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AHRI Warns Consumers about Modification of Gas-Fired Appliances

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Arlington, VA (November 19, 2009) -- The Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI), warns consumers about the dangers of unauthorized and unapproved altering or any gas-fired heating appliance. Manufacturers must use specific engineering and design knowledge to develop gas-fired heating appliances that operate safely and properly under a variety of conditions.

The product designs are tested and certified by third-party independent testing agencies, like CSA International, ETL/Intertek and Underwriters Laboratories for compliance with nationally recognized voluntary consensus safety standards. Any unauthorized modification to a gas-fired appliance, no matter how minor, can alter the design and compromise the safety of that unit. For example, an alteration that changes the combustion process may cause carbon monoxide (CO) emissions that exceed the limits specified in the safety standards. Modifications should only be made that are authorized by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or other recognized authority and performed by qualified service personnel.

Consumers should also beware of companies that offer to make, or instruct consumers about how to make, modifications to various appliances without expressed, written authorization of the OEM. Always check with the OEM or their local representative to ensure that a modification is authorized.

“Any unauthorized modification to a gas burning appliance voids its safety certification and may expose consumers to a risk of property damage, personal injury, or even death,” said AHRI Chief Technical Advisor Frank A. Stanonik. “AHRI is committed to providing consumers with information on the proper installation and safe and efficient use of gas-fired appliances,” Stanonik said.

About AHRI

The Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) is the trade association representing manufacturers of air conditioning, heating and commercial refrigeration equipment. An internationally recognized advocate for the industry, AHRI develops standards for and certifies the performance of many of these products. AHRI's 300 member companies account for more than 90 percent of the residential and commercial air conditioning, space heating, water heating, and commercial refrigeration equipment manufactured and sold in North America.

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