



# Transporting and Travelling with Oxygen Safely

Enjoy life's travels with confidence as VitalAire assists you with your portable oxygen needs.



# Travel is an Option

Today's portable oxygen systems offer freedom when transporting and travelling with oxygen.

However, there is always some danger when transporting oxygen, particularly in vehicles that are not designed for that purpose. This brochure has been designed to give you information that will let you travel with your oxygen, with confidence.



## Transporting Oxygen in Passenger Vehicles



Oxygen is packaged in cylinders under high pressure. Liquid oxygen is packaged in containers under pressure and at low temperature, making it extremely cold. The following are the greatest dangers associated with transporting oxygen:

- > If the liquid units are damaged, the escaping liquid oxygen may cause injury because of its extreme cold.
- > If the cylinders are damaged, the cylinders could move with dangerous speed as high pressure is released.
- > The risk of fire is increased in any circumstance where extra oxygen is added to the environment.

Securing the load is the most important factor in transporting oxygen safely. An unsecured or improperly secured con-

tainer could become dislodged during transport creating danger to both the vehicle occupants and other vehicles on the roadway.

**If you intend to transport oxygen in your vehicle, please read further to find out how to travel safely!**

The preferred method of transporting cylinders and liquid oxygen equipment is in a supplier's truck, which is specifically designed for this purpose. The alternative method is for a customer to transport oxygen in a suitable vehicle.

### **A suitable vehicle is one that has:**

- > adequate ventilation in the event of an oxygen leak, and
- > an adequate method of securing the cylinder or liquid oxygen container during transportation. **An adequate method of securing the cylinder or liquid oxygen means that the cylinder or container is not free to move relative to the vehicle while it is in motion.**

The risk found in transporting oxygen is directly affected by the amount of oxygen being transported. As a result, the Compressed Gas Association (CGA) recommends the maximum number of oxygen containers (cylinders or liquid units) that should be transported by customers in a passenger vehicle (e.g. car, van, SUV)<sup>1</sup>:

Lots of people drive pick-up trucks as well. These aren't categorized as passenger vehicles in the table above, but VitalAire still strongly suggests that the CGA recommendations be followed. Cylinders must be secured in the open bed of the truck. Liquid containers must be secured in an upright position in the passenger compartment or the open bed portion of the truck.

<sup>1</sup> These recommendations apply when products and containers meet applicable regulations that set-out container specifications, labeling requirements, marking requirements and packaging requirements. There are federal, provincial and local regulations in Canada as well as federal, state and local regulations in the United States. The containers that you will receive from VitalAire comply with applicable regulations for home care use.

<sup>2</sup> Compressed Gas Association Inc., CGA Position Statement on the Safe Transportation of Cylinders in Passenger Vehicles.

VitalAire recommends that you carry a maximum of 10 small cylinders, example - M6, size 3 (D) or size 5 (E) cylinders in your vehicle, if you require a greater amount of cylinders than this, we strongly recommend you have VitalAire deliver or ship the cylinders to your residence or destination.

Oxygen	Quantity
M6 – cylinder	10
3 – cylinder	10
5 – cylinder	10
22 – cylinder	1
44 – cylinder	0
Liquid oxygen container	1/2 full Lib 20 (gross weight 30 kg)

*Maximum total load of ten (10) cylinders to be offered for transport.*

Oxygen therapy doesn't mean being stuck at home.

There is equipment available that allows you to be mobile – and the availability of oxygen in many places – means that travel is an option.



## VitalAire's Responsibility

When customers intend to use their own vehicles to transport oxygen,

**VitalAire staff will:**

- > Provide a copy of this brochure to the customer.
- > Ensure that a valve protection cap covers the valve outlet, unless the oxygen cylinder is being used while in transit.

# In Case of Emergency

1. Stop the vehicle, switch the engine and all electrical equipment off, get out of the vehicle immediately, and clear the area.
  - > Do not move the vehicle if this could cause spilling of the liquid or create sparks.
2. Do not allow anyone to smoke and do not bring a flame or exposed light bulb close to the cylinder or liquid oxygen container.
3. If possible to do safely:
  - > Stop any and all leaks without tightening the valves excessively.
  - > If the cylinders are cold to the touch, remove them from the vehicle to a safe place.
4. If there is a fire heating the cylinder(s) or cryogenic container, evacuate the area immediately, or have it evacuated while waiting for the fire department to arrive.
5. Inform the firefighters and the police that you are transporting oxygen, and about the type of cylinder(s) or liquid oxygen container you have.



## Costs

If you receive assistance for the cost of home oxygen from a government or insurance program, please note that the cost of oxygen and related supplies when travelling **may not** be directly covered. Programs vary and may not reimburse you for these costs. There may

be fees associated with the delivery of oxygen equipment to your travel destination. Airlines may also charge if you require oxygen during a flight. Save all your receipts. You will need them if you are going to be reimbursed by a funding agency or insurance plan.

