\$36.40
Customer Service Representatives	\$21.12
Accounts Payable/Receivable Staff	\$23.43
CFO/Controller	\$52.11
Bookkeeping/Accounting Manager	\$28.16
General Manager	\$48.16
Operations Manager	\$40.55
Office Manager	\$32.54
Sales Manager	\$35.31
IT Manager	\$38.22
HR Manager	\$34.92

How much do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new heating account? \$133.75 per account

What commission do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new equipment installation? 7%

Outside of payroll which operating expenses have increased the most in the last 1-2 years and why?

- 22% - Updating software
- 41% - Liability insurance
- 57% - Health insurance
- 10% - Cybersecurity insurance
- 6% - Environmental
- 65% - Vehicle
- 13% - Other
 - Supplies and fuel costs
 - Cyber threats
 - Materials and parts costs

Retaining good employees over the past year has been:

- 26% - Easy
- 53% - Somewhat difficult
- 18% - Very difficult
- 3% - Nearly impossible



What are you doing to retain employees?

- 92% - Raising wages
 - 6% - Converting hourly employees to salaried
- 42% - Improving benefits
- 63% - Paying bonuses
 - 9% - Increased 401k/pension contribution
- 35% - Health insurance
- 19% - More input in management decisions
- 25% - Growth and promotion opportunities
- 5% - Other
 - Promoting a more family atmosphere
 - Freedom - they are not micro managed
 - Have a great training program that includes outside schooling

What did you do this year to retain employees that you did not do last year?

- Raises (increase wages)
- Training
- Bonuses
- Increased PTO
- 401K
- Additional benefits
- Retention bonuses
- Flexible schedules
- Floating holidays

Finding qualified new employees over the past year has been:

- 20% - Somewhat difficult
- 46% - Very difficult
- 34% - Nearly impossible

What steps have you taken to hire qualified workers?

- 81% - Offering higher wages
- 26% - Signing bonus
- 23% - More benefits
- 26% - Flexible hours
- 28% - More paid vacation time
- 8% - Remote work
- 39% - Training program
- 22% - Tuition reimbursement
- 8% - Other
 - We pay people even when they are in school
 - Free oil
 - Employee referrals
 - Make them a part of the team and make them feel appreciated
 - Being a good place to work



Where have you had the most success in finding new workers?

- 64% - Word of mouth referrals
- 3% - Newspaper advertising
- 33% - Online websites (ex: Monster, Indeed, etc.)
- 15% - Social media posts
- 15% - Vocational and trade schools
- 4% - Job fairs
- 13% - No luck at all
- 4% - Other
 - Hiring signs outside office
 - Industry networking
 - Employment agency

What percentage of employee health insurance benefit is paid by the company?

- 39% - Company pays 100%
- 19% - Company pays 75% to 99%
- 12% - Company pays 51% to 74%
- 26% - Company pays 50%
- 4% - Company pays 0% to 49%

If your customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- 33%- Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- 5%- Gained due to an acquisition
- 5%- Gained due to better use of the internet or e-commerce
- 57%- Gained due to other reasons
 - Word of mouth
 - Great service
 - Aggressive pricing
 - Poor competitor service
 - Conversions
 - Had tank inventory for generator installs

If you lost customers last year, to what do you most attribute their leaving?

- 3% - Lost to competitor with similar pricing
- 40% - Lost to competitor with lower prices
- 23% - Lost to gas conversion
- 15% - Lost to heat pump conversion
- 19% - Lost due to other reasons
 - Sold/moved
 - Let them go
 - Messed up
 - Poor communication



At what point do you consider a customer “lost” and remove them from your customer list?

- 1% - After no deliveries in 6 months
- 38% - After no deliveries in 12 months
- 19% - When they notify us in writing
- 21% - We never take customers off our customer list
- 21% - Other
 - Equipment pickup
 - When they become a problem
 - Home sale or death - inactivate account then delete if new owner does not start back up with us

How long have your current customers been with your company? 

- 9% - Less than 1 year
- 8% - 1-2 years
- 7% - 2-3 years
- 8% - 3-4 years
- 6% - 4-5 years
- 62% - 5+ years

How are you protecting your business against a cyberattack and data loss?

- 54% - Encrypted cloud-based data storage
- 71% - Anti-malware software/Endpoint protection
- 79% - Secure data backup for disaster recovery & business continuity
- 22% - Written information security plan (WISP)
- 42% - Staff training
- 38% - Cybersecurity insurance
- 5% - Not sure what I should be doing

Are you considering any of the following?

