



Coffee Break Training - Fire Protection Series

Inspection Techniques: “Approved,” “Certified,” “Listed,” and “Labeled” Explained

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Learning Objective: The student shall be able to explain the differences among the terms “approved,” “certified,” “listed,” and “labeled” pertinent to the model building and fire codes.

How many times have you heard someone say they wouldn't buy a product unless it was “UL approved”? They are going to wait a long time because Underwriters Laboratories (UL) doesn't “approve” products, it “certifies” them.

The words “approved,” “certified,” “listed” and “labeled” are found in the model codes, and often are misapplied. The following table summarizes the differences among the terms.



The gas appliance vent is both “listed” and “labeled” with a certification mark. The authority having jurisdiction may approve its use.

Term	Definition
Approved	Acceptable to the code enforcement official or authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). One of the world's largest property insurance and loss-prevention engineering firms, FM Global (formerly Factory Mutual), “approves” products it evaluates because it serves as the AHJ for many of its subsidiary insurance providers.
Certified	The product has been tested and performed successfully in accordance with its design standards. This is the term UL employs to indicate that the product fulfills all applicable requirements. UL authorizes the manufacturer to apply a certification mark to production of the samples submitted, or issues a certificate or notification that the product is now certified by UL.
Labeled	Equipment or material to which has been attached a label, symbol, or other identifying mark of a nationally recognized testing agency.
Listed	Equipment, materials, or services that have been evaluated by an independent, third-party agency to verify they perform as intended. The most commonly recognized listing agencies are UL and FM.



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