When purchasing out of country medical insurance, please read the policy and fine print (most policies have exemptions for clients on home oxygen).





## If you use a Recreational Vehicle

If you are using oxygen in a recreational vehicle such as a camper van or mobile home:

- > Ensure that a window is opened or the mechanical ventilation system is active and unobstructed. This helps to prevent a buildup of oxygen inside the vehicle.
- > Ask your VitalAire representative if an oxygen concentrator would be suitable in your situation.
- > Do not store containers for flammable products (gasoline, propane, butane, solvents, etc.) within 15 feet (5 metres) of the oxygen source, except if these receptacles are stored in a box open to the outside and isolated from the passenger compartment.

- > Do not have the oxygen within 30 feet (10 metres) of open or cooking flames such as campfires or barbeques.

- > Do not have the oxygen within 6 feet (2 metres) of gas cookers, portable stoves, heating elements, camping stoves, electric radiators, and motor air inlets.

> **DO NOT SMOKE OR ALLOW SMOKING NEAR THESE PRODUCTS.**

Oxygen equipment should **NOT** be set-up for use in recreational vehicles when the RV is:

- > Next to trees, bushes, high grass, or in dry areas.
- > Next to stores of combustible products (dustbins, waste paper, cardboard, etc.).

- > In proximity to other vehicles (within 5 metres).

The oxygen equipment should preferably be installed outside the mobile unit, when the inside is considered too cramped, under a canopy that will protect it from rain.

**Cruise Liners, Ferries, and other Public Transportation**

In all cases, you should contact the transportation company to provide authorization to transport oxygen containers.

# Customer Responsibility

## The following actions are recommended to lower your risk while transporting oxygen:

- > Ensure that the liquid oxygen container is in good condition.
- > Check that proper labels are affixed to the container.
- > Read the product label to confirm that you have the proper product (i.e. oxygen).
- > Listen for leaks from the cylinder.
- > Visually inspect the container for blemishes (e.g. dents, gouges, pits, etc.)
- > Ensure that valve protection, where provided, remains in place until the oxygen is ready for use.
- > Before loading, ensure each cylinder valve is properly closed, and remove the regulator if not using the cylinder.
- > Store cylinders that are not in use during transportation in the trunk area of the vehicle. Brace and secure the oxygen containers in the vehicle.
- > Do not cover them with rags, clothes, or other fabrics.
- > Cylinders in use during transportation should be laid on the floor in the front passenger foot area or back foot area, and should be secured to avoid the risk of rolling around the driver's feet.
- > Liquid oxygen containers are designed to vent small amounts of gas when not in use. They must be secured in an upright position (ideally in the portable cart) in the passenger compartment of the vehicle to allow the gas to vent. Ensure that the container vent is not covered.
- > Make sure there are no flammable materials (gasoline, oil, oily rags, etc.) near the containers being transported.
- > Make sure that you travel with an all-purpose fire extinguisher when transporting oxygen containers.
- > Always maintain adequate fresh air ventilation by opening at least one of the vehicle windows (even during cold or wet weather).
- > **DO NOT SMOKE OR ALLOW PASSENGERS TO SMOKE WHEN HANDLING OR TRANSPORTING THESE PRODUCTS.**
- > DO NOT use or allow the use of cell phones in the presence of oxygen.
- > Take the most direct route to your destination (with no intermediate stops). If possible, avoid routes with heavy traffic.
- > Be aware that environmental conditions, such as heat exposure, may cause the temperature of the cylinder or liquid oxygen container to rise to excessive levels that could lead to a release of oxygen, even if the temperature around the container is relatively low.
- > When your destination is reached, immediately remove ALL containers of oxygen from the vehicle.
- > Follow VitalAire's instructions for proper use and storage of the containers that were provided to you when you first started using oxygen from VitalAire.
- > When returning the containers of oxygen, follow these same precautions.



# A Few Final Tips...

- > **When travelling, make arrangements to pick-up your oxygen well in advance.**
- > **Bring a letter from your physician with your name, diagnosis, and medications currently used. This will help simplify treatment if needed. Ensure that you have multiple copies of your oxygen prescription with you.**
- > **Make a checklist of supplies, prescriptions, and medications needed for your trip. Remember to include your wrench/stroller key, cannula, and connectors.**
- > **Keep all sources of combustion (cigarette lighters, candles etc.) away from your oxygen equipment. Wherever you are, sit in the non-smoking section.**



## ***Locally***

Contact your local VitalAire office at least one week in advance to arrange services at your destination branch.



## ***Nationally***

Contact your local VitalAire office at least two weeks in advance when travelling within Canada and using the VitalAire network.



