



Hazards of Uncoated Brass Flexible Gas Connectors in Older Homes



CAUTION!

Certain older gas connectors may be dangerous.

Gas connectors are corrugated metal tubes used to connect gas appliances in your home to fuel gas supply pipes. Some older brass connectors have come apart, causing fires and explosions resulting in deaths and injuries.



These older brass connectors have a serious flaw in how their tubing was joined to their end pieces. Over time, the end pieces can separate from the tubing, and cause a serious gas leak, explosion, or fire. To our knowledge, these dangerous uncoated brass connectors have not been made for more than 20 years, but many of them are still in use. The older these connectors get, the greater the possibility of failure.

Although not all uncoated connectors have this flaw, it is very difficult to tell which ones do. Therefore, any uncoated brass connector should be replaced immediately with a new stainless steel connector. Connectors can wear out from too much moving, bending or corrosion. Connectors should always be replaced whenever the appliance is replaced or moved from its location.

Moving the appliance, even slightly, whether to clean behind it or to inspect its gas connector, can cause the complete failure of one of these older weakened connectors.



These brass gas-flex connectors were installed in older homes (pre 1976) These types of connectors are responsible for several failures. These connectors are used on water heaters, furnaces, clothes dryers and stoves. They are uncoated brass and will fracture if left in place.
Immediate Replacement Recommended.

If you smell gas

If you suspect a gas leak:

- Leave the house immediately.
- Don't use your phone; call your gas supplier from a neighbor's house or cell phone.
- Don't light a match.
- Don't turn on a light.
- Don't switch on anything electrical.

Installation

- Flex connector standard for a non-moveable gas appliance is ANSI Z21.24. It **MUST** be stainless steel.
- A flexible gas connector must bear a label that reads: U.L. approved; A.G.A. approved; or an ANSI standard.
- Install per the manufacturer's instructions.

See next page for a related news story...



Hazards of Uncoated Brass Flexible Gas Connectors in Older Homes (Cont'd)....

Broken Connector Caused Blast

2 Still Critical After Gas Explosion Levels Home

Chicago Sun-Times, Tuesday, February 29, 2000 p10, Maureen O'Donnell, Staff Reporter

An equipment fracture created a gas leak that caused the explosion that leveled a Southwest Side home Sunday, according to the Chicago Fire Department.

"There was a leak in the line, the flexible line coming to the gas cooking stove," said Fire Department spokesman Bill Norris. "That natural gas leak was ignited and that's what caused the explosion and ensuing fire."

A fracture was found in the uncoated brass flexible connector, which links the stove to the gas line, said Peoples Energy Vice President Desiree Rogers. The connector is made of tubing that resembles a gooseneck lamp.

Fire investigators "actually did see an opening" in the connector, Rogers said. "If there's a fracture in that, then you've got gas escaping."

The blast destroyed a home at 5214 S. McVicker belonging to Peter Honcharevich, 85, and his wife Anne, 79. He was in critical condition and she was in "very critical condition" Monday at Loyola University Medical Center. She had burns on 84 percent of her body, said hospital spokesman Michael Maggio.

If air becomes composed of as little as 5 percent natural gas, an explosion can be set off by friction as slight as a key turning in a lock or a light being switched on, or the mere presence of a pilot light, Rogers said.

"It's a perfect environment for there to be an explosion," Rogers said. Two other adjacent severely damaged homes probably will have to be demolished, according to the city Building Department.

Investigators from the Fire Department's Office of Fire Investigation, the Police Bomb and Arson unit, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms are not sure what ignited the blast, Norris said.

Consumers concerned about whether their homes contain outmoded uncoated brass flexible connectors should have an inspection by a private heating, venting, air conditioning or plumbing contractor, Rogers said.

Newer connectors need to be replaced every ten years.

Even if your appliances are new, "that doesn't mean that... you don't have an outmoded connector," Rogers said.