



OFFICE APPROVAL OF ALTERNATE METHOD

OFFICE INTERPRETATION

TO: Building, Plumbing, Mechanical & Electrical Contractors
FROM: Armin Wallner, Chief Building Services Official *afw*
DATE: November 8, 2007
SUBJECT: Acceptable Terminations for Water Heater Pressure Relief Valve Piping in Crawlspace

Recently this Division received requests regarding our policy for properly terminating the pressure relief valve discharge piping of a water heater located in the crawlspace.

The applicable code sections are Section 504.6 of the NC Plumbing Code (NPC) and Section R408.1.4 or R409.2.4 of the NC Residential Code (NRC).

The following are three acceptable methods of termination within a crawlspace.

1. The relief valve discharge piping shall terminate above the crawlspace drain required by section R408.2 (NRC) with a visible air gap, or
2. The relief valve discharge piping shall terminate outdoors. Relief valve discharge pipes must not be exposed to freezing temperatures. Relief valves commonly discharge small amounts of water or may leak as a result of a fouled or failed valve seat or disc. The discharge water could freeze, thereby blocking the discharge pipe and disabling the relief valve. The relief valve discharge pipe must first discharge through an air gap into an indirect waste receptor located in the crawlspace. The piping from the indirect waste receptor shall terminate to the outdoors. The waste receptor piping shall have adequate fall and support to ensure proper drainage, or
3. The relief valve discharge piping shall discharge to an interior pump located in the crawlspace that discharges to a safe place of disposal.

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