

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
DALLAS DIVISION

GOODSON HOLDINGS, LLC

Plaintiff,

v.

TITFLEX CORPORATION,

Defendant.

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CIVIL ACTION NO. 3:15-cv-2153

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

**PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL COMPLAINT**

Plaintiff Goodson Holdings, LLC files this Original Complaint against Defendant Titeflex Corporation, alleging as follows:

**I. THE PARTIES**

1. Goodson, Holdings, LLC. ("Goodson") is a limited liability company organized and existing under the laws of the State of Texas, with a principal place of business in Carrollton, Dallas County, Texas.

2. Titeflex Corporation ("Titeflex") is a corporation organized and existing under the law of the State of Connecticut, with its principal place of business located at 603 Hendee St., Springfield, Massachusetts. Titeflex may be served with process by serving its registered agent, CT Corporation System, One Corporate Center, Hartford, CT 06103-3220.

3. Titeflex designs, manufacturers, and sells fluid management products including corrugated semi-rigid stainless tubing (CSST) and fittings for use in residential natural gas and LP gas piping systems. Titeflex is a subsidiary of Smiths Group PLC, a global technology company based in London.

## **II. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

4. This is an action for patent infringement arising under the patent laws of the United States, Title 35 United States Code. This Court has exclusive subject matter jurisdiction over this case for patent infringement under 28 U.S.C. §1338(a).

5. Upon information and belief, Titeflex regularly transacts business in, and has committed acts of patent infringement within the State of Texas and, upon information and belief, within the Northern District of Texas. Defendant Titeflex is, therefore, subject to the personal jurisdiction of this Court.

6. Venue is proper in this District pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b)-(c) and 1400(b).

7. Goodson is an existing business located within the Dallas Division of the Northern District of Texas. All of Goodson's employees, documents, and prototypes relating to the patents-in-suit are located in this Division.

## **III. PATENTS-IN-SUIT**

8. Many residences use gas as a source of heating for cooking, water, and comfort. Such residences require a system of pipes or tubing to distribute gas to appliances throughout the house. Over the last 20 years, builders have moved from using traditional rigid pipe to corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST). CSST is flexible and avoids the onsite cutting and threading requirements of rigid pipe.

9. Mark Goodson is a Professional Engineer licensed in electrical and mechanical engineering. He has devoted over 30 years to the investigation and prevention of electrical failures which resulted in death and injury. Through his work, he discovered that CSST has a propensity to fail when exposed to electrical events such as lightning. Such events can cause perforation of the thin wall of CSST allowing gas to escape. The resulting fires have caused death, injuries, and property damage. Mark Goodson invented means and methods for preventing lightning induced electrical

fires. He applied to the United States Patent and Trademark Office for patent protection of his inventions. As it pertains to this lawsuit, Mark Goodson's invention relates to devices and methods which prevent electrically induced gas fires involving gas tubing such as Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing (CSST) and gas appliance connectors (GAC).

10. On July 11, 2009, after due review of his application, the United States Patent and Trademark Office recognized Mark Goodson's invention and issued United States Patent No. 7,562,448 ("the '448 patent") for a "METHOD FOR PREVENTING ELECTRICALLY INDUCED FIRES IN GAS TUBING." A true and correct copy of the '448 patent is attached hereto as Exhibit "A."

11. On October 26, 2010, after due review of his application, the United States Patent and Trademark Office recognized Mark Goodson's invention and issued United States Patent No. 7,821,763 ("the '763 patent") issued for a "DEVICE FOR PREVENTING ELECTRICALLY INDUCED FIRES IN GAS TUBING." A true and correct copy of the '763 patent is attached hereto as Exhibit "B."

