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NFPA® 90A

Standard for the

Installation of Air-Conditioning and Ventilating Systems

2015 Edition

This edition of NFPA 90A, Standard for the Installation of Air-Conditioning and Ventilating Systems, was prepared by the Technical Committee on Air Conditioning. It was issued by the Standards Council on April 29, 2014, with an effective date of May 19, 2014, and supersedes all previous editions.

This edition of NFPA 90A was approved as an American National Standard on May 19, 2014.

Origin and Development of NFPA 90A

This standard dates from 1899, when committee attention was first given to blower and exhaust systems. Prior to 1936, the subject of air conditioning was covered in NFPA standards on blower systems. In 1937, it was decided to prepare a separate standard on air-conditioning, warm air heating, and ventilating systems. This standard was initially adopted in 1937 with subsequent amendments in 1938, 1939, 1940, 1942, 1950, 1952, 1955, 1956, 1960, 1961, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1973, 1976, 1980, 1984, and 1989. The 1993 and 1996 editions were reconfirmations of the 1989 edition. The 1999 edition contained changes that were mainly editorial in nature.

The 2002 edition incorporated format changes to comply with the Manual of Style for NFPA Technical Committee Documents and new provisions for the removal of accessible abandoned materials in concealed spaces and plenums.

The only changes to the 2006 edition were to update “flame spread rating” to “flame spread index.”

The major change in the 2009 edition was to replace the references to NFPA 255 with ANSI/UL 723 and ASTM E 84, since NFPA 255 had been withdrawn. All three test standards are quite similar.

The changes in the 2012 edition were for the purposes of updating the editions of the referenced standards.

For the 2015 edition, the changes that have been made consist of primarily editorial alterations, reference updates, and clarifications of existing language. A section and test method for Air Dispersion Systems has also been added.
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This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted on the final text of this edition. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred. A key to classifications is found at the back of the document.

NOTE: Membership on a committee shall not in and of itself constitute an endorsement of the Association or any document developed by the committee on which the member serves.

Committee Scope: This Committee shall have primary responsibility for documents on the construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of systems for air conditioning, warm air heating, and ventilating including filters, ducts, and related equipment to protect life and property from fire, smoke, and gases resulting from fire or from conditions having manifestations similar to fire.

2015 Edition
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NFPA 90A

Standard for the
Installation of Air-Conditioning and Ventilating Systems

2015 Edition

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NOTICE: An asterisk (*) following the number or letter designating an explanatory material on the paragraph can be found in Annex A.

A reference in brackets [ ] following a section or paragraph indicates material that has been extracted from another NFPA document. As an aid to the user, the complete title and edition of the source documents for extracts in mandatory sections of the document are given in Chapter 2 and those for extracts in informational sections are given in Annex C. Extracted text may be edited for consistency and style and may include the revision of internal paragraph references and other references as appropriate. Requests for interpretations or revisions of extracted text shall be sent to the technical committee responsible for the source document.

Information on referenced publications can be found in Chapter 2 and Annex C.

Chapter 1 Administration

1.1* Scope. This standard shall cover construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of systems for air conditioning and ventilating, including filters, ducts, and related equipment, to protect life and property from fire, smoke, and gases resulting from fire or from conditions having manifestations similar to fire.

1.2 Purpose. This standard shall prescribe minimum requirements for safety to life and property from fire. These requirements shall be intended to accomplish the following:

(1) Restrict the spread of smoke through air duct systems within a building or into a building from the outside
(2) Restrict the spread of fire through air duct systems from the area of fire origin, whether located within the building or outside
(3) Maintain the fire-resistive integrity of building components and elements such as floors, partitions, roofs, walls, and floor- or roof-ceiling assemblies affected by the installation of air duct systems
(4) Minimize the ignition sources and combustibility of the elements of the air duct systems
(5) Permit the air duct systems in a building to be used for the additional purpose of emergency smoke control

1.3 Application. This standard shall apply to all systems for the movement of environmental air in structures that serve the following:

(1)*Spaces over 708 m³ (25,000 ft³) in volume
(2)*Buildings of Types III, IV, and V construction over three stories in height, regardless of volume
(3)*Buildings and spaces not covered by other applicable NFPA standards
(4)*Occupants or processes not covered by other applicable NFPA standards

1.4 Retroactivity. The provisions of this standard shall not be intended to be applied retroactively. Where a system is being altered, extended, or renovated, the requirements of this standard shall apply only to the work being undertaken.

1.5 Equivalency. Nothing in this standard shall be intended to prevent the use of new methods or devices, provided that sufficient technical data are submitted to the authority having jurisdiction to demonstrate that the proposed method or device is equivalent in quality, strength, durability, and safety to that prescribed by this standard.

Chapter 2 Referenced Publications

2.1 General. The documents or portions thereof listed in this chapter are referenced within this standard and shall be considered part of the requirements of this document.

2.2 NFPA Publications. National Fire Protection Association, 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471.


2.3 Other Publications.