- 52% - Acquiring a company
- 15% - Selling your company
- 26% - Transitioning to the next generation
- 16% - Conducting a business valuation
- 27% - Developing a new bulk plant
- 19% - Retiring
- 2% - Merging into a joint venture
- 15% - Updating accounting software
- 11% - Diversifying into a new product line (ex: generators, pest control, plumbing, etc.)



If conducting a business valuation, what is the purpose?

35% - External sale

30% - Internal sale/gift

13% - Family issues/divorce

30% - Financing

13% - Other

- Considering selling due to lack of new, qualified employees
- Anti fossil fuel push by the state and federal government
- Interested in value of business
- Growth

What products or services are you considering adding in 2022?

18% - Generators

29% - Plumbing

35% - HVAC

47% - Propane

18% - Fuel Oil

6% - Electricity

12% - Other

- Water filtration and drain services
- Handyman services

What are the three largest permanent business changes you have made in the last 12 months?

- Replaced old vehicles /added new vehicles
- Increased wages, vacation time, and personnel/management positions
- Upgraded IT, equipment, processes, propane storage
- Multiple acquisitions extending service areas and product line offerings

How has your business adapted with the challenges posed by the Russia/Ukraine conflict?

70% - Maintained margin

23% - Lowered margin

28% - Communicated to customers via email

30% - Posted communications on company website

19% - Extended credit terms

18% - Increased line of credit

19% - Other

- Smaller deliveries/reduced minimum deliveries
- Contact customers - letters or calls
- Raised margins
- Extended prebuy season to end in May instead of April
- Added more budget accounts



Given environmental concerns and the political climate, how confident are you in your company's ability to remain a viable energy provider?

- 29% - Highly confident
- 48% - Confident
- 15% - Somewhat confident
- 7% - Not confident
- 1% - Unsure

Are you a member of your state and/or regional industry associations?

- 95% - Yes
- 5% - No

Do you blend biofuel?

- 28% - Yes
- 72% - No
- If "yes" what percentage of biofuel blending? 18%

Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

- 40% - Yes
- 60% - No

If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers?

- 38% - Word of mouth
- 48% - Newsletters
- 62% - Website
- 31% - Not communicating it to our customers
- 14% - Other
 - Eblasts
 - Radio
 - Newspaper
 - Association mailers
 - Delivery tickets
 - Invoices

How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

- 13% - Very confident
- 59% - Somewhat confident
- 21% - Not confident
- 7% - Not sure

How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	1,597,672
Fuel Oil - Commercial	408,555
Heating Propane - Residential	1,468,967
Heating Propane - Commercial	425,937



What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers?


59% - Automatic
41% - Will call

What was your average margin on the following during the heating season that just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	\$0.82
Fuel Oil - Commercial	\$0.53
Heating Propane - Residential	\$1.26
Heating Propane - Commercial	\$0.69
Propane - Grills	\$3.23
Propane - Pool Heaters	\$1.76
Propane - Autogas	\$0.73
Propane - Agriculture	\$0.45
Propane - Home Use (cooking, laundry)	\$3.05
Propane - Generators	\$2.39
Other	\$1.16

What percentage of active customers use a budget plan? 20%

What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? 23%

How many gallons are price-protected as a percentage of gallons sold? 

9% - Cap price plan
14% - Fixed price plan
78% - Variable price plan

How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months?

Fuel Oil	30,211
Propane	28,830

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop and average customer tank size?

Fuel Oil - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	161
Fuel Oil - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	275
Fuel Oil - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	382
Fuel Oil - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000
Heating Propane - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	157
Heating Propane - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	500
Heating Propane - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	542
Heating Propane - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop? 

Fuel Oil	195
Stops per hour	2.4
Gallons per hour	474



Do you offer fuel oil tank monitoring?

25% - Yes

75% - No

If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$111

Do you offer propane tank monitoring?

76% - Yes

24% - No

If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$121

If you answered "yes" above and you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

49% - Yes

2% - No

49% - NA

In the last 12 months did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID, and are you planning on keeping this in place?

12% - Yes

84% - No

4% - NA

Do you charge a delivery fee to propane customers?

26% - Yes

74% - No

If "yes" how much do you charge? \$8.21

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on fuel oil equipment? \$297.00

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on propane equipment? \$307.31

What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service?

Fuel Oil	\$123.92
Propane	\$118.19
Air Conditioning	\$139.51
Plumbing	\$154.70
Pipeline Gas	\$138.36
Other	\$107.50

What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own?

Above Ground 80%

Underground 55%



Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

65% - Yes
35% - No
If "yes" what is the average fee? \$106.68

Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

51% - Yes
49% - No
If "yes" what is the average fee? \$135.75

How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	45%
For Underground Tanks	44%

How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	5 years
For Underground Tanks	4 years

Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?