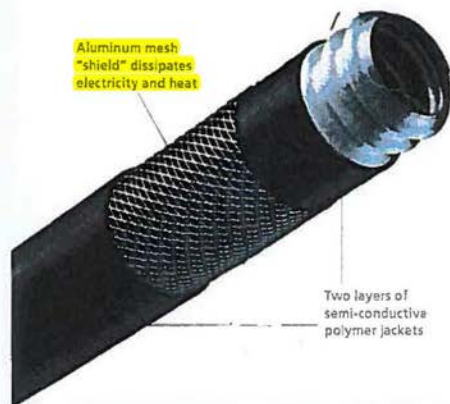
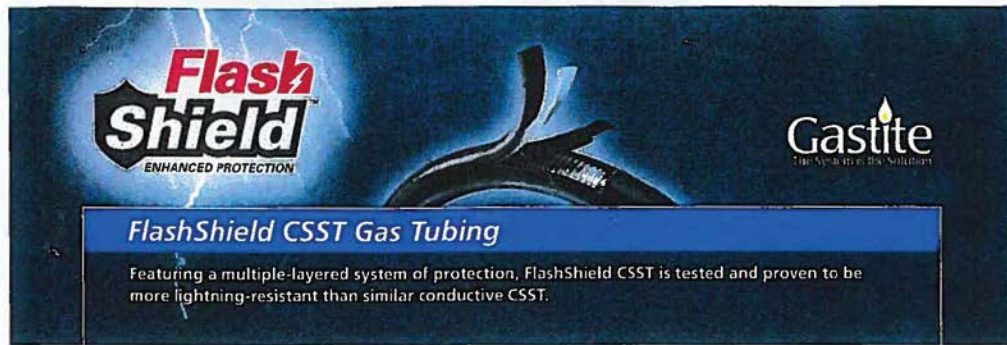
12. Goodson is the owner of all right, title and interest of the patents-in-suit, including all rights to enforce and prosecute actions for infringement and to collect damages for all relevant times against infringers of the patent-in-suit. Accordingly, Goodson possesses the exclusive right and standing to prosecute the present action for infringement of the patents-in-suit by Titeflex.

#### **IV. CLAIMS FOR RELIEF**

13. Titeflex is a leading manufacturer and seller of CSST and associated fittings in the United States. Titeflex was aware of Goodson's patents at least as early as September 2011. On September 21, 2011, Goodson's representative wrote Chris Lockhart, CEO of Titeflex. Titeflex was provided copies of the '448 and '763 patents, an article authored by Mark Goodson on the dangers of

electrically induced fires in gas tubing, a description the applicability of the patents to CSST, and an invitation to discuss licensing of Goodson’s patents. A copy of the letter is attached as exhibit “C.”

14. Titeflex did not obtain a license to use Goodson’s inventions. Instead, Titeflex proceeded with the manufacture and sale of Titeflex’s FlashShield CSST and associated fittings. FlashShield is described and depicted by the following Titeflex's materials:



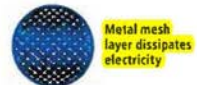
**Safety in layers without additional bonding**

- Proven to perform more than 10X better than similar conductive CSST
- Enhanced continuity between fitting and expanded metal
- No additional manufacturer bonding required

**FlashShield is easy to install**

- No spacing requirements, allowing for simple routing through complex layouts
- Pre-marked by the foot for easy measuring and installation
- Provides the same flexibility as standard CSST
- Clean and attractive finished installation

Part No.	Description	Pkg. Qty	Lbs.	Reel Size (Dia. x Width)
FS-8-250	1/2" FlashShield CSST	250 Ft/Coil	49.5	20" x 12-1/2"
FS-8-50	50 Ft/Box	8.3		21" x 6"
FS-8-125	125 Ft/Coil	28.75		20" x 12-1/2"
FS-8-500	500 Ft/Coil	95		24" x 25"
FS-8-1000	1,000 Ft/Coil	187		32" x 21-1/2"
FS-8-1500	1,500 Ft/Coil	270		32" x 21-1/2"
FS-11-250	3/4" FlashShield CSST	250 Ft/Coil	64.25	24" x 25"
FS-11-50	50 Ft/Box	10.45		21" x 6"
FS-11-125	125 Ft/Coil	34.125		20" x 12-1/2"
FS-11-500	500 Ft/Coil	116.5		24" x 25"
FS-11-1000	1,000 Ft/Coil	230		32" x 21-1/2"
FS-16-150	1" FlashShield CSST	150 Ft/Coil	58.05	24" x 25"
FS-16-50	50 Ft/Box	23.35		20" x 12-1/2"
FS-16-75	75 Ft/Coil	31.025		20" x 12-1/2"
FS-16-300	300 Ft/Coil	104.1		24" x 25"
FS-16-500	500 Ft/Coil	174.5		32" x 21-1/2"



Made in the USA.

For more information go to [www.gastite.com/flashshield](http://www.gastite.com/flashshield). Or email us at [flashshield@gastite.com](mailto:flashshield@gastite.com).  
 Gastite • 1116 Vaughn Parkway • Portland, TN 37148 • 1-800-662-0208

**Gastite**  
The System is the Solution™



LC1027  
LISTING CRITERIA

## FlashShield™ CSST Gas Tubing

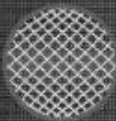
The only CSST to meet the industry's toughest standard for lightning protection and performance.



