

THE INSIDER

A NATIONAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS AND GLOBAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS MONTHLY PUBLICATION

Issue # 8 - August 2009

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2009 Annual Meeting

The 2009 Annual Meeting is scheduled for Nov. 6 and Nov. 7.

Registration packets will be mailed shortly!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The "green" mind set is more deeply entrenched today than it was back in the 1970s. Then, our reaction was mostly one of conservation for fear OPEC would cut off the oil supply. I remember President Jimmy Carter's fireside chats. (Does he still have those sweaters he wore? That would be conservation.) Most people think global warming is real, and we all need to do more to conserve our natural resources. A town in Australia just banned the sale of water in plastic bottles. Who could dispute Pepsi is better for you anyway?



Roland Bates
President

Canada has a concerted effort to conserve energy and protect the planet. The GPI franchisees are doing a lot of energy evaluations. With the help of several GPI franchisees, we have submitted an RFP to Natural Resources Canada to become a licensed service organization, which can train and support energy advisors. We won't know if we've been approved for some time, but in any case, the GPI franchisees (with the proper training and equipment) can continue to perform energy evaluations.

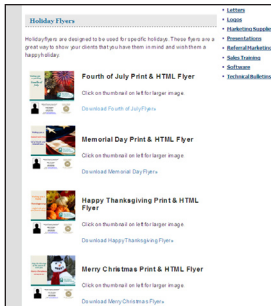
The success of Canada's program is due in part to reimbursement of up to half the cost of the energy evaluation. The home owners are also paid right away to affect certain energy saving measures. The U.S. has some hit and miss measures offering partial tax credits (taken off next year's return) if they qualify. That has not driven the same interest in the U.S. as in Canada. We do not have a crystal ball, but all that could change in the U.S.

We have done a lot of research, and talked to a lot of you and various industry experts regarding energy evaluations. And of course, we get a lot of phone calls and e-mails from companies trying to cash in on the "green" wave. They offer training, marketing assistance, etc. (A lot of them are not legitimate and, even if they are, won't necessarily be around for long.)

The two major energy related trade groups in the U.S. are BPI (Building Performance Institute) and Resnet (Residential Services Network). They have similarities and differences. They both claim an "in" with EPA and/or State programs, and that may be true. They both offer training, certifications, etc. As of now, there's a pretty strong chance training with either one will qualify you to perform energy audits in the U.S. While a strong market for energy audits has not yet materialized in the U.S., it could become huge, and we would be remiss if we didn't prepare ourselves. We will be exploring the possibility of earning the right to offer BPI and Resnet

NEW HTML FLYERS AVAILABLE IN LIBRARY

We have three new categories of re-designed flyers: seasonal flyers, sports series flyers and holiday flyers. These flyers are both HTML and print friendly.



To download these flyers, log into your personal Web page and click on the “Library” tab. When you are in the Library, click on the “Flyers” category in the right hand column of the page. Click on either the “Seasonal Flyers,” “Sports Series Flyers” or “Holiday Flyers” entry to view the available flyers in that category.

Thumbnails of each of the available flyers are posted to allow you to view the flyer before downloading it. You can click on the thumbnail to view a larger picture. To download a particular flyer, click on the available link to the right of the thumbnail.

If you have any questions, please contact Meghan ext. 15 or Kim ext. 23.

PRACTICE HOME INSPECTOR EXAM

Are you getting ready to take the National Home Inspector Exam? You might be interested in a practice exam that is now available in the NPI Library. (Special thanks to Joe Hartman for writing this program.)

The practice exam takes you through 10 subjects and 376 randomized questions to help you prepare for the exam. It doesn't give you a score, just asks you the questions and provides you with instant feedback.

To get to the test follow these instructions:

1. Login to your personal Web site
2. Click on “Site Admin” in the left column under your photo
3. Click on the “Library” tab
4. Choose “National Home Inspector Exam” category in the left hand column of the page
5. Click on the title, and then click on the link “Take the National Home Inspector Exam – Practice Exam”
6. Take the test by clicking the radio button by the letter, then choose “Get the answer!”
7. To get to the next question, click “Next Question”

Let us know if you notice any inconsistencies, or have trouble accessing the test.

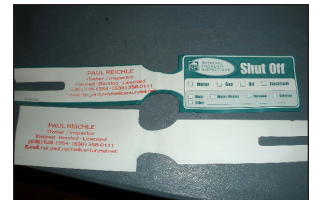
SHUT OFF TAG IDEA



Paul Duffau
Asotin, WA

Paul Duffau wanted to pass along an idea he has found successful. He stamps his shut off tags with his information. He previously used the stamp on brochures and other marketing items, and then found out that it fit on the tags also.