17% - Yes
83% - No

* Multiple choice answers that generated no response were not reported.



Appearance of this logo indicates data provided by Angus Energy customer analysis. Founded in 1991 by Phil Baratz, Angus Energy has guided businesses in the ever-evolving realm of heating oil prices, helping fuel dealers improve their business performance through data-driven strategies and tools created over 30+ years. This includes pricing program marketing strategies, as well as business intelligence and data analysis, financial management, tank monitoring and a host of products and services designed to maximize growth.



Total number of full-time equivalent Employees	20
Total number of full-time equivalent Service Technicians	6
Total number of full-time equivalent Delivery Drivers	6
Number of customers per Service Technician 	827
What percentage of your delivery drivers are also cross-trained as HVAC technicians?	20%

What is the HOURLY rate you pay?

Delivery Drivers	\$24.80
Service Technicians - Heating	\$27.69
Service Technicians - Air Conditioning	\$28.92
Dispatchers	\$25.28
Service Manager	\$34.93
Customer Service Representatives	\$20.16
Accounts Payable/Receivable Staff	\$22.75
CFO/Controller	\$45.55
Bookkeeping/Accounting Manager	\$26.54
General Manager	\$41.00
Operations Manager	\$36.63
Office Manager	\$30.90
Sales Manager	\$33.26
IT Manager	\$32.25
HR Manager	\$31.51

How much do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new heating account? \$125 per account

What commission do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new equipment installation? 6%

Outside of payroll which operating expenses have increased the most in the last 1-2 years and why?

- 19% - Updating software
- 46% - Liability insurance
- 65% - Health insurance
- 6% - Cybersecurity insurance
- 4% - Environmental
- 63% - Vehicle
- 13% - Other
 - Supplies and fuel costs
 - Insurance premium increases
 - Materials and parts costs
 - Market forces
 - Increase in staff
 - Moving to mobile applications / technology
 - Repairs



Retaining good employees over the past year has been:

- 29% - Easy
- 51% - Somewhat difficult
- 20% - Very difficult

What are you doing to retain employees?

- 90% - Raising wages
- 4% - Converting hourly employees to salaried
- 41% - Improving benefits
- 67% - Paying bonuses
- 8% - Increased 401k/pension contribution
- 43% - Health insurance
- 16% - More input in management decisions
- 20% - Growth and promotion opportunities
- 6% - Other
 - Freedom (not micro-managed)
 - Have a great training program that includes outside schooling
 - Got rid of former owner/manager who was not personal/friendly/savvy

What did you do this year to retain employees that you did not do last year?

- Raises (increase wages)
- Bonuses
- 401K
- Additional benefits
- Retention bonuses
- Flexible schedules
- Floating holidays
- No changes
- No summer layoffs
- Spread out work more for employees
- Short term and long term disability plans

Finding qualified new employees over the past year has been:

- 22% - Somewhat difficult
- 49% - Very difficult
- 29% - Nearly impossible



What steps have you taken to hire qualified workers?

- 76% - Offering higher wages
- 24% - Signing bonus
- 31% - More benefits
- 33% - Flexible hours
- 38% - More paid vacation time
- 2% - Remote work
- 40% - Training program
- 17% - Tuition reimbursement
- 14% - Other
 - Pay people even when they are in school
 - Free oil
 - Employee referrals
 - Make them a part of the team and make them feel appreciated
 - Being a good place to work

Where have you had the most success in finding new workers?

- 68% - Word of mouth referrals
- 5% - Newspaper advertising
- 32% - Online websites (ex: Monster, Indeed, etc.)
- 11% - Social media posts
- 11% - Vocational and trade schools
- 7% - Job fairs
- 16% - No luck at all

What percentage of employee health insurance benefit is paid by the company?

- 46% - Company pays 100%
- 18% - Company pays 75% to 99%
- 9% - Company pays 51% to 74%
- 25% - Company pays 50%
- 2% - Company pays 0% to 49%

If your customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- 41%- Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- 59%- Gained due to other reasons
 - Word of mouth
 - Great service
 - Aggressive pricing
 - Poor competitor service
 - Conversions



If you lost customers last year, to what do you most attribute their leaving?

- 2% - Lost to competitor with similar pricing
- 37% - Lost to competitor with lower prices
- 24% - Lost to gas conversion
- 13% - Lost to heat pump conversion
- 24% - Lost due to other reasons
 - Sold/moved
 - Natural gas/propane conversion
 - Let them go
 - Poor communication
 - Natural gas - Government subsidizing
 - Retirement
 - Real estate turnover
 - Give away programs for new accounts
 - Purchased new customer list and weeded out some accounts

At what point do you consider a customer “lost” and remove them from your customer list?

