

MEETING LOG
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Discussion of Gas Research Institute Activities
Supporting Development of Standard Test Methodology
to address the Water Heater Flammable Vapor
Ignition Issue

PLACE: CPSC Headquarters, 4330 East West Highway,
Bethesda, MD 20814

MEETING DATE: January 17, 1997

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Donald W. Switzer *DWS*

ENTRY DATE: January 23, 1997
COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Donald W. Switzer	ES
Ronald A. Jordan	ES
Jim Hoebel	ES

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Bob Hemphill Gas Research Institute

MEETING SUMMARY

Mr. Hemphill requested this meeting to brief staff on Gas Research Institute (GRI) activities in support of developing performance standard requirements to address the hazard of water heater ignition of flammable vapors.

GRI remains committed to rapid development of standard requirements to address water heater ignition of flammable vapors. GRI believes that it is necessary for utilities to have input into the field testing of prototype water heaters. GRI expects to publish a field test plan in first quarter, 1997. GRI will make the plan available to the manufacturers through the Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association (GAMA). Staff expressed concern that conflicting field test plans could delay standard development.

GRI is in process of developing a "white paper" on the issue of elevating water heaters 18 inches. The purpose of the white paper would be to examine all the pros and cons of the "18 inch solution" without making recommendations. GRI intends to provide this information to interested parties, and allow them to develop their individual position. GRI expects to complete this work in third quarter 1997.

GRI is examining using a sensor technology to turn off the

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Released to

water heater in the presence of flammable vapors. GRI believes that a promising technology could be used in conjunction with other approaches to solving the problem.

GRI also expressed concern that since the Flammable Vapor Technical Advisory Group disbanded, there has been a loss of communications between utilities and manufacturers. Staff said it will examine the possibility of a regularly scheduled meeting among the groups.