Counterfeit and Non-Compliant Communications Cable

Warning
Genuine Counterfeit Electrical Product

May be hazardous to people and property.

Possible Results Include
Property Damage, Electrocution, Burnt Wiring, Explosion, Fire

Liability Statement
We have your money and you can’t find us.

… what you need to know
The CCCA

• Non-profit association addressing quality, design, environmental and other key issues in the communications infrastructure.

• Members include leading manufacturers of cable and connectivity products, distributors and material suppliers.
• Goal: All communications cable products sold in the U.S. comply with applicable fire safety codes, transmission standards … and the law.

Mission: Education
Communications Cable
Copper – 4 pair UTP (unshielded twisted pair)
Codes and Standards Intensive Industry

“Listed”
Fire safety
Mandatory

“Verified”
Electrical
Voluntary
800.179 Communications Wires and Cables
“Communications wires and cables shall be listed in accordance with 800.179(A) through (I) and marked in accordance with Table 800.179. Conductors in communications cables, other than in a coaxial cable, shall be copper.”

CMP – Communications Plenum
CMR - Communications Riser
CM – Communications General Purpose
Codes and Standards Intensive Industry

“Equipment, materials, or services included in a list published by an organization that is acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction …”

Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTLS)
“BAD CABLE” 101
Bad Cable 101.1

Packaging and/or cable shows unauthorized UL or ETL marks

- Cable is counterfeit
- Never listed or verified
- No longer compliant (removed)
- UL, ETL protect mark, property rights
- Seizure, legal and criminal consequences
Bad Cable 101.2

Packaging and/or cable shows NO UL or ETL mark on package or cable.

– Cable is counterfeit
– Deceptively advertised and marketed as fully compliant.
– Misleading and false claims, e.g.
  • CMP “Plenum rated”
  • CMP “Plenum cable”
  • CMP “Plenum approved”
Bad Cable 101.3

Packaging and/or cable shows authorized UL or ETL marks, but does not meet requirements of codes and standards

- Cable is non-compliant
- Significant failure in fire performance and/or electrical transmission
- UL, ETL protect mark, corrective action, follow up
- Recalls possible
Bad Cable 101.4

Common characteristics of counterfeit or non-compliant cable

– Very Low price – below market norms
  – Low cost, low performance materials substituted for jacket and insulation
– Poor design and quality control
– Copper clad aluminum conductors (CCA) replaces 100% copper, required for “Category” cable
– All of the above!
Bad Cable 101.5

More common characteristics of counterfeit or non-compliant cable

– Private labeled unfamiliar brands from offshore manufacturers
– Supplied only through website or local store front distributors
  – Poor English on company website
– No information on factory location our country of origin
– Extremely poor fire performance, serious public safety concern
– Violation of building codes, fines
– Legal exposure and possible liability
– All of the above!
CCCA Market Surveillance and Testing Program

- 2008-2012
- 4 rounds (sample sets)
- 30+ samples from field - CMP/CMR
- Independent testing
- NFPA 262 (Steiner Tunnel)
  - Flame Spread
  - Smoke
- Round 5 WIP
Special Alert

• Low cost “tip off”
• Unknown brand names
• Suspicious advertising and false claims
• Packaging and/or cable with NO UL or ETL mark
• Copper clad aluminum (CCA) conductors
Copper Clad Aluminum
Real Encounters ... Real Examples

- **CCA** cable caused failure of elementary school PoE security cameras
  - Action: Cable removed, replaced with brand name

- Customer purchased **CCA** cable with unauthorized UL mark
  - Action: Rejected by contractor. $30K of cable - can’t use, can’t sell. Purchaser dismissed.
Recalls

Home Depot Recalls CE Tech Riser Cable Due to Fire Hazard

Consumers should stop using this product unless otherwise instructed. It is illegal to resell or attempt to resell a recalled consumer product.

Recall date: April 09, 2013
Recall number: 13-163

Recall Summary
Name of product:
CE Tech 1,000 ft. Riser Cable

Hazard:
The riser cable does not meet fire resistance standards for riser cable, posing a fire hazard.

