

# TECHNICAL BULLETIN

TT-03



March 2004

## The Difference Between Flexible Air Ducts and Flexible Air Connectors

by Dave Fetters

Flexible air ducts and flexible air connectors share many of the same traits, yet are different enough that they are uniquely separate products. All of the national codes share similar language, as represented by the International Mechanical Code, 2003 edition (paraphrased):

*Flexible air ducts and flexible air connectors, both metallic and nonmetallic, shall be tested in accordance with UL 181. Such ducts and connectors shall be listed and labeled as Class 0 or Class 1 flexible air ducts or flexible air connectors and shall be installed in accordance with the terms of their listing and the manufacturer's installation instructions.*

It goes on to say:

*Flexible air ducts shall not be limited in length.*

*Flexible air connectors shall be limited in length to 14 feet. Flexible air connectors shall not pass through any wall, floor, or ceiling.*

These last two entries define the primary difference between the two products. Air ducts must pass 15 UL tests, whereas connectors are not required to pass the flame penetration, puncture, or impact tests.

All Hart & Cooley flexible ducts are insulated and have a rectangular label that shows the UL listing mark and clearly states that it is an air duct. Hart & Cooley flexible connectors have no insulation, but have a round label with the UL listing mark, the words "air connector," and the words "For installation in length not over 14 ft."

*(continued on reverse side)*

If flexible connector is used in an application, the 14-foot maximum installed length limit may not be increased by installing a splice at the end of a 14-foot length of connector. If a listed connector is used in an application that does not require the use of listed connectors, it could still be subject to the 14-foot length limitation.

Whether or not Hart & Cooley-listed air connector may be used for bathroom or dryer vent is a common question. Subject to the 14-foot limitation stated above, our air connectors—whether listed or not, whether polyester or corrugated aluminum—may be used, provided the appliance manufacturer allows for its use in their installation instructions.



Hart & Cooley, Inc. 800.433.6341 *toll-free*  
500 East Eighth Street 616.392.7855 *phone*  
Holland, MI 49423 800.223.8461 *toll-free fax*  
info@hartcool.com 616.392.7971 *fax*  
www.hartandcooley.com