- 37% - After no deliveries in 12 months
- 21% - When they notify us in writing
- 17% - We never take customers off our customer list
- 25% - Other
 - When they become a problem
 - Home sales or death - inactivate account then delete if new owner does not start back up with us
 - Converted to different fuel
 - Put them in the “inactive accounts” list

How long have your current customers been with your company? 

- 9% - Less than 1 year
- 8% - 1-2 years
- 7% - 2-3 years
- 8% - 3-4 years
- 6% - 4-5 years
- 62% - 5+ years

How are you protecting your business against a cyberattack and data loss?

- 48% - Encrypted cloud-based data storage
- 67% - Anti-malware software/Endpoint protection
- 73% - Secure data backup for disaster recovery & business continuity
- 21% - Written information security plan (WISP)
- 40% - Staff training
- 35% - Cybersecurity insurance
- 8% - Not sure what I should be doing



Are you considering any of the following?

- 43% - Acquiring a company
- 23% - Selling your company
- 14% - Transitioning to the next generation
- 17% - Conducting a business valuation
- 29% - Developing a new bulk plant
- 17% - Retiring
- 3% - Merging into a joint venture
- 20% - Updating accounting software
- 14% - Diversifying into a new product line (ex: generators, pest control, plumbing, etc.)

If conducting a business valuation, what is the purpose?

- 50% - External sale
- 21% - Internal sale/gift
 - 7% - Family issues/divorce
- 21% - Financing
- 14% - Other
 - Considering selling due to lack of new, qualified employees
 - Anti-fossil fuel push by the state and federal government
 - Interested in value of business

What products or services are you considering adding in 2022?

- 22% - Plumbing
- 44% - HVAC
- 67% - Propane
- 22% - Fuel Oil
- 11% - Other
 - Handyman services

What are the three largest permanent business changes you have made in the last 12 months?

- Increase - service parts inventory, personnel, focus on improving processes
- Upgrades - IT, equipment, vehicles, bulk plant, vehicle parking building, electronic service software, propane transport purchase and implementation, communications with employees as well as customers
- Increased wages and vacation time
- Additional staff - plumber; increased size of service department
- Acquisitions - electric company, another oil company



How has your business adapted with the challenges posed by the Russia/Ukraine conflict?

- 67% - Maintained margin
- 27% - Lowered margin
- 21% - Communicated to customers via email
- 29% - Posted communications on company website
- 15% - Extended credit terms
- 13% - Increased line of credit
- 17% - Other
 - Smaller deliveries/Reduced minimum deliveries
 - Contact customers - letters or calls
 - Added more budget accounts
 - Offered multiple contracting options for energy
 - Contact client for approval for automatic deliveries prior to delivery

Given environmental concerns and the political climate, how confident are you in your company's ability to remain a viable energy provider?

- 29% - Highly confident
- 47% - Confident
- 14% - Somewhat confident
- 8% - Not confident
- 2% - Unsure

Are you a member of your state and/or regional industry associations?

- 96% - Yes
 - 4% - No
- If "no" are you planning to join this year? Yes: 50% No: 50%

Do you blend biofuel?

- 20% - Yes
 - 80% - No
- If "yes" what percentage of biofuel blending? 15%

Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

- 32% - Yes
- 68% - No

If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers?

- 40% - Word of mouth
- 33% - Newsletters
- 53% - Website
- 40% - Not communicating it to our customers
- 20% - Other
 - Eblasts
 - Radio
 - Newspaper
 - Association mailers



How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

- 21% - Very confident
- 58% - Somewhat confident
- 14% - Not confident
- 7% - Not sure

How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	837,380
Fuel Oil - Commercial	281,801
Heating Propane - Residential	2,472,853
Heating Propane - Commercial	736,598

What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers?


- 59% - Automatic
- 41% - Will call

What was your average margin on the following during the heating season that just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	\$0.78
Fuel Oil - Commercial	\$0.54
Heating Propane - Residential	\$1.25
Heating Propane - Commercial	\$0.70
Propane - Grills	\$3.15
Propane - Pool Heaters	\$1.48
Propane - Autogas	\$0.73
Propane - Agriculture	\$0.54
Propane - Home Use (cooking, laundry)	\$2.77
Propane - Generators	\$2.31
Other	\$1.16

What percentage of active customers use a budget plan? 18%

What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? 24%

How many gallons are price-protected as a percentage of gallons sold? 

- 9% - Cap price plan
- 14% - Fixed price plan
- 78% - Variable price plan

How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months?

Fuel Oil	8,285
Propane	7,905



What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop and average customer tank size?

