SECTION H44.120
Issue A, June 1939
N.W.B.TEL.CO.
MINN. AREA

INSPECTION OF TELEPHONE BUILDINGS FOR GAS HAZARDS

1. GENERAL

1.01 This section outlines the procedure to be followed in the daily inspection of cable vaults and other portions of basements in telephone exchange buildings in communities served with gas, primarily as a safeguard against hazards from the entrance of migrating gas.

1.02 In communities served with gas, this applies also to unattended dial offices.

1.03 Employees assigned the duty of carrying out the provisions of this Practice must be cautioned and supervised to insure against the relaxation of vigilance otherwise likely to occur in following a routine examination to detect the presence of a danger which will be very rarely encountered.

2. UNATTENDED DIAL OFFICES

2.01 Before entering such an office which has been closed for a time, note carefully whether there is any smell of gas or any other foreign odor which might be dangerous. If gas or suspicious odors are noted, avoid switching on lights or approaching with flames or lanterns which might ignite combustible gases. Open the door and thereby clear the room of the gas before entering and be careful to avoid all possible causes for ignition until the dangerous conditions have been corrected.

2.02 Be sure to leave the ventilators at unattended dial offices open and free so that natural ventilation will tend to avoid any accumulation of dangerous gases at times when no one is present in the building.

3. TELEPHONE OFFICES WITH UNDERGROUND CABLE ENTRANCES

3.01 This applies only to telephone offices with cables entering through underground ducts which terminate below the level of the first floor.

3.02 A daily inspection shall be made of cable vaults and other portions of the basement of telephone buildings to determine whether dangerous gases or undesirable odors are present.

3.03 In special cases where it is known that the gas supply system is leaking, particularly in the winter months, this inspection should be made more often as circumstances may warrant.

3.04 Use the sense of smell to indicate the presence of free gas.

3.05 Some individuals are relatively insensitive to the smell of gas and such individuals should not be assigned the duty of making this inspection.

3.06 Immediately before proceeding with the inspection of cable vaults and basements, the inspector should go outside the building for a few moments sufficient to sharpen his sense of smell, relieving it temporarily of any lack of sensitivity due to an atmosphere laden with tobacco smoke or other adverse factors.

3.07 Examine a round all floor drains and plumbing fixtures for gas which may be entering from the sewer because traps are not properly filled.

3.08 Examine all normally closed rooms in which foreign gases or odors might enter and accumulate owing to lack of natural ventilation, etc.

4. WHEN GAS IS PRESENT

4.01 Carefully avoid doing anything which might ignite the gas such as bringing open flames near, or operation of pull chains or key sockets for electric lights.

4.02 Ventilate the cable vault by opening the windows.

4.03 The inspector's supervisor should be notified immediately and special instructions obtained as to further procedure.

4.04 The presence of gas shows that at some point there is an opening in the basement wall on floor which should be located and sealed to prevent further entrance of gas.

4.05 The responsible individual in the organization of the municipality or the gas company serving it should be immediately notified and requested to locate and repair the leak in the gas service system without delay.

5. ANNUAL INSPECTION

5.01 Annually the cable vault and the entire basement should be closely examined to detect any openings which may have occurred either in the masonry walls or around conduits, pipes, etc. Appropriate steps should be taken to immediately replace any seals which appear to have become defective and to provide seals for masonry cracks or other openings not previously present.