BOILER CAPACITY

The capacity of the boiler should be based on the rated capacity of the heaters at the lowest entering air temperature that will occur, plus an allowance for line losses. Ordinarily for recirculating heaters the lowest entering temperature will occur at the beginning of the heating period and is usually taken as 40 F, while for ventilators taking air from outdoors the lowest entering temperature will be the extreme outdoor temperature expected in the district. No greater allowance in boiler capacity beyond the calculated heat demand need be added in order to supply unit heaters than for any other type of system.

It is unwise to install a single unit heater as the sole load on any boiler, particularly if the unit heater motor is started and stopped by thermostatic control. The wide and sudden fluctuations of load that occur under such conditions would require closer attendance to the boiler than is usually possible in a small installation. Where oil or gas is used to fire the boiler, it is possible by means of a pressurestat to control the boiler, in response to this rapid fluctuation. In most cases, however, and particularly where the boiler is coal-fired, it is advisable to use two or more smaller heating units instead of one large unit.

Steam pressures below 5 lb can be used with safety for recirculating unit heaters when their coils are designed for the purpose and when proper provision is made for returning the condensate. If ventilators are to take in air that may be at a temperature below freezing, however, a steam pressure of not less than 5 lb should be maintained on the convector or a corresponding differential in pressure between the supply and returns be maintained by means of a vacuum.

QUIETNESS

Fan speed alone is not a measure of relative quietness of fans having different designs and proportions. Quietness is a function of type, diameter, blade form and other variables besides speed, and all these must be considered. In general for a given design, the higher the fan speed, the greater the noise, and centrifugal fans are more quiet than disc or propeller fans.

PIPING CONNECTIONS

Piping connections for unit heaters are similar to those for other types of fan-blast heaters. Typical connections are shown in Figs. 4 and 5. One-pipe gravity and vapor systems are not recommended for unit heater work. For two-pipe closed gravity return systems the return from each unit should be fitted with a heavy-duty or blast trap, and an automatic air valve should be connected into the return header of each unit. Pressure-drop must be compensated for by elevation of the heater above the water line of the boiler or of the receiver.

In pump and receiver systems the air may be eliminated by individual air valves on the heaters, or it may be carried into the returns the same as for vacuum systems and the entire return system be free-vented to the

atmosphere, provided all units, drip points, and radiation are properly trapped to prevent steam entering the returns.

On vacuum or open vented systems the return from each unit should be fitted with a large capacity trap to discharge the water of condensation and with a thermostatic air valve for eliminating the air, or with a heavy-duty trap for handling both the condensation and the air, provided the air finally can be eliminated at some other point in the return system.

For high pressure systems the same kind of traps may be used as with vacuum systems, except that they must be constructed for the pressure used. If the air is to be eliminated at the return header of the unit, a high pressure air valve can be used; otherwise the air may be passed with the condensate through the high-pressure return trap, with some danger of return pipe corrosion and the problem of its elimination at some other point in the system.

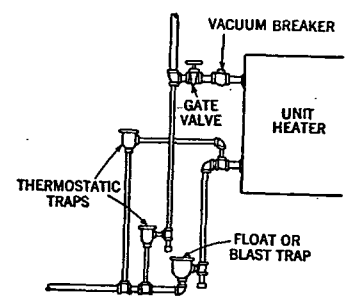


FIG. 4. UNIT HEATER CONNECTIONS WHERE CONDENSATION IS RETURNED TO VACUUM PUMP OR TO AN OPEN VENTED RECEIVER

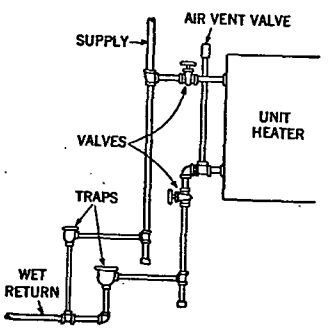


FIG. 5. UNIT HEATER CONNECTIONS WHERE CONDENSATION IS RETURNED TO BOILER THROUGH WET RETURN

OTHER TYPES OF UNITS

All Electric

The foregoing discussion relates generally to units in which steam or hot water is used as the heating medium. On rare occasions electrical resistances are used as the heating element. These are applied only where electric power is abundant and cheap and where other forms of fuel are scarce and expensive. (See Chapter 40.)

Direct Fired

A recent development in gas burning equipment is the direct-fired industrial unit heater. These heaters are of the warm-air type and are equipped with fans which cause the air to pass over the heating surfaces at a fairly high velocity and then direct the warm air in to the space to be heated. As is the case with the steam-fed unit heaters, the gas-fired appliances may be used for heating stores, shops, and warehouses. They usually are suspended in the space to be heated and in most instances