Fuel Oil - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	162
Fuel Oil - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	275
Fuel Oil - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	354
Fuel Oil - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000
Heating Propane - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	164
Heating Propane - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	500
Heating Propane - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	582
Heating Propane - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop? 

Fuel Oil	186
Stops per hour	2.27
Gallons per hour	422

Do you offer fuel oil tank monitoring?

25% - Yes
 75% - No
 If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$116.29

Do you offer propane tank monitoring?

71% - Yes
 29% - No
 If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$170.50

If you answered "yes" above and you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

42% - Yes
 58% - NA

In the last 12 months did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID, and are you planning on keeping this in place?

13% - Yes
 85% - No
 2% - NA

Do you charge a delivery fee to propane customers?

31% - Yes
 69% - No
 If "yes" how much do you charge? \$9.09

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on fuel oil equipment? \$305.64

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on propane equipment? \$336.80



What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service?

Fuel Oil	\$120.16
Propane	\$108.67
Air Conditioning	\$137.56
Plumbing	\$154.50
Pipeline Gas	\$133.67
Other	\$107.50

What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own?

Above Ground	83%
Underground	74%

Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

60% - Yes
 40% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? \$101.55

Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

58% - Yes
 42% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? \$126.83

How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	50%
For Underground Tanks	7%

How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?


For Above Ground Tanks	2 years
For Underground Tanks	5 years

Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?

15% - Yes
 85% - No

* Multiple choice answers that generated no response were not reported.



Total number of full-time equivalent Employees	37
Total number of full-time equivalent Service Technicians	7
Total number of full-time equivalent Delivery Drivers	11
Number of customers per Service Technician 	827
What percentage of your delivery drivers are also cross-trained as HVAC technicians?	8%

What is the HOURLY rate you pay?

Delivery Drivers	\$28.15
Service Technicians - Heating	\$30.55
Service Technicians - Air Conditioning	\$34.70
Dispatchers	\$30.31
Service Manager	\$40.94
Customer Service Representatives	\$26.81
Accounts Payable/Receivable Staff	\$25.46
CFO/Controller	\$46.97
Bookkeeping/Accounting Manager	\$30.81
General Manager	\$57.81
Operations Manager	\$53.61
Office Manager	\$42.00
Sales Manager	\$40.80
IT Manager	\$48.10
HR Manager	\$72.12

How much do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new heating account? \$120 per account

What commission do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new equipment installation? 8%

Outside of payroll which operating expenses have increased the most in the last 1-2 years and why?

- 30% - Updating software
- 50% - Liability insurance
- 60% - Health insurance
- 10% - Cybersecurity insurance
- 20% - Environmental
- 50% - Vehicle
- 30% - Other
 - Parts costs
 - Equipment
 - Several people with extended illnesses
 - Multiple small accidents

Retaining good employees over the past year has been:

- 20% - Easy
- 60% - Somewhat difficult
- 20% - Very difficult



What are you doing to retain employees?

- 100% - Raising wages
- 10% - Converting hourly employees to salaried
- 30% - Improving benefits
- 50% - Paying bonuses
- 10% - Increased 401k/pension contribution
- 20% - Health insurance
- 10% - More input in management decisions
- 10% - Growth and promotion opportunities

What did you do this year to retain employees that you did not do last year?

- Increased wages
- Training
- Bonuses
- Flexible schedules

Finding qualified new employees over the past year has been:

- 10% - Somewhat difficult
- 50% - Very difficult
- 40% - Nearly impossible

What steps have you taken to hire qualified workers?

- 100% - Offering higher wages
- 40% - Signing bonus
- 10% - More benefits
- 30% - More paid vacation time
- 20% - Remote work
- 20% - Training program
- 30% - Tuition reimbursement

Where have you had the most success in finding new workers?

- 70% - Word of mouth referrals
- 40% - Online websites (ex: Monster, Indeed, etc.)
- 20% - Social media posts
- 10% - Vocational and trade schools

What percentage of employee health insurance benefit is paid by the company?

- 40% - Company pays 100%
- 10% - Company pays 75% to 99%
- 20% - Company pays 51% to 74%
- 30% - Company pays 50%



If your customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- 33%- Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- 67%- Gained due to other reasons
 - Word of mouth
 - Aggressive pricing
 - Had tank inventory for generator installs

If you lost customers last year, to what do you most attribute their leaving?

- 11% - Lost to competitor with similar pricing
- 45% - Lost to competitor with lower prices
- 22% - Lost to gas conversion
- 22% - Lost to heat pump conversion

At what point do you consider a customer “lost” and remove them from your customer list?

