



STRATA_HEAT™ WIRE Repair

Procedure with a Cable Fault Finder

TDS 218

1. Cut all electricity going to your thermostat and disconnect the heating system from the thermostat.
2. Turn on the Cable Fault Finder by holding down either the UP or DOWN button on the front of it while pressing the ON/STANDBY button. The display should alternate between “0” and a value called the VOP (Velocity of Propagation). If the VOP is 65, then you may continue. If not, press the UP or DOWN button to change it to 65.
3. Turn off the Cable Fault Finder, then turn it back on without pressing the UP or DOWN buttons. The display should show a steady “0”.
4. Temporarily touch the tips of the test leads together to get a tone from the instrument. The sound indicates “continuity” within a circuit. You are now ready to use the instrument.
5. Attach the black test lead to the green (braided) ground wire of the mat power leads.
6. Attach the red test lead to either one of the other two power leads feeding the mat.
7. If the display fluctuates or shows “ERR”, try pulling the mat power leads apart further to get space between the test leads.
8. Write down the distance shown on the display and the color of the power lead you connected to.
9. Move the red lead to the other power lead feeding the mat.
10. Write down the distance shown on the display and the color of the power lead you connected to.

IF THE READINGS ARE THE SAME

If the readings on both sides are the same and within 10% of the total length of the wire (see product specs or manual), you should be in good shape. It can however mean that your break is at the far end of the wire. The most common scenario is a damaged end splice (the tail of the wire).

IF YOUR READINGS ARE THE SAME BUT SIGNIFICANTLY SHORTER THAN THE FACTORY LENGTH OF THE WIRE

It could indicate that you have a complete break. For example, on a 100ft (30.5m) cable (0802-0100-2), the cable is 100 linear feet (30.5m). If your CFF readings are well short of 100ft (30.5m), then you may have a clean break in the wire.

Confirm your readings with an Ohm-meter or Multi-Meter:

- Black to White: see factory settings. Typically, on a 200 Ohms scale, you should read something between 20 and 200. If you have no readings here, it might indicate or confirm you have a break. Before jumping to conclusions, double check the batteries on your reader and re-do the measure. Ensure to use a digital Ohm-meter (digital screen), not an analog one (with a needle indicator).
- Black to ground: no reading should show. If you do show a reading, it confirms a “leak to ground” and you have a “short”. The CFF should give you the distance on that leg and indicate “Short”.
- White to ground: no reading should show. If you do show a reading, it confirms a “leak to ground” and you have a “short”. The CFF should give you the distance on that leg and indicate “Short”.

IF THE READINGS ARE DIFFERENT

If the readings on the black and white side are different, write down your readings. What happens here is that the wire is partially damaged, and the signal on one side hits the damage and the reading on the other side goes all

the way to the end of the cable, and then hits the damage on the return. In the example of the 100 ft. (30.5m) spool above, if a partial damage is found 30 ft. (9.1m) away on the white side of the cable, then one reading will read 30 ft. (9.1m) and the other will read 170 ft. (51.8m). That is 100 ft. (30.5m) to the end of the black side (no damage) and 70ft backwards returning on the white side of the cable.

1. Once you have written down your readings and made a written map of the cable or mat layout and the possible location, carefully lift the tile over the suspected area. Be careful with grinders if you use them; favor smaller tools and a slower process rather than the industrial-grade chisel and hammer approach. A smaller chisel will allow you to reduce further damage to wire.
2. If things go well, you will find a break. You are looking either at a black/dark spot in the thin set where the cable burned out, or, after uncovering and loosening the cable, a crushed spot on the cable. You can typically spot these with bare hands by running your fingers on the break. Typically, this is not the spot where the break lies.
3. If the break is not here, cut the wire on purpose and carefully clean the ground and conductors on both sides. You will have one side heading to the thermostat and one side aiming to the tail of the mat. Let's call them upstream (thermostat) and downstream (tail-end). When cleaning up the wires and exposing the copper, we recommend using a utility knife with a fresh blade. The wires are so small that most wire strippers will simply break the cable.

ISOLATE THE SIDE WITH THE BREAK

To identify whether the break is upstream or downstream from your cut, use your Ohm-meter. Twist the black and white together at the thermostat with a wire nut (do not connect the ground wire). Check the ohm's normally from your cut towards the thermostat.

You should have a reading (a fraction of the factory reading since you're not measuring the entire cable), and an open circuit to ground. If that's not the case, your break is on that side and you should repeat the TDR steps above to identify how far from your cut the break now is. If your original drawing and approximation was good, you should be pretty close and read a small number of feet.

If your circuit is fine, turn to the other side of your cut and use the Ohm-meter to check readings towards the tail of the mat (downstream).

If the ohms do not show a complete circuit, repeat the CFF instructions above to get nearer to the break.

ONCE THE BREAK IS FOUND

When you have found the break, we suggest you first simply twist all the wires back together in order to establish a complete circuit from the thermostat. Measure the ohms to confirm you have restored the original or close to original readings. There is no polarity in the cable, which means that you can interchange the two conductors at any point. While the cables are color-coded at the thermostat level, they are all the same under the floor. Follow the instructions located in the STRATA_HEAT standard repair kit to complete your connections.

Technical Data Sheets are subject to change without notice. For latest revision, check our website at <https://laticrete.com>
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