



The Standards we live by:

As of the writing of this article, UL 48 15<sup>th</sup> addition is still being revised at UL. Since the majority of the STP members on UL 48 Electric Signs and UL 879 Sign Components are the same; we are trying to get it right the first time.

### **UL 879-8 Sign Components Effective Date Extended:**

UL 879-8 is currently being revised and because of the impact and timing of file review, to component manufacturers, the effective date has been revised. The date has been extended from June 2007 to September of 2008. This extension is a year longer than some STP members had requested. I felt the requested 90 day extension would give the manufacturers, who needed file review, time to comply with the revised Standard. UL extended the effective date further due to the large amount of file reviews that will be required.

I will try to summarize some of the changes and sections found to be unacceptable. Many of the problems arose when manufacturers started their file reviews and discovered many of the current products and materials would no longer be acceptable. Now in defense of the standard writer UL, I know me defending UL is unusual but, the entire STP and the manufacturers who were involved should have caught many of these problems before we voted affirmative on the Standard. Enough about history lets move on to the work at hand.

A complete list and outline of each section and revision is available on the CSDS site.

The first round of changes numbered 18, and only, number 7, Table 4.3, failed. This failed due to a massive number of changes requested by the component manufacturers at the STP meeting in January.

(reprinted from UL 879 8<sup>th</sup> January 19, 2007)

### **SUMMARY OF TOPICS:**

The following changes in requirements are being proposed:

1. Revision that wire connection shall not rely on dimensional stability of thermoplastic
2. Revision of terminology and units in ozone test
3. Revision of UV test exposure parameters
4. Correction of brass rod diameter in electrostatic field material test
5. Editorial correction for the test temperature for the mold stress relief test

6. Correction to 30 AWG thermocouple size if referee temperature measurement required
7. Corrections to Table 4.3 Part 2
8. Editorial revisions for Figures 4.7 and 4.8 showing the boots extending past the neon electrode
9. Test specifications for flexible sign faces
10. Editorial revision of installation instruction subheading for enclosure sign face materials
11. Correction of material tests for electrode receptacle insulators
12. Correction for thickness specifications for switch enclosures
13. Corrections to test specifications for neon electrode splice and GTO cable polymeric enclosure systems
14. Clarification of test procedures for neon electrode splice and GTO cable polymeric enclosure systems
15. Clarification of Requirements for Tube and Tube/Cable Supports
16. Revisions to Glossary
17. Revision to Glass Cup Orientation Requirement
18. Editorial corrections and clarifications

(reprinted from UL 879 8<sup>th</sup> February 23, 2007)

Round two of the revisions are available to view on the CSDS site and will be voted on April 9, 2007.

#### **SUMMARY OF TOPICS:**

The following topics were discussed at the meeting:

1. New UL 879 Requirements Overview
2. Trim Cap Requirements
  - (a) Flame Rating
  - (b) RTI
  - (c) Table 4.3
3. UL Corrections and Clarifications
4. CTI Ratings for Polymeric Sign Components

5. Temperature Ratings in Table 4.3
6. Structural Panels
7. Tube Support Requirements
8. Sign Face Requirements
  - (a) RTI Requirements for Rigid Non-Enclosure Sign Faces
  - (b) Flexible Sign Faces
9. Integrally Sleeved GTO Test
10. Addition of Factory Installed Sign Components to Section 4
11. Material Requirements for Electrode Receptacle Insulator
12. Channel Letters
13. Polymeric Materials
14. Retention Tests on Electrode Covers
15. Mounting Means
16. Clamping Means on Sign Faces
17. Revisions to Table 4.3

Along with these requested revisions there were a number of Task groups formed to review some of the more controversial issues.

#### 1. NEON ENCLOSURE SYSTEMS AND FIGURES 4.7 & 4.8 TASK GROUP

Objective: Review 5.9, 5.10, and 5.12 for consistency and terminology and review Figures 4.7 and 4.8 for accuracy.

#### 2. GLOSSARY TERMS TASK GROUP

Objective: Consider adding additional glossary terms used in UL 879, specifically Structural Panel, Sign Face, Sign Body, etc.

#### 3. INTEGRALLY SLEEVED GTO TEST TASK GROUP

Objective: Develop test for integrally sleeved GTO cables.

Thanks to a number of guests, representing various manufacturers, which made themselves available for two days to the STP group to consult and advise on some existing products. They provided good information on how new testing and elevated requirements in the new standard would virtually eliminate some products. There seemed to be no technical substantiation to support the elevation of requirements. (a list of guests is available on the CSDS site, last page of the February 23,2007 report)

While trying not to sound like a broken record, we must always remember this Standard was a creation of a completely new Standard. The old version was only electrode receptacles and now has all, hopefully, of the components used to build a listed electric

sign. These requirements were assembled using all the different testing procedures (desk top standards) used in all the different locations to test these special products. They were all different based on when the product was tested. These current requirements had to be assembled into one document to test all the same type products to the same Standard.

This should allow manufacturers to innovate new products based on their ability to meet or exceed the Standard as written. Since safety is our first concern we want to be assured that using recognized, certified and listed products in accordance with their installation instructions and conditions of acceptability will allow us to build a fire safe listed sign.

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