

# Propane Tanks



The most accurate way to measure the propane left in a propane tank is to weigh it. Stamped into the side of the tank should be the letters TW followed by a number. This number is the weight in pounds of the tank when empty, or its tare weight. A typical 5-gallon propane tank has a tare weight of 17 pounds. Thus, for example, if the partially filled tank weighs 20 lbs, it follows that there are 3 pounds of propane stored in it. You should first weight the empty tank on your scales to see just how (in) accurate they are.

A gallon of propane contains 91,690 BTUs. Multiplying this number by the number of gallons in the tank results in 152,205 BTUs of thermal energy ( $1.66 \times 91,690 = 152,205$ ).

The running time of a particular appliance can then be calculated if the BTU consumption of the appliance is known. This number, given in BTUs per hour, can usually be found on the appliance or from the manufacturer. Continuing this example, an appliance that consumes 12,000 BTUs per hour would provide 12.68 hours of operation ( $152,205 \div 12,000 \approx 12.68$ ).