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## Piped-in gas eliminates risks

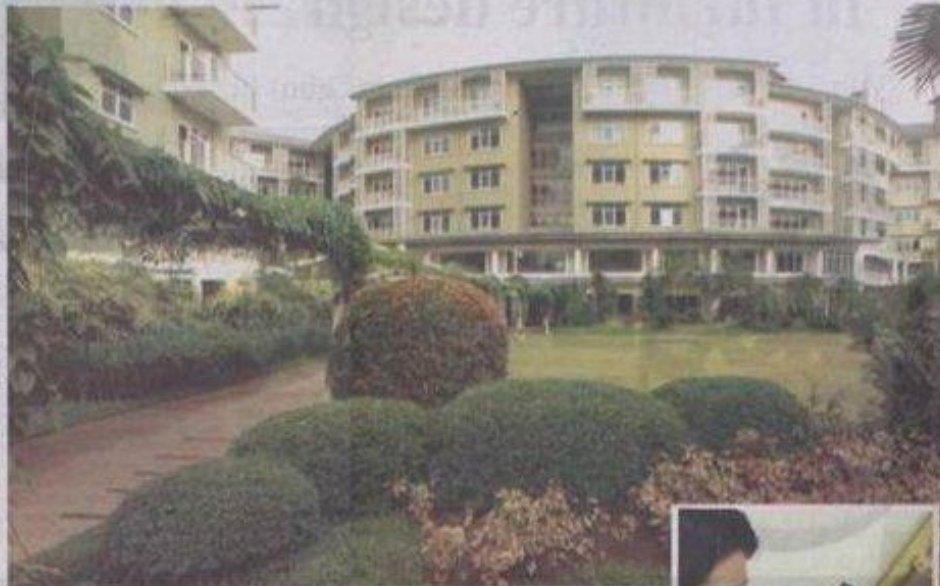
**T**he risks to consumers of fires and explosions posed by sub-standard LPG cylinders in many parts of the country were recently highlighted with the filing of HB 5942 or the LPG Bill now being deliberated in the Philippine legislature.

According to the Association of LPG Cylinder Manufacturers, Inc., as many as 300 incidents of fire that claimed scores of lives from 2001 to 2004 were traced to exploding gas tanks. The association pointed out that cylinders that had been jacked in other countries, smuggled into the Philippines, then re-used by unscrupulous dealers, were likely to pose such dangers. Traders who use substandard cylinders now account for a significant share of the LPG market in the Philippines where high energy costs have prompted users to seek alternative fuels.

Exploding substandard tanks and other related risks have practically been eliminated in Bonifacio Global City and the commercial area of Eastwood City, where piped-in LPG is predominantly used. Bonifacio Gas Corporation operates in these two areas, linking residents and restaurants in a reticulated system of pipes that conform to international standards. The company is further seeking to expand its service to other communities.

The systems utilize earthquake-proof polyethylene pipes with leak-free electric-fused interconnections for distributing gas. From a centralized tank farm, the fuel is released in vapor form — and not in liquid form — into the network. In liquid form, gas expands 250 times when vented into the atmosphere.

Distributing gas in vapor form is thus safer since it minimizes the presence of the alternative fuel, says Serge Bernal, general manager of Bonifacio Gas. Also, the state-of-the-



The Serendra is among the many buildings at the Fort that are equipped with piped-in LPGs installed by the Bonifacio Gas Corporation.

art piped-in system does not need to maintain gas pressures at the high levels necessitated by cylinders. The higher the pressure used, the greater the danger posed by a leak because more gas will be pushed out or vented into the atmosphere. Bernal says the Bonifacio Gas system maintains a pressure of only 17 psi compared to the 85-100 psi needed by cylinders.

Moreover, the Bonifacio Gas network allows its consumers to pay only for what they use. Usage is recorded by highly accurate meters that have

consistently performed through the years. In contrast a cylinder's gas residuals range from two to 10 percent and represent a loss to the consumer. For these reasons, a number of building owners have opted to tap into the piped-in network.

Aside from saving savings of up to 40 percent when compared to electricity, piped-in gas, which is consistently available in Bonifacio Gas service areas, also frees consumers from the hassle of keeping an inventory of heavy LPG cylinders that

occupy storage space. Moreover, they tend to be roughly handled and consequently result in the wear and tear of their surroundings.

As more buildings are added to the Bonifacio Gas network, more consumers are enjoying the economic and safety benefits of piped-in gas. Managers of buildings like those in Bonifacio High Street, Net Group office towers, Bonifacio Technology Center, Bonifacio Stopover,



Kenatngon and Serendra relate that piped-in gas users hardly miss using the heavy LPG cylinders.