

CHAPTER 28

WATER HEATERS

User note: Code change proposals to this chapter will be considered by the IRC – Plumbing and Mechanical Code Development Committee during the 2015 (Group A) Code Development Cycle. See explanation on page iv.

SECTION P2801 GENERAL

P2801.1 Required. Hot water shall be supplied to plumbing fixtures and plumbing appliances intended for bathing, washing or culinary purposes.

P2801.2 Drain valves. Drain valves for emptying shall be installed at the bottom of each tank-type water heater and *hot water* storage tank. The drain valve inlet shall be not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch (19.1 mm) nominal iron pipe size and the outlet shall be provided with a male hose thread.

P2801.3 Installation. Water heaters shall be installed in accordance with this chapter and Chapters 20 and 24.

P2801.4 Location. Water heaters and storage tanks shall be installed in accordance with Section M1305 and shall be located and connected to provide access for observation, maintenance, servicing and replacement.

P2801.5 Prohibited locations. Water heaters shall be located in accordance with Chapter 20.

P2801.6 Required pan. Where a storage tank-type water heater or a hot water storage tank is installed in a location where water leakage from the tank will cause damage, the tank shall be installed in a pan constructed of one of the following:

1. Galvanized steel or aluminum of not less than 0.0236 inch (0.6010 mm) in thickness.
2. Plastic not less than 0.036 inch (0.9 mm) in thickness.
3. Other approved materials.

A plastic pan shall not be installed beneath a gas-fired water heater.

P2801.6.1 Pan size and drain. The pan shall be not less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (38 mm) deep and shall be of sufficient size and shape to receive dripping or condensate from the tank or water heater. The pan shall be drained by an indirect waste pipe of not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch (19 mm) diameter. Piping for safety pan drains shall be of those materials indicated in Table P2906.5. Where a pan drain was not previously installed, a pan drain shall not be required for a replacement water heater installation.

P2801.6.2 Pan drain termination. The pan drain shall extend full-size and terminate over a suitably located indirect waste receptor or shall extend to the exterior of the building and terminate not less than 6 inches (152 mm) and not more than 24 inches (610 mm) above the adjacent ground surface.

P2801.7 Water heaters installed in garages. Water heaters having an *ignition source* shall be elevated such that the source of ignition is not less than 18 inches (457 mm) above the garage floor.

Exception: Elevation of the *ignition source* is not required for appliances that are *listed* as flammable vapor ignition-resistant.

P2801.8 Water heater seismic bracing. In Seismic Design Categories D₀, D₁ and D₂ and townhouses in Seismic Design Category C, water heaters shall be anchored or strapped in the upper one-third and in the lower one-third of the appliance to resist a horizontal force equal to one-third of the operating weight of the water heater, acting in any horizontal direction, or in accordance with the appliance manufacturer's recommendations.

SECTION P2802 SOLAR WATER HEATING SYSTEMS

P2802.1 Water temperature control. Where heated water is discharged from a solar thermal system to a *hot water* distribution system, a thermostatic mixing valve complying with ASSE 1017 shall be installed to temper the water to a temperature of not greater than 140°F (60°C). Solar thermal systems supplying *hot water* for both space heating and domestic uses shall comply with Section P2803.2. A temperature-indicating device shall be installed to indicate the temperature of the water discharged from the outlet of the mixing valve. The thermostatic mixing valve required by this section shall not be a substitute for water temperature limiting devices required by Chapter 27 for specific fixtures.

P2802.2 Isolation valves. Isolation valves in accordance with P2903.9.2 shall be provided on the cold water feed to the water heater. Isolation valves and associated piping shall be provided to bypass solar storage tanks where the system contains multiple storage tanks.

SECTION P2803 WATER HEATERS USED FOR SPACE HEATING

P2803.1 Protection of potable water. Piping and components connected to a water heater for space heating applications shall be suitable for use with potable water in accordance with Chapter 29. Water heaters that will be used to supply potable water shall not be connected to a heating system or components previously used with nonpotable-water heating *appliances*. Chemicals for boiler treatment shall not be introduced into the water heater.

P2803.2 Temperature control. Where a combination water heater-space heating system requires water for space heating at temperatures exceeding 140°F (60°C), a master thermostatic mixing valve complying with ASSE 1017 shall be installed to temper the water to a temperature of not greater than 140°F (60°C) for domestic uses.

SECTION P2804 RELIEF VALVES

P2804.1 Relief valves required. Appliances and equipment used for heating water or storing hot water shall be protected by one of the following:

1. A separate pressure-relief valve and a separate temperature-relief valve.
2. A combination pressure-and-temperature relief valve.

P2804.2 Rating. Relief valves shall have a minimum rated capacity for the equipment served and shall conform to ANSI Z21.22.

P2804.3 Pressure-relief valves. Pressure-relief valves shall have a relief rating adequate to meet the pressure conditions for the appliances or equipment protected. In tanks, they shall be installed directly into a tank tapping or in a water line close to the tank. They shall be set to open at not less than 25 psi (172 kPa) above the system pressure and not greater than 150 psi (1034 kPa). The relief-valve setting shall not exceed the rated working pressure of the tank.

P2804.4 Temperature-relief valves. Temperature-relief valves shall have a relief rating compatible with the temperature conditions of the appliances or equipment protected. The valves shall be installed such that the temperature-sensing element monitors the water within the top 6 inches (152 mm) of the tank. The valve shall be set to open at a temperature of not greater than 210°F (99°C).

P2804.5 Combination pressure-and-temperature relief valves. Combination pressure and temperature-relief valves shall comply with the requirements for separate pressure- and temperature-relief valves.

P2804.6 Installation of relief valves. A check or shutoff valve shall not be installed in any of the following locations:

1. Between a relief valve and the termination point of the relief valve discharge pipe.
2. Between a relief valve and a tank.
3. Between a relief valve and heating appliances or equipment.

P2804.6.1 Requirements for discharge pipe. The discharge piping serving a pressure-relief valve, temperature-relief valve or combination valve shall:

1. Not be directly connected to the drainage system.
2. Discharge through an air gap located in the same room as the water heater.
3. Not be smaller than the diameter of the outlet of the valve served and shall discharge full size to the air gap.
4. Serve a single relief device and shall not connect to piping serving any other relief device or equipment.
5. Discharge to the floor, to the pan serving the water heater or storage tank, to a waste receptor or to the outdoors.
6. Discharge in a manner that does not cause personal injury or structural damage.

7. Discharge to a termination point that is readily observable by the building occupants.
8. Not be trapped.
9. Be installed to flow by gravity.
10. Terminate not more than 6 inches (152 mm) and not less than two times the discharge pipe diameter above the floor or waste receptor flood level rim.
11. Not have a threaded connection at the end of the piping.
12. Not have valves or tee fittings.
13. Be constructed of those materials indicated in Section P2906.5 or materials tested, rated and *approved* for such use in accordance with ASME A112.4.1.
14. Be one nominal size larger than the size of the relief-valve outlet, where the relief-valve discharge piping is constructed of PEX or PE-RT tubing. The outlet end of such tubing shall be fastened in place.

P2804.7 Vacuum-relief valve. Bottom fed tank-type water heaters and bottom fed tanks connected to water heaters shall have a vacuum-relief valve installed that complies with ANSI Z21.22.