



Testing As Part of Gas Appliance Incident Investigation

BY THE WARREN TEAM

If Equipment and appliances supplied with fuel gases like natural gas, propane and butane are a common and convenient part of most of our lives. Such devices as gas grills and ranges, ovens, furnaces, space heaters and water heaters usually perform without incident. However, when they malfunction the potential for incidents such as fires and explosions, carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and burn injuries may occur. These incidents may be due to design and manufacturing defects in the product, or improper installation or operation of the device.



Lab testing of a gas heater at WARREN

When incidents occur with gas fired equipment, a proper investigation should be conducted to determine the cause(s). One part of such an investigation may include testing of the gas appliance or exemplars of the appliance. These tests can be compared with tests of other exemplar devices or with standards for the gas appliance. The ANSI Z21 and Z83 series of product standards include many provisions for testing common gas appliances. These tests specify CO generation limits and temperature limits of parts of the appliance and nearby materials, among other provisions.



Field testing of flue gas

WARREN has the experience and ability to conduct such testing. I have conducted testing of gas appliances and equipment in both my forensic career and as a designer of gas fired appliances and equipment. Such testing requires proper selection of testing equipment and experience in interpreting the results of such tests. If you have an incident involving natural gas or LP gas appliances or equipment, contact WARREN to obtain the benefit of our experience in dealing with these losses.

