

# Natural Gas Service Installation and Repair

## *A Proficiency Checklist*

By Loss Control Consultants



In an attempt to verify that a contractor is qualified to install, service and repair natural gas (not LPG) lines and fittings the following check list has been developed. To avoid the typical check list deficiencies, namely leading questions which naturally prompt an affirmative response queries should be in the form as indicated.

1. Is your company involved in the installation, service or repair of natural gas lines?
2. Are there specific national guidelines, codes and or regulations that apply to this activity?

*Answer:* Response should at least mention NFPA54-The National Fuel Gas Code, The Federal Pipeline Safety Regulations or The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. These codes and agencies contain all of the pertinent information required for safe installation. If the exact titles cannot be recited evidence of at least some familiarity with this material should be able to be elicited.

3. How do you determine proficiency with regard to pipe and fittings installation?

*Answer:* There are specific training requirements for the various materials used and certification requirements for installers including the making up and testing of actual specimen sections. Records need to be kept of these activities.

4. How do you know if a given plastic pipe can be used for underground Natural gas distribution?

*Answer:* It will be manufactured to ASTM D2513 and will be so marked. There are many varieties of plastic pipe that are not suitable for underground gas transmission and that should not be used. The installer should know this.

5. How do you deal with corrosion when using metallic pipe and parts?

*Answer:* There are very specific requirements for cathodic protection of metallic parts and they should know the details of magnesium bags, leads, wetting requirements etc. They should also mention coal tar and other coatings of welds, wrapping and di-electric connections.

6. What are your backfill procedures?

*Answer:* Answer should emphasize not damaging the piping and fittings and should in some way describe the quality of the backfill and the compacting requirements.

7. What might the requirements be regarding plastic pipe and gas pressure, if any?

*Answer:* Plastic pipe is limited to 100 psi.

Answers to these essentially random questions should give a fair indication of the knowledge base associated with this activity. These are very basic questions that any company in the business should have the answers to. They are the subject of specific standards that apply to any service or installation activity. Lack of answers imply at least a lack of experience or equally problematic the dependence upon direction and supervision of the operator who has ultimate responsibility on the job. In either case, the quality of the risk is questionable.