- 10% - After no deliveries in 6 months
- 60% - After no deliveries in 12 months
- 10% - When they notify us in writing
- 10% - We never take customers off our customer list
- 10% - Other
 - No deliveries in 2 years or if they call

How long have your current customers been with your company? 

- 9% - Less than 1 year
- 8% - 1-2 years
- 7% - 2-3 years
- 8% - 3-4 years
- 6% - 4-5 years
- 62% - 5+ years

How are you protecting your business against a cyberattack and data loss?

- 50% - Encrypted cloud-based data storage
- 70% - Anti-malware software/Endpoint protection
- 90% - Secure data backup for disaster recovery & business continuity
- 30% - Staff training
- 40% - Cybersecurity insurance

Are you considering any of the following?

- 38% - Acquiring a company
- 63% - Transitioning to the next generation
- 25% - Conducting a business valuation
- 25% - Developing a new bulk plant
- 25% - Retiring
- 13% - Updating accounting software



If conducting a business valuation, what is the purpose?

- 50% - Internal sale/gift
- 25% - Family issues/divorce
- 75% - Financing

What products or services are you considering adding in 2022?

- 33% - Generators
- 33% - Plumbing
- 33% - HVAC
- 33% - Propane

What are the three largest permanent business changes you have made in the last 12 months?

- Upgrades - propane bulk plant, inventory management system, website, vehicles, remote work capabilities for office staff
- Readjust wage scale for employees holding specific licenses
- Growth through acquisitions
- Expanded service offerings - commercial fuels, plumbing, AC, gas service

How has your business adapted with the challenges posed by the Russia/Ukraine conflict?

- 88% - Maintained margin
- 13% - Lowered margin
- 13% - Communicated to customers via email
- 13% - Posted communications on company website
- 25% - Extended credit terms
- 25% - Increased line of credit
- 38% - Other
 - Extended prebuy season to end in May instead of April
 - Reduced minimum delivery

Given environmental concerns and the political climate, how confident are you in your company's ability to remain a viable energy provider?

- 30% - Highly confident
- 40% - Confident
- 30% - Somewhat confident

Are you a member of your state and/or regional industry associations?

- 80% - Yes
- 20% - No
- If "no" are you planning to join this year? No: 100%

Do you blend biofuel?

- 22% - Yes
- 78% - No
- If "yes" what percentage of biofuel blending? 35%



Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

- 44% - Yes
- 56% - No

If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers?

- 33% - Word of mouth
- 100% - Newsletters
- 67% - Website

How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

- 50% - Somewhat confident
- 25% - Not confident
- 25% - Not sure

How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	2,800,819
Fuel Oil - Commercial	875,691
Heating Propane - Residential	2,288,179
Heating Propane - Commercial	1,247,853

What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers?


- 59% - Automatic
- 41% - Will call

What was your average margin on the following during the heating season that just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	\$0.92
Fuel Oil - Commercial	\$0.58
Heating Propane - Residential	\$1.31
Heating Propane - Commercial	\$0.67
Propane - Grills	\$3.75
Propane - Pool Heaters	\$1.90
Propane - Autogas	\$1.05
Propane - Agriculture	\$0.30
Propane - Home Use (cooking, laundry)	\$3.24
Propane - Generators	\$2.55

What percentage of active customers use a budget plan? 26%

What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? 23%

How many gallons are price-protected as a percentage of gallons sold? 

- 9% - Cap price plan
- 14% - Fixed price plan
- 78% - Variable price plan



How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months?

Fuel Oil	33,285
Propane	28,294

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop and average customer tank size?

Fuel Oil - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	154
Fuel Oil - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	275
Fuel Oil - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	674
Fuel Oil - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000
Heating Propane - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	140
Heating Propane - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	200
Heating Propane - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	437
Heating Propane - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop? 

Fuel Oil	168
Stops per hour	2.71
Gallons per hour	456

Do you offer fuel oil tank monitoring?

20% - Yes
 80% - No
 If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$91.94

Do you offer propane tank monitoring?

71% - Yes
 29% - No
 If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$70.97

If you answered "yes" above and you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

50% - Yes
 10% - No
 40% - NA

In the last 12 months did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID, and are you planning on keeping this in place?

100% - No

Do you charge a delivery fee to propane customers?

29% - Yes
 71% - No
 If "yes" how much do you charge? \$103.00



What is the average renewal price for a service contract on fuel oil equipment? \$279.00

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on propane equipment? \$224.67

What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service?

Fuel Oil	\$126.00
Propane	\$125.60
Air Conditioning	\$133.00
Plumbing	\$195.00
Pipeline Gas	\$159.00

What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own?