Although the tags do include the National Property Inspections or Global Property Inspections logo, Paul likes to include his personal information, too. He said every time he shows the shut off tag to a new agent, they really like the extra effort. Several have called him later for quotes, and some inspections.



EXTREME HOME MAKEOVER



Gerry Millen
Regina, SK

Gerry Millen is a silver sponsor for the 1st Annual Regina Extreme Home Makeover.

Following the format of the TV show, the Regina Home Makeover is designed to help out one of the city's needy families by sending them away for a month and completely refurbishing their home.

A number of contractors and businessmen are helping with this project.

Gerry will be providing an inspection on the three finalists' homes to identify the problematic concerns requiring refurbishing or replacement. He will also perform an energy evaluation for the finalist family, so that they may become qualified for energy rebates.

NEW INSPECTION SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

Inform 2006 Version 1.5 is now available in the NPI/GPI Library. To download the software, log into your personal Web page and click on the "Library" tab. When you are in the Library, click on the "Software" category in the right hand column of the page, and click on "Inform 2006- Inspection Software."

Some of the new features of Inform 1.5, include :

1. Compatibility with XP and Vista
2. Compatibility with 32-bit and 64-bit computers
3. A Free (blank) Form that can be used in conjunction with a home inspection or as a stand-alone narrative form for listing Radon or water results, etc. It can also be used in conjunction with the photo page for some types of field service reporting.
4. New reporting features that allow you to export invoice data to Excel
5. Exportation of comments so they can be imported into another computer

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy ext. 11.

FSBO ONLINE DIRECTORY

We came across a new directory that may be worth a test trial. Forsalebyowner.com offers a variety of advertising and real estate services. Those who are buying or selling a home without an agent use the directory to locate professionals in all areas of the real estate process.

There is a free 6-month trial you can sign up for. For free, your services will be seen in the "Find a Pro" search results section of the Web site. You can also choose one county anywhere in the country, and your ad will display your business name, address and phone number.

If you are interested in signing up for a free trial, go to www.forsalebyowner.com.

IMPORTANT RECALL



CPSC, in cooperation with OJ Electrics, announced a voluntary recall of about 30,000 208-Volt and 240-Volt Thermostats. The thermostat's floor sensor or its cable can be damaged from cutting, drilling or nailing, which poses a risk of electric shock to consumers if the power supply is not disconnected.

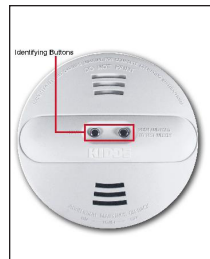
The recall involves thermostats that have built-in GFCI and are designed for use in under-flooring heating systems.

For more information, go to <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09282.html>.

YOUR CORPORATE CONTACTS

Roland Bates x18	roland.bates@npiweb.com
Bill Erickson x19	bill.erickson@npiweb.com
Connie Carlson x21	connie.carlson@npiweb.com
Debbie Fibich x16	debbie.fibich@npiweb.com
Dee Little x10	dee.little@npiweb.com
Julie Erickson x24	julie.erickson@npiweb.com
Kenn Garder x30	kenn.garder@npiweb.com
Kim Gatson x23	kim.gatson@npiweb.com
Luke Armstrong x12	luke.armstrong@npiweb.com
Meghan Murphy x15	meghan.murphy@npiweb.com
Molly Johnson x25	molly.johnson@npiweb.com
Nancy Ressel x11	nancy.resset@npiweb.com
Randy Yates x33	randy.yates@npiweb.com
Terry Wilson x31	terry.wilson@npiweb.com

IMPORTANT RECALL



CPSC, in cooperation with Walter Kidde Portable Equipment, Inc., announced a voluntary recall of about 94,000 Kidde Model PI2000 Dual Sensor Smoke Alarms. An electrostatic discharge can damage the unit, causing it not to warn consumers

of a fire.

This recall only involves Kidde dual sensor alarms model PI2000. The model number and date code are on the back of the smoke alarm. Only date codes 2008 Aug. 01 through 2009 May 04 are included in the recall.

This product was sold at retail, department and hardware stores and through electrical distributors nationwide from August 2008 through May 2009.

For more information, go to <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prhtml09/09266.html>.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY

Help us welcome the newest members of our NPI family.



Jason Lapp
Milford, OH



Russell Pittman
Seligman, AZ



Andy Smith
Omaha, NE

CONGRATULATIONS

We salute you on expanding your business by hiring an employee.

