

APPLIANCE DOCTOR

More warning needed on gas leaks



JOE GAGNON

In a recent article a newspaper reported that the gas line to hook up an appliance such as a stove or clothes dryer might be dangerous to your health. The article was written based on information obtained from the Product Safety Commission in Washington.

The CPSC reports that they have received 200 cases where the old style corrugated metal gas lines have sprung a leak and been associated with 35 deaths and 59 injuries. This type of flexible connector has not been sold for the past 10 years, but I'm sure there are many clothes dryers in the American home which still have this product connected to it.

Millions of consumers out there have clothes dryers which are well over 10 years old. It is sad that the CPSC had to wait until 35 people died before they brought out information that could possibly save the lives of more victims. The article you might have read will not be seen by many millions across the country and yet I feel they should do more

in an endeavor to reach these people.

The deaths and injuries reported so far might be a small amount compared to the figures of the next five years. As these connectors get older than I think the likelihood of a leak would increase tremendously. There are many ways they could increase this warning so that it reached more homeowners than it has so far. As an example I would suggest that they work through every major utility company across the land and put a warning notice in every utility bill sent to each customer. I would have printed and charged back to the manufacturer of these deadly connectors, a full page article in all newspapers across America and follow that up with the same procedure on television.

Let me give you a synopsis of the warning put out by the CPSC and the action you should take to correct the problem. First, let me say that it is my recommendation to hook up a gas line dryer using only solid copper tubing with flared fittings. Use enough tubing so that you have several loops coiled at the rear which allow you to move it for service and cleaning. These materials are available at your local hardware store where they will flare the fittings etc. The hardware store industry is very

versed on what has to be done to properly hook up your clothes dryer.

The CPSC reports that older corrugated metal tubes were used in hooking up ranges, ovens and clothes dryers. They are uncoated, brass, flexible metal lines which has a fitting on each end which is soldered in place. The solder can fail resulting in a gas leak. They also recommend that the appliance not be moved to any degree as this might cause the connector to break and leak gas. The CPSC suggests that you call a professional service provider to inspect the product. They fail to mention that there might be a cost for this service or that a clothes dryer in operation has a vibration to it that could cause a leak

as well.

I recommend that if you are using this type of connector which hasn't been sold in the past 10 years, you shut off the gas to the product, remove the hazard and replace it yourself. If I was the chairman of the Consumers Product Safety Commission I would have printed a special weekly listing of every product complaint filed daily to their agency. I wouldn't wait 10 years of compiling information which I knew was causing and injuries. A copy of this article is being sent to the CPSC in Washington.

Joe Gagnon, the Appliance Doctor, will answer your questions about maintaining and repairing large appliances.


Contests have Halloween spirit

Area families will grab their plumpiest pumpkins and scariest costumes Saturday, Oct. 26, and head to English Gardens for its 10th annual Pumpkin Decorating and Halloween Costume Contests.

Children ages 3-16 may participate. First, second and third place prizes will be awarded to contestants with the best pumpkin and costume entries.

Winner in each category will receive English Gardens gift certificates. Participants must arrive at English Gardens by 1:45 p.m. for registration. Halloween safety tips will be shared with children, and refreshments will be served.

English Gardens is at 6370 Orchard Lake Road at Maple, West Bloomfield. Call (810) 851-7506.



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