Above Ground	68%
Underground	43%

Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

71% - Yes
 29% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? \$157.80

Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

57% - Yes
 43% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? \$200.00

How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	13%
For Underground Tanks	25%

How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?


For Above Ground Tanks	3 years
For Underground Tanks	3 years

Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?

14% - Yes
 86% - No

* Multiple choice answers that generated no response were not reported.



Total number of full-time equivalent Employees	87
Total number of full-time equivalent Service Technicians	19
Total number of full-time equivalent Delivery Drivers	19
Number of customers per Service Technician 	827
What percentage of your delivery drivers are also cross-trained as HVAC technicians?	7%

What is the HOURLY rate you pay?

Delivery Drivers	\$26.53
Service Technicians - Heating	\$28.33
Service Technicians - Air Conditioning	\$30.17
Dispatchers	\$28.38
Service Manager	\$43.20
Customer Service Representatives	\$22.03
Accounts Payable/Receivable Staff	\$24.07
CFO/Controller	\$61.63
Bookkeeping/Accounting Manager	\$36.00
General Manager	\$64.00
Operations Manager	\$52.70
Office Manager	\$35.40
Sales Manager	\$37.75
IT Manager	\$51.50
HR Manager	\$41.50

How much do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new heating account? \$212.50 per account

What commission do you pay a salesperson for bringing in a new equipment installation? 7%

Outside of payroll which operating expenses have increased the most in the last 1-2 years and why?

- 17% - Updating software
- 33% - Liability insurance
- 67% - Health insurance
- 83% - Vehicles

Retaining good employees over the past year has been:

- 17% - Easy
- 49% - Somewhat difficult
- 17% - Very difficult
- 17% - Nearly impossible



What are you doing to retain employees?

- 100% - Raising wages
- 17% - Converting hourly employees to salaried
- 50% - Improving benefits
- 67% - Paying bonuses
- 17% - Health insurance
- 67% - Growth and promotion opportunities
- 17% - Other
 - Promote a more family atmosphere

What did you do this year to retain employees that you did not do last year?

- Increased wages
- Training
- Bonuses
- Growth opportunities

Finding qualified new employees over the past year has been:

- 17% - Somewhat difficult
- 66% - Very difficult
- 17% - Nearly impossible

What steps have you taken to hire qualified workers?

- 100% - Offering higher wages
- 33% - Signing bonus
- 17% - More benefits
- 50% - Flexible hours
- 33% - Remote work
- 33% - Training program
- 17% - Tuition reimbursement

Where have you had the most success in finding new workers?

- 50% - Word of mouth referrals
- 83% - Online websites (ex: Monster, Indeed, etc.)
- 33% - Social media posts
- 33% - Vocational and trade schools
- 17% - Other
 - Employment agency

What percentage of employee health insurance benefit is paid by the company?

- 17% - Company pays 75% to 99%
- 49% - Company pays 51% to 74%
- 17% - Company pays 50%
- 17% - Company pays 0% to 49%



If your customer list grew last year, to what do you most attribute the increase?

- 20%- Gained due to better or more effective marketing
- 20%- Gained due to an acquisition
- 40%- Gained due to better use of the internet or e-commerce
- 20%- Gained due to other reasons
 - Failure of competitors to meet customer expectations

If you lost customers last year, to what do you most attribute their leaving?

- 66% - Lost to competitor with lower prices
- 17% - Lost to gas conversion
- 17% - Lost due to other reasons
 - Combination of heat pumps and discounters

At what point do you consider a customer “lost” and remove them from your customer list?

- 50% - After no deliveries in 12 months
- 33% - When they notify us in writing
- 17% - We never take customers off our customer list

How long have your current customers been with your company? 

- 9% - Less than 1 year
- 8% - 1-2 years
- 7% - 2-3 years
- 8% - 3-4 years
- 6% - 4-5 years
- 62% - 5+ years

How are you protecting your business against a cyberattack and data loss?

- 67% - Encrypted cloud-based data storage
- 83% - Anti-malware software/Endpoint protection
- 83% - Secure data backup for disaster recovery & business continuity
- 17% - Written information security plan (WISP)
- 50% - Staff training
- 50% - Cybersecurity insurance

Are you considering any of the following?

- 83% - Acquiring a company
- 17% - Selling your company
- 33% - Transitioning to the next generation
- 17% - Conducting a business valuation
- 33% - Developing a new bulk plant
- 17% - Retiring

If conducting a business valuation, what is the purpose?

- 50% - Internal sale/gift
- 50% - Family issues/divorce



What products or services are you considering adding in 2022?

100% - Generators
100% - Electricity

What are the three largest permanent business changes you have made in the last 12 months?