Jeremy Pittman



Employee of
Russell Pittman
Bullhead City, AZ

FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT'D)

training and certifications.

We are all still watching the economy. Starting in January, each month has been slightly better than the month before. Where some areas have fallen off, other areas are picking up. We are a global economy; East Asia indicates it feels it is easing out of its recession and the same goes for Europe. Recessions are funny animals: we are in one long before it's officially declared a recession and we are out of it long before it's declared over. In the meantime, things are looking a little better and we will take what we can get.

Please stay in touch. We love hearing from you.

BACK UP YOUR COMPUTER FILES!

Don't want to lose irreplaceable files on your computer if the unexpected happens? We recommend that you back up your computer files to ensure that your files are safe if disaster strikes.

One program that we came across is Carbonite Online Backup. Carbonite installs a small software program on your computer that looks for new and changed files to back up when your computer is idle. If you accidentally delete or lose a file, you can retrieve those files from the Carbonite program installed on your desktop. If your computer is damaged, stolen or crashes and you lose all of your files, you can visit Carbonite's Web site from another computer and restore all of your files. The program costs \$54.95 a year.

For more information, go to www.carbonite.com.

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NATIONAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS, INC

9375 BURT STREET, SUITE 201
OMAHA, NE 68114
PHONE (800) 333-9807



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

August, 2009

TOPIC: Proper Ventilation and Insulation for Traditional Attic Spaces

Improper venting and inadequate amounts of insulation can reduce the life expectancy of the average type of roof coverings- composite and wood. In warmer temperatures, this can crack and blister shingles, and in colder temperatures, cause ice dams and moisture problems, including condensation and mold.

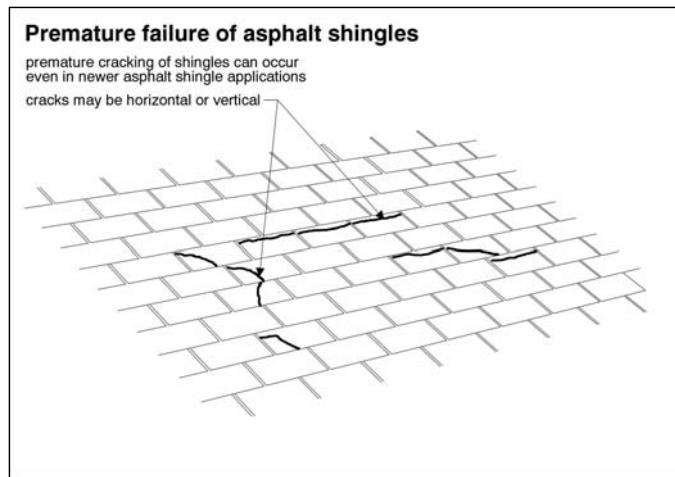


Diagram provided by Carson & Dunlop

In warmer climates and temperatures, the ambient temperature in a traditionally vented attic should be no more than 25 to 30 degrees warmer than what the outside ambient temperature is.

Ventilation

In order to achieve the correct amount of ventilation for a traditionally vented attic, building standards have established for every 150 sq. ft. of footprint layout there should be 1 ft. total of upper and lower ventilation opening. This can be achieved by a combination of soffit vents and static vents, soffit and ridge vents, soffit and gable vents or soffit vents and power ventilators.

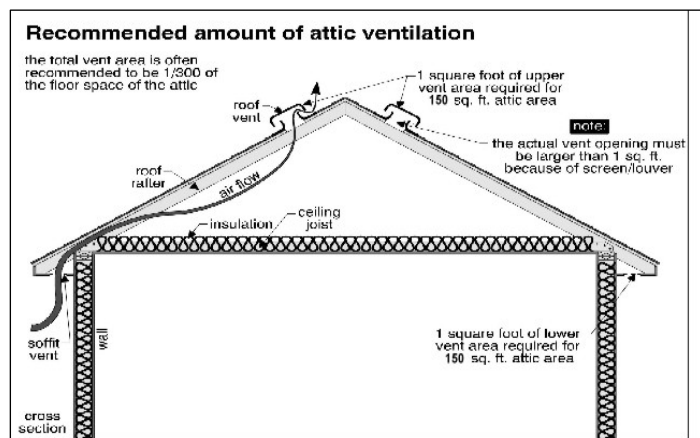


Diagram provided by Carson & Dunlop

Insulation

With today's building standards, the recommended amount of insulation should be about an R-40, which is equivalent to about 12 to 14 inches of blown-in or loose fill insulation. In colder climates, ice dams can occur when there is a combination of inadequate ventilation and insulation.



