

## Wisconsin Reinsurance Corporation

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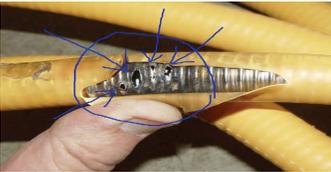
March 2009

Type: Loss Control—Loss Prevention

Subject: CSST Alert

Learn more about CSST  
by visiting:

[www.pddocs.com/csst/faq.aspx](http://www.pddocs.com/csst/faq.aspx)



Burn hole in CSST due to lightning



CSST installed through wall framing

For more information, contact:

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### Flexible Gas Lines & Lightning = Fire/Explosion Hazard

#### WHAT IS CSST?

Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) is continuous flexible gas line used today in many new and retrofit applications. CSST is marketed as an alternative to traditional black iron piping. It offers significant cost advantages for builders and contractors. Because of its ease and speed of installation, many hours of labor are saved.



Typical CSST

CSST is routed beneath, through, or alongside floor joists in basements, inside interior wall cavities, and on top of ceiling joists in attic spaces. You are most likely to see CSST in homes constructed since 1990. Older homes that have had work done since then may also have flexible gas lines installed. CSST is most often coated with a yellow or black exterior plastic coating. CSST does NOT include flexible gas appliance connectors, which is a short connector that runs from a gas outlet to an appliance.

#### THE BLOW TORCH EFFECT

CSST has the potential to leak if a home is struck by lightning and is not properly bonded or grounded. A lightning strike can travel through a structure's CSST natural gas piping system. This can create holes and cracks in the thin, flexible walls of the stainless steel tubing. The escaping gas is ignitable by the charge of the lightning strike. In effect, the lightning turns the CSST into a blow torch.

CSST manufacturers have settled a class action law suit related to product liability claims (see WRC's Subrogation Bulletin "Potential Recoveries for CSST Fires"). Numerous municipalities and energy providers, such as Alliant Energy in Wisconsin, have issued advisory notices to the public about CSST. This is a concern in all states across the country.

#### WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND CSST

If CSST is located on a property, it is strongly recommended that the insured have a licensed electrician verify or install a bonding device on the natural gas system in order to reduce the chances of a natural gas leak and fire.

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