- Upgrades – IT-related security policies, remote capabilities, new garage facilities
- Discontinued segments of service business due to inability to keep up with demand
- Separated online ordering company
- Acquisition - expanded coverage area
- Started hauling own fuel
- Increased - mark-up on material and labor on jobs, cost of service plans and labor, wages

How has your business adapted with the challenges posed by the Russia/Ukraine conflict?

100% - Maintained margin
80% - Communicated to customers via email
60% - Posted communications on company website
40% - Extended credit terms

Given environmental concerns and the political climate, how confident are you in your company's ability to remain a viable energy provider?

17% - Highly confident
83% - Confident

Are you a member of your state and/or regional industry associations?

100% - Yes

Do you blend biofuel?

67% - Yes
33% - No
If "yes" what percentage of biofuel blending? 18%

Is your organization ready to increase the percentage of biofuel blending?

100% - Yes

If yes, how are you communicating that to your customers?

20% - Word of mouth
80% - Newsletters
80% - Website
20% - Not communicating it to our customers
20% - Other

- Delivery tickets
- Email
- Invoice messages



How confident are you that all of your customers are aware you blend biofuel?

60% - Somewhat confident
40% - Not confident

How many gallons did you sell during the heating season just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	7,408,481
Fuel Oil - Commercial	735,165
Heating Propane - Residential	2,239,958
Heating Propane - Commercial	629,661

What percentage of your customer list is automatic customers?


69% - Automatic
31% - Will call

What was your average margin on the following during the heating season that just ended?

Fuel Oil - Residential	\$0.88
Fuel Oil - Commercial	\$0.54
Heating Propane - Residential	\$1.29
Heating Propane - Commercial	\$0.77
Propane - Grills	\$4.25
Propane - Pool Heaters	\$2.50
Propane - Autogas	\$0.40
Propane - Agriculture	NA
Propane - Home Use (cooking, laundry)	\$4.25
Propane - Generators	\$2.50

What percentage of active customers use a budget plan? 27%

What percentage of active customers use a price protection plan? 21%

How many gallons are price-protected as a percentage of gallons sold? 

9% - Cap price plan
14% - Fixed price plan
78% - Variable price plan

How many total deliveries did your company make in the last 12 months?

Fuel Oil	54,618
Propane	23,213



What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop and average customer tank size?

Fuel Oil - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	166
Fuel Oil - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	275
Fuel Oil - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	283
Fuel Oil - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000
Heating Propane - Residential average gallons delivered per stop	161
Heating Propane - Residential average tank size (in gallons)	240
Heating Propane - Commercial average gallons delivered per stop	1,682
Heating Propane - Commercial average tank size (in gallons)	1,000

What is your company's average gallons delivered per stop? 

Fuel Oil	203
Stops per hour	2.38
Gallons per hour	485

Do you offer fuel oil tank monitoring?

- 50% - Yes
- 50% - No
- If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? NA

Do you offer propane tank monitoring?

- 100% - Yes
- If you answered "yes" what is the average annual fee? \$120.00

If you answered "yes" above and you lose a customer, do you pick up the tank monitor?

- 80% - Yes
- 20% - NA

In the last 12 months did you implement or increase a delivery fee to recover costs due to COVID, and are you planning on keeping this in place?

- 33% - Yes
- 67% - No

Do you charge a delivery fee to propane customers?

- 100% - No

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on fuel oil equipment? \$277.83

What is the average renewal price for a service contract on propane equipment? \$275.00



What is the average hourly labor rate you charge for service?

Fuel Oil	\$147.33
Propane	\$164.00
Air Conditioning	\$154.83
Plumbing	\$141.67
Pipeline Gas	\$160.00

What percentage of customer propane tanks do you own?

Above Ground	84%
Underground	35%

Do you charge annual rental fees for customer propane tanks?

80% - Yes
 20% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? \$101.00

Do you charge a minimal use fee for propane tanks?

20% - Yes
 80% - No
 If "yes" what is the average fee? NA

How many customers have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	90%
For Underground Tanks	70%

How long is the average contract for customers that have a multi-year contract on propane tanks?

For Above Ground Tanks	2 years
For Underground Tanks	4 years

Do any of your fleet vehicles currently operate on propane autogas?

20% - Yes
 80% - No

* Multiple choice answers that generated no response were not reported.



Since 1945 Gray, Gray & Gray has been the nation's premier accounting and business advisory firm for fuel oil and propane marketers. No other accounting or consulting firm has such intimate experience and expertise in the field. We serve the tax, accounting and business management needs of the energy industry, including some of the leading propane and fuel oil dealers in the country.

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sage Intacct



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