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INSTALLING WICKS IN SUCCESS LAMPS

Pittsburgh Brass Company introduced the “Success” line of lamps in 1899. These lamps were also sometimes marked “PLB&GCo.” The lamps were of exceptional quality and made to very tight tolerances. The burners must be very clean to work properly and to ease wick installation. Success lamps were sized slightly smaller than 20"‘ European lamps and American #2 size lamps but produced a brilliant white light equal to a quality #2 size lamp. Their wicks were unique and not readily interchangeable with other wicks, being thinner and slightly smaller in diameter than 20"‘ European lamps.

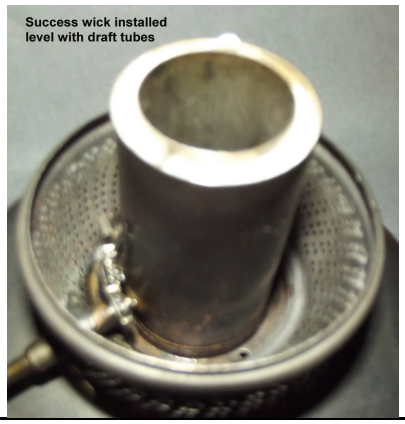
The flame spreader must be removed for wick installation and that is usually the first obstacle. Try to pull the flame spreader straight up - DO NOT TWIST the flame spreader! The flame spreader is steel and can rust to the draft tube and twisting during removal will damage the flanges on the flame spreader. If it does not come up and out easily, used a flat-ended dowel that will fit up from the bottom through the draft tube and gently push the flame spreader up and out. Flat sand or lightly file the edges of the flame spreader flanges so it will fit back into the center draft tube easily.

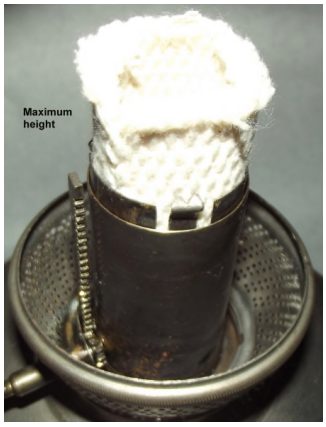
The burner is removed by turning it counterclockwise. The lift gallery can be removed from the lower burner by lifting it until it stops, turn counterclockwise and pull straight up. At this point the entire burner assembly should be thoroughly cleaned and polished.	 Success lift gallery installed Success gallery partly lifted.	 Success lift gallery- fits over peg opposite gear shaft Slot in the gallery fits over peg opposite winder gear.

The photo at right shows the burner with the wick sleeve raised as high as it will go. Inspect the wick sleeve to make sure it is not dented, bent in or out, as that will make wick installation very difficult. Make sure the slotted gear rod is straight and of equal distance from the draft tube from bottom to top so the gear wheel on the shaft is fully engaged in the slots.	 Success_burner ratchet & gear

Lower the wick sleeve as far as it will go and then push the new wick up through the wick sleeve until the top of the new wick is level with the top of the draft tubes.

The photo extreme right shows the maximum height of the extended wick. That is the maximum wick travel. When the wick burns down with use it can be raised to again be level with the top of the draft tubes.





Use a dowel or piece of a broom handle one inch or less in diameter to smooth the inside of the wick and press the wick into the retaining barbs on the wick sleeve. Then the wick can be slowly pushed down over the center draft tube while gently turning the burner. If the draft tube is polished smooth the burner with installed wick should slide down the draft tube without much effort.

The photo at right shows the burner with gallery installed prior to installation over the draft tube. Note that the wick is well down from the top of the burner flame cone.

With NO FUEL IN THE RESERVOIR, reinstall the flame spreader, making sure the wick is not exposed more than 1/8" above the draft tubes. Put some 91% alcohol or fuel on the wick with an eyedropper, light the wick, and put the chimney on the lamp. When the fuel burns out the cotton wick itself will burn down level with the draft tubes. Cotton smells when burning so this process should be done where a gentle breeze or exhaust fan can expel the fumes generated by burning cotton.
THE WICK MUST BE ABLE TO RETRACT A MINIMUM OF 1/4'' BELOW THE TOP OF THE DRAFT TUBES OR THE FLAME CANNOT BE EXTINGUISHED!

Circular wick, center draft lamps should be burned at near maximum light output to properly heat the flame spreader to burn up all fumes. If used turned down to minimum light output, they will produce an aroma when burning, but not when properly adjusted for maximum light output.

When not in use for a long time, empty the font of fuel and burn the wick "dry." Even 1K clear kerosene will precipitate a paraffin deposit which will harden any wick, ruining the capillary action necessary for proper burning. Fuel evaporated while in storage leaves a varnish which often glues everything together.