## ***Internationally***

VitalAire may be able to provide you with contacts in other countries to assist you with your oxygen needs. Some countries may not recognize an oxygen prescription from Canada. Make sure you find out what you need before you leave home.

The recommendations presented in this document are based on the recommendations of the Compressed Gas Association and are not unique to VitalAire.

You may have challenges with travel that are not addressed in this brochure. Please call your local VitalAire office for further information.

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*Note: This brochure is intended for general information purposes only and is not intended as a representation or warranty of any kind, or as a statement of any terms or conditions of sale. The information herein is believed to be correct, but is not warranted for correctness or completeness, or for applicability to any particular customer or situation. The terms and conditions of any sales transactions that may occur between VitalAire and any customer shall be set forth in the agreement signed by the parties.*



## VitalAire Canada

With nearly 800 employees in 80 offices, VitalAire is a leader in Home Oxygen Services, Sleep Apnea Programs and CPAP Treatment across Canada. Our accreditation assures you of Quality Programs and our International affiliation brings you the best the world has to offer in new technology and innovative healthcare solutions. Our Healthcare Professionals have built our reputation as knowledgeable, competent and caring in providing services to those in need of respiratory care.

### Contact us at:

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cranbrook	(250) 489-0976
Kamloops	(250) 374-6333
Kelowna	(250) 862-8727
Nanaimo	(250) 390-5193
Penticton	(800) 637-0202
Prince George	(250) 562-1148
Surrey	(604) 881-0214
Trail	(800) 637-0202
Vancouver	(604) 881-0214
Vernon	(250) 549-3030
Victoria	(250) 744-3577

#### ALBERTA

Calgary	(403) 250-3118
Camrose	(780) 672-8411
Edmonton	(780) 944-0202
Grande Prairie	(780) 538-3511
Hinton	(800) 252-9384
Lethbridge	(403) 320-0678
Lloydminster	(780) 875-9777
Medicine Hat	(403) 529-1975
Red Deer	(403) 347-4245
St. Paul	(780) 645-4332
Wetaskiwin	(780) 361-0233

#### SASKATCHEWAN

Lloydminster	(780) 875-9777
Regina	(306) 721-0071
Saskatoon	(306) 931-3334

#### MANITOBA

Brandon	(204) 726-0697
Winnipeg	1 (855) 309 8301

#### ONTARIO

Ajax	(905) 428-8800
Belleville	(613) 969-7448
Brockville	(613) 498-0336
Chatham	(519) 436-1414
Cornwall	(613) 938-1116
Etobicoke	(905) 890-7100
Guelph	(519) 821-5771
Hamilton	(905) 387-0082
Kingston	(613) 530-2112
Kitchener	(519) 744-4104
London	(519) 668-5255
Mississauga	(905) 890-7100
New Liskeard	(705) 647-6999
Niagara Falls	(800) 567 0202
Orillia	(705) 325-3277
Ottawa	(613) 741-0202
Owen Sound	(519) 371-6611

Pembroke	(613) 735-5811
Peterborough	(705) 743-7483
Port Hope	(905) 885-4553
Sarnia	(519) 383-1575
Sault Ste. Marie	(705) 942-7607
Scarborough	(416) 784-0202
St. Catharines	(905) 641-8141
Sudbury	(705) 566-1832
Timmins	(705) 268-5511
Toronto	(416) 784-0202
Windsor	(519) 971-8585

#### QUEBEC

Gatineau	(819) 778-2176
Îles De La Madeleine	(800)-465-1539
Joliette	(450) 760-9777
Laval	(450) 978-2336
Levis	(418) 658-2425
Longueuil	(450) 646-1058
Montreal:	
Centre est	(514) 721-2355
Centre Ville	(514) 989-8937
West Island	(514) 426-3922
Ormstown	(450) 370-0113
Quebec	(418) 658-2425
Sorel	(450) 760-9777
St-Eustache	(800)-465-1539
St-Hyacinthe	(450) 773-8024
St-Jérôme	(450) 438-9733
Valleyfield	(450) 370-0113

#### NEW BRUNSWICK

Bathurst	(506) 545-6743
Edmundston	(506) 737-8573
Fredericton	(506) 452-8680
Moncton	(506) 857-9709
Saint John	(506) 634-8962

#### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Stratford	(902) 894-3724
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#### NOVA SCOTIA

Antigonish	1-800-361-5939
Bridgewater	1-800-361-5939
Dartmouth	(902)-450-5162
Halifax	(902)-450-5162
Kingston	1-800-361-5939
New Glasgow	(902)-752-4117
Sydney	(902)-539-3660

#### NEWFOUNDLAND

Cornerbrook	(709) 634-1932
St. John's	(709) 754-3036