Condensation and Mold

It typically takes several things to start a mold problem: moisture, water or condensation, temperatures 60 degrees or warmer, and lack of air flow or movement. Contributing factors to attics and moisture problems are bathroom exhaust fans that either terminate in the attic or terminate at a soffit vent opening.

A 50 CFM exhaust fan doesn't stand a chance against a 10 to 15 mph updraft wind entering a soffit vent. Bathroom exhaust fans must terminate to an independent opening or to an upper vent opening, depending upon jurisdictional rules.

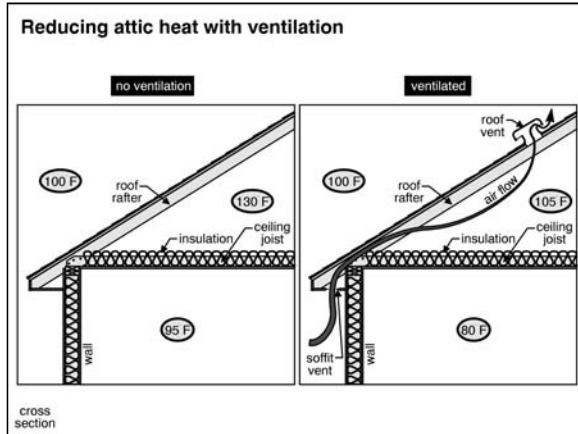


Diagram provided by Carson & Dunlop

Inspection Tip

To determine if there is enough ventilation and insulation in an attic, there should be enough ambient light entering from the soffit and upper vent system to read a newspaper under normal daylight conditions. If not, there could be a problem.

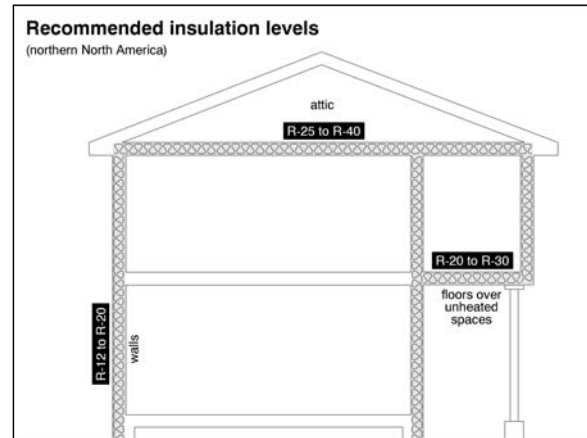


Diagram provided by Carson & Dunlop

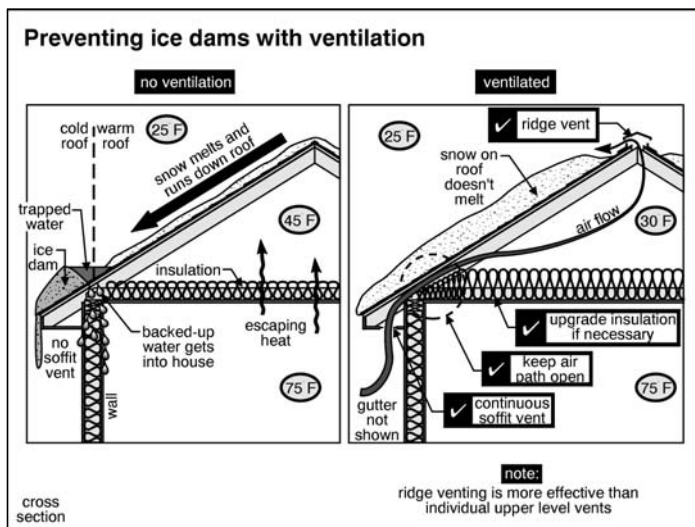


Diagram provided by Carson & Dunlop

Temperatures, as stated previously, should be no more than 25 to 30 degrees warmer in an attic than the outside ambient temperature. If they are warmer then there may be a problem.

If problems exist, always recommend further evaluation by an insulation and ventilation contractor.



COMMERCIAL TECHNICAL BULLETIN

August, 2009

TOPIC: CSST

Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) is a common alternative to traditional threaded black-iron gas piping for commercial, residential and industrial applications. Its light weight, flexibility and need for fewer connections and fittings, make it easier to install than traditional threaded black-iron piping. These benefits can add up to substantial labor savings for installers and cost savings for builders.



Photo courtesy of PATH

Since 1989, over 150 million feet of CSST has been installed in commercial, residential and industrial structures. During 2002, approximately 45 million feet of CSST was sold and installed.