Remedy:
Refund

Consumer Contact:
Home Depot at (800) 394-7519 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday or online

Report an Incident Involving this Product

Recall Details

Units
About 11,300

Description
This recall involves 1,000 ft. CE Tech riser cable sold in boxes of 1,000 ft. lengths. It is intended to self-extinguish in a fire. The cable is gray and marked (UL) E316395. The cable’s box is blue and contains the CE Tech logo.

Incidents/Injuries
None reported

Remedy
Consumers should remove the recalled cable and return it to Home Depot for a full refund.

Sold exclusively at
Home Depot stores nationwide from January 2013 through February 2013 for about $100.

Importer

Manufactured in
China
UL Public Notice

UL warns of communication cable with unauthorized reference to UL

“This cable does not comply with the standard for safety for the United States and Canada, and is not authorized to bear the UL Mark or reference UL.”
UL Public Notice
UL warns of potentially hazardous communications cable
INTERTEK WARNS OF COUNTERFEIT ETL LISTED AND VERIFIED MARK ON COMMERCIAL GRADE CMP CAT 6E COMMUNICATION CABLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 1, 2013

The following is a notification to consumers and retailers that the Commercial Grade Communication Cable identified below bears counterfeit cETLus and ETL Listed and Verified Marks. The Commercial Grade Communication Cable has not been evaluated by Intertek to the appropriate Standards for Safety for Safety and does not comply with Intertek’s safety requirements for the United States or Canada.

Name of Product: Commercial Cable CMP Cat 6E Communication Cable

Identification: The product bears a counterfeit ETL Listed and Verified mark. The printing on the cable states:
E223070W 23AWG 4 PR UTEGORY 6E 550MHZ 3147705 CMP C(ETL)US FT6 ETL LISTED & VERTIFIED TO TIA/EIA-568B.2-1 0918FT

Known Distributor(s): Cable Discounters www.cablediscounters.com

Photos of Product:
What CCCA is Doing

• Collaborating with UL and ETL on compliance and quality assurance procedures.

• Communications, training, education, tools for industry and end-users

• Collaborating, training U.S. Customs and law enforcement to protect member brands and trademarks.

• Ongoing surveillance and testing
Bogus-cable warnings remind of need for vigilance

An alert from Underwriters Laboratories and a white paper from the CCCA serve as reminders that the purchase and installation of substandard cable can have a steep price.

BY PATRICK MCLAUGHLIN
Substandard cable, steroids and sour milk

Just a few days after we heard about the latest round of testing the Communication Cable and Connectivity Association (CCCA) commissioned, on "non-compliant" twisted-pair cables, we also heard about a price increase on the materials that are used to make the outside jackets of communications, electrical, and other cables. The relationship between the two stories is not as obvious as you might think.

I know it's the usual refrain, but it's true: flexural strength is essential to ensure that cables meet the required performance standards. But how will anyone ever know if the material compounds used to create the cable jacket, or the conductor insulation, are the types and amounts required to achieve the required performance? And how can we determine whether the tests conducted by the CCCA were performed as required? Without a test plan, tests conducted will not be able to reliably predict the performance of cables in use.

The cable manufacturer further stated, "Although these products are marked with the UL logo, they do not comply with Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) safety requirements and are not authorized to bear the UL logo."

The cables for which the notification was sent are red in color and are designated as follows:

Eagle Aspen 90 Cat 5E tested up to 350MHz 4PR 24AWG Type CMR 75 (UL) CUL; E 246025 verified to TIA/568-B.2-0745

The notification indicates that the cables were sold in the United States.

Visit Pan-Asia Cable’s website for contact information.

Rating: outstanding. Substandard cable, the lowest and sour milk.
Part 1  How Big is the Problem? – CCCA
Part 2  Avoiding Liability – Crowell & Moring
Part 3  UL Labels and Marks – UL
CCCA’s CableCheck™ App

For use as a field-screening tool and checklist.
Available from the App Store and Google Play.
What You Can Do to Protect Yourself, Your Customer and the Public

- Long term due diligence is vital.
- Industry media and educational events
- UL and ETL public notices
- www.cccassoc.org
- CableCheck™ app
- Buy known brands
- If unknown brand require written proof of listing or verification
Thank You!