

For this issue of Hemingray Corner, we're studying the CD 252 Knowles Cable Insulator—specifically the [010] embossing:

(F-Skirt) KNOWLES CABLE / INSULATOR. SB

For years I've always puzzled over the presence of this embossing blotted out underneath many early Hemingray CD 252 molds.

There are currently 6 different Hemingray CD 252 embossings in the price guide that have "KNOWLES CABLE / INSULATOR" blotted out on either the front or rear skirt: [170], [180], [220], [260], [265] & [270].

There are also 3 embossings that seemingly only have "KNOWLES CABLE" blotted out, but no trace of "INSULATOR"—specifically [155], [160] and [230]. Yet, no CD 252 Knowles embossed counterparts have ever been found without the word "INSULATOR", so it's more likely that the blotout is just indiscernible underneath the Hemingray embossing, and these embossings don't actually exist.

There is even a [190] embossing in which KNOWLES CABLE is supposedly still present (not blotted out). I've yet to see one and I wonder if it truly exists, or if it is just an extremely poor/strong blotout.

But enough nitpicking about embossings... regardless of how many variants there truly are, it's clear that Hemingray used several of these CD 252 Knowles [010] molds and rebranded them as Hemingray. But who made the original CD 252 Knowles [010]? Well, based on this being featured in Hemingray Corner, you've probably already guessed what I think... so let's dig into the evidence!

I recently had a chance to add 3 specimens to my collection and study them more carefully—aqua with amber swirls, light aqua, and blue

aqua—all typical Hemingray colors. The price guide also shows [010] in yellow green, ice green, ice aqua, and light green, all of which are also colors that Hemingray produced (and I'd love to find them!)

As for the embossing, it is hand engraved, sharply chiseled, and fairly uniform—nearly identical to the earliest Hemingray embossed versions. All three pieces came from different molds, as evidenced by the leg of the "R" in "INSULATOR." being different. All of the specimens I've seen also have a period after "INSULATOR." which is not denoted in the price guide. While periods after words are not terribly common on Hemingray insulators (except for abbreviations such as "H.G.CO.") I know of at least two others, specifically CD 280 [025] and [030], which have a period after "N°1."

Another aspect I studied is the quality of the glass and mold. As anyone who has collected insulators for a long time can tell you, sometimes you can hold an insulator in your hand and it just "feels like a Hemingray", for lack of a better way to put it. The mold seam lines and sharp edges, the heft, the wire brush marks on the ears and machining marks on the outside that are both telltale signs of a fresh mold, and even the bubbles & amber swirling in the glass—all of these qualities can be found in the [010] specimens that I've seen and handled.

There is one more mold feature that stood out—the inside edge of the outer skirt is rounded and not a sharp edge. At first glance, this might seem odd on a Hemingray piece. However, if you look at other Hemingray products, including many of their 1890s power pieces, and even the No Name CD 145 "Bar/Bar" attributed to Hemingray, these also have rounded inner edges on the outer skirt. I also have a CD 252 Hemingray [180] with drip points added to the rounded edge (which, incidentally, has the Knowles Cable Insulator blotout).



CD 252 KNOWLES [010] IN 3 COLORS (LEFT TO RIGHT): AQUA WITH AMBER SWIRLS, LIGHT AQUA, AND BLUE AQUA.

CD 252 KNOWLES [010] STUDY

(CONTINUED)



WHAT I BELIEVE ARE WIRE BRUSH MARKS CAN BE SEEN ON THE EARS, A TYPICAL FEATURE ON NEW HEMINGRAY MOLDS.



NOTE THE CONCENTRIC CIRCLES IN THE TOP OF THE PINHOLE (NOT AN ELMER RING). THIS WOULD ALSO SEEM TO INDICATE A FRESHLY MADE PLUNGER.



LEFT: KNOWLES [010]. RIGHT: HEMINGRAY [180] WITH "KNOWLES CABLE / INSULATOR." BLOTTED OUT. NOTE THE LOWER SET PINHOLE ON THE KNOWLES.



BASE VIEW: NOTE THE ROUNDED INNER EDGE OF THE OUTER SKIRTS ON BOTH PIECES. THE KNOWLES (LEFT) HAS A SLIGHTLY THICKER & SHORTER INNER SKIRT.

With all the similarities stated, I should also say that there are a couple of minor differences between the Knowles and Hemingray embossed insulators as well: namely the pinhole and inner skirt. At least with the three Knowles specimens I have, the pinhole is lower set and the inner skirt is thicker and shorter, as you can see in the photos. Interestingly, the extra glass above the pinhole didn't affect the overall weight of the piece as much as I would have thought; both the Knowles and the Hemingray specimens pictured weigh about 2¾ pounds.

So now for the ultimate question: are the CD 252 Knowles [010] Hemingray products? The jury is still out, but based on the evidence, I'm leaning towards a yes. What do you think? No shards have been dug from the Hemingray dump that I'm aware of.

That said... I suspect that *only* the CD 252 Knowles [010] embossing was manufactured by Hemingray. All of the other Knowles embossed CD 252 insulators do not have these same characteristics. This includes the tall variants, the Prism embossed variants, the slug embossing variants, and the M&E Co. embossed variants. Those were clearly made by other glass companies.

If anyone else has performed a study on the CD 252 Knowles Cable Insulator, or has [010] specimens in other colors, I would be interested in hearing from you! 🍷