CSST consists of a continuous, flexible, stainless steel pipe with an exterior PVC covering. The piping is produced in coils that are air-tested for leaks. It is most often installed in a central manifold configuration with “home run” lines that extend to gas appliances.

CSST has the potential for higher levels of system safety because connections and joints behind the wall, common in black-iron pipe, are essentially eliminated. In addition, builders and installers have noted a reduction in employee injuries by eliminating the heavy equipment associated with traditional black-iron pipe installations.

According to literature and instructions from the manufacturers, CSST systems must be installed by qualified installers who are trained in the methods required by that brand’s system, and who meet all the qualifications of the building codes and authority having jurisdiction where CSST is installed.

CSST is also available in hardware and home supply stores, where the only training provided is an installation manual that is often sold separately. So the opportunity is there for do-it-yourself installers who may not be following the instructions to install the CSST in a substandard or unsafe way.



Photo courtesy of Fire Engineering



This warning label is included in the Parker Hannifin Corporation Parflex Division:

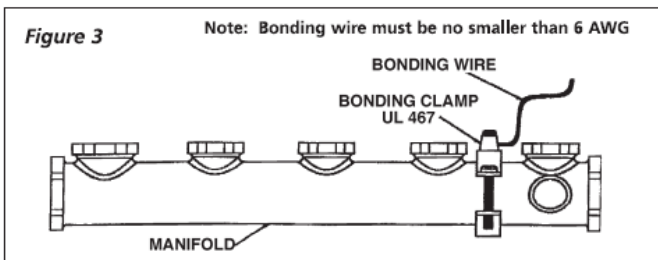
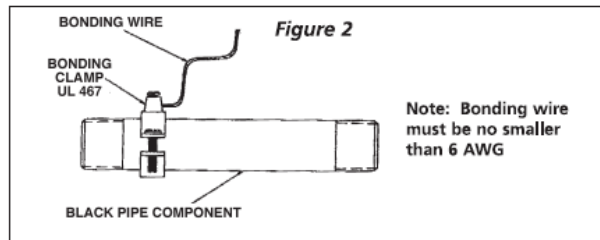
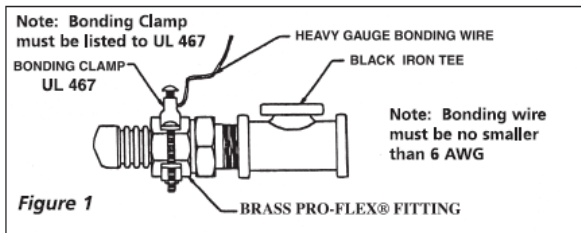
! WARNING: Failure or improper selection, design, installation, testing, repairing or use of Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing and related accessories used to convey fuel gas such as natural gas or propane in building structure can cause death, personal injury and property damage. Possible consequences of failure or improper selection, design, installation, testing or use of these Products include but are not limited to:

- Holes and leaks in the tubing caused by electrical arcing between the tubing and an adjacent metal object such as a furnace duct or cabinet, caused by lightning (whether direct lightning strikes to trees or ground or poles or wire long distances from the CSST)
- Holes and leaks in the tubing caused by puncture by nails, drills, or other sharp objects.
- Holes and leaks in the tubing caused by kinking.
- Leaks in the fittings and other accessories.
- Fires or explosion or burning of the conveyed gas, or asphyxiation from the conveyed gas, resulting from holes and leaks.

Before selecting, installing, using or repairing any CSST, the Design and Installation Guide provided by the manufacturer, must be read and followed. CSST must not be used unless properly bonded and grounded as described in the instructions.

In January 2009, minimum safety standards were adopted in most areas requiring that CSST

gas lines be bonded to the electrical service grounding system at the point where the gas service enters the building. The bonding jumper should be no smaller than 6 AWG copper wire or equivalent.



The approved methods of bonding require the installation of a UL-listed ground clamp on one of the following: On the bass fitting connecting each run of CSST to a manifold as shown in Figure 1; or on the black steel pipe where it enters the building as shown in Figure 2; or on the manifold connecting the black steel pipe to multiple runs of CSST as shown in Figure 3.

The bonding conductor must be continuous and connected to the steel enclosure of the electrical service equipment, or the grounded conductor at the electrical service, or the grounding electrode conductor between the service equipment and the grounding electrode.

Photos courtesy of Parker Hannifin

Please note: Safety standard adoption can vary by local, state or provincial officials. As stated in the warning and in the installation instructions of CSST, the lines should be bonded properly.

For more information, go to www.parker.com, www.fireengineering.com or www.pathnet.org.

This technical bulletin has been drafted to be general in nature and not technically exhaustive.