NO additional manufacturer bonding required



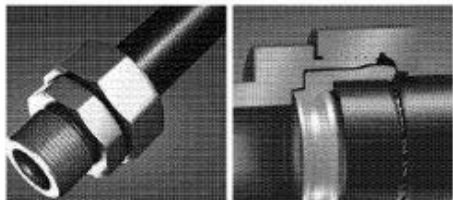
Jacket-Bite™ fittings provide continuity with metal mesh



Metallically shielded system dissipates electricity and heat



Two semi-conductive polymer jackets surround layer of metal mesh for extra protection



### A perfect fit for enhanced electrical protection.

The innovative FlashShield fitting is an integral component in the FlashShield system. Its cut-tolerant nature and multipoint seal yield rapid installation and long-term reliability. Other benefits:

- Self-guiding assembly helps ensure perfect flare
- Tool-less design, no special equipment required
- All components fully reusable

### FlashShield is easy to install.

- No spacing requirements, allowing simple routing through complex layouts
- No additional bonding requirements outside those mandated by local code
- Pre-marked by the foot for easy measuring and installation
- Provides the same flexibility as standard CSST
- Clean and attractive finished installation



15. Through its manufacture and sale of FlashShield CSST and associated fittings, Titeflex directly infringes one or more claims of the '763 patent.

16. By virtue of the September 2011 letter and attachments described above, Titeflex knew that Goodson's '448 patent claims methods for affixing connectors and CSST so as to provide an electrical shunt. In addition to selling FlashShield and associated fittings, Titeflex provides purchasers of FlashShield with means, training, instructions, and encouragement to install FlashShield and associated fittings through training programs, printed materials, web pages, and YouTube videos. An example of such means, instructions, and encouragement are depicted by the following:



## **1.1 General User Warnings**

The installation of FlashShield™ Flexible Gas Piping must be performed by a qualified installer who has successfully completed the FlashShield™ training program. FlashShield™ certifications are valid for 3 years. Certification training is available through qualified distributors, and at [www.gastite.com](http://www.gastite.com). The installer must meet all qualifications and requirements to install gas piping as required by the local administrative authority. Improper installation or operation of a FlashShield™ Flexible Gas Piping system may result in fire, explosion or asphyxiation.

This document provides the user with general guidance when designing and installing fuel gas piping using FlashShield™ Flexible Gas Piping. This guideline must be used in conjunction with all applicable building standards and codes. In the event that there is a conflict between this guideline and local code the more stringent requirement will take precedence.

17. Through utilizing Titeflex's means, instructions, and encouragement, installers of FlashShield and associated fittings directly infringe claims 1, 2, and 7 of the '448. By inducing purchaser to directly infringe the '448 patent, Titeflex is liable for indirect infringement.

18. As a result of Titeflex's direct and indirect conduct, Titeflex has damaged Goodson. Titeflex is, thus, liable to Goodson in an amount that adequately compensates Goodson for Titeflex's infringement, which by law in no event can be less than a reasonable royalty, together with interest and costs as fixed by this Court under 35 U.S.C. § 284.

19. As set out above, Titeflex was on notice of the patents-in-suit and of its infringing conduct no later than September 2011. In the face of such knowledge, Titeflex has knowingly and willfully infringed the patents-in-suit. Consequently, Goodson is entitled to additional damages as permitted by 35 U.S.C. § 284.

## **V. JURY DEMAND**

Goodson hereby requests a trial by jury pursuant to Rule 38 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

## **VI. PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

WHEREFORE, Goodson respectfully requests that the Court find in its favor and against Titeflex, and that the Court grant Goodson the following relief:

- a. Judgment that one or more claims of the patents-in-suit have been infringed, either literally and/or under the doctrine of equivalents, by Titeflex;



- b. Judgment that Titeflex's infringement is willful from the time Titeflex became aware of the infringing nature of its products and that the Court award treble damages for the period of such willful infringement pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 284.
- c. Judgment that Titeflex account for and pay to Goodson all damages to and costs incurred by Goodson because of Titeflex's infringing activities and other conduct complained of herein;
- d. That Goodson be granted pre-judgment and post-judgment interest on the damages caused by Titeflex's infringing activities and other conduct complained of herein;
- e. That the Court declare this an exceptional case and award Goodson its reasonable attorney's fees and costs in accordance with 35 U.S.C. § 284; and
- f. That Goodson be granted such other and further relief as the Court may deem just and proper under the circumstances.

Dated: June 26, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Mark D. Strachan

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