

thereby withdrawing the valve from its seat. This permits the steam pressure acting on the surface of the water in the bucket to force the water to a discharge opening. When the bucket is emptied it rises and closes the valve and another cycle begins. The discharge from this type of trap is intermittent.

In the *inverted bucket* trap, steam floats the inverted submerged bucket and closes the valve. Water entering the trap fills the bucket, which sinks and through compound leverage opens the valve, and the trap discharges. It is impossible to install a water gage glass on an inverted bucket trap, but if visual inspection is necessary, a gage glass can be placed on the line leading to the trap. No air relief cocks can be used, but they are unnecessary, as the elimination of air is automatically taken care of by air passing through the vent in the top of the inverted bucket regardless of temperature.

**Thermostatic Traps.** Thermostatic traps are of two types, those in which the discharge valve is operated by the relative expansion of metals, and those in which the action of a volatile liquid is utilized for this purpose. Thermostatic traps of large capacity for draining blast coils or very large radiators are called *blast* traps.

*Float and thermostatic traps* have both a thermostatic element to release air and a float element to release the water.

*Impulse traps* operate with a moving valve actuated by a control cylinder. When the trap is handling condensate, the pressure required to lift the valve is greater than the reduced pressure in the control cylinder and consequently the valve opens allowing a free discharge of condensate. As the remaining condensate approaches steam temperature, flashing results, flow through the valve orifice is choked and the pressure builds up in the control chamber closing the valve.

#### Automatic Return Traps

In the general heating plant, where thermostatic traps are installed on the heating units, it becomes necessary to provide a means for returning the water of condensation to the boiler, if a condensation or vacuum pump is not used. When the return main can be kept sufficiently high above the boiler water line for all operating conditions, the water of condensation will flow back by gravity, and no mechanical device is required. But actually this does not work out in practice. It follows, therefore, that a direct-return trap is needed for the handling of the condensation even though it may not be called into action except under some operating condition where the pressure differential exceeds the static head provided. The installation of a direct-return trap assures safety for such systems, and guarantees the operation of the plant under varying conditions.

Automatic return traps, sometimes called alternating receivers, may be of the counter-balanced, tilting type, or spring actuated. These consist of a small receiver with an internal float, and when the condensate will not flow into the boiler under pressure, it will feed into the receiver of the trap, and in so doing, raise or tilt the float or mechanism which actuates a steam valve automatically. This admits steam to the receiver, at boiler pressure, and the equalizing of the pressures which follows allows the water to flow into the boiler.

**Tilting Traps.** With this type of trap, water enters a bowl and rises until its weight overbalances that of a counter-weight, and the bowl sinks to the bottom. As the bowl sinks, a valve is opened thus admitting live steam pressure on the surface of the water and the trap then discharges. After the water is discharged, the counter-weight sinks and raises the bowl, which in turn closes the valve and the cycle begins again. Tilting traps are necessarily intermittent in operation. They are not ordinarily equipped with glass water gages, as the action of the trap shows when it is filling or emptying. The air relief of tilting traps is taken care of by the valves of the trap.

## CHAPTER 15

### *Piping for Steam Heating Systems*

*Operating Characteristics, Steam Flow, Pipe Sizes, Tables for Pipe Sizing, One-Pipe Gravity Air-Vent Systems, Two-Pipe Gravity Air-Vent Systems, Two-Pipe Vapor Systems, Vacuum, Orifice, Atmospheric and Sub-Atmospheric Systems, Boiler and Radiator Connections, Piping for Indirect Heating Units, Dripping*

IT is important that steam piping systems distribute steam not only at full *design* load but during excess and partial loads. Usually the average winter steam demand is less than half of the demand at the *design* outside temperature. Moreover, in rapidly warming up a system even in moderate weather, the load on the steam main and returns may exceed the maximum operating load for severe weather due to the necessity of raising the temperature of the metal in the system to the steam temperature and the building to the *design* indoor temperature. Investigations of the return of condensation have revealed that as high as 143 per cent of the design condensation rate may exist under conditions of actual operation.

The functions of the piping system are the distribution of the steam, the return of the condensate and in systems where no local air vents are provided, the removal of the air. The distribution of the steam should be rapid, uniform and without noise, and the release of air should be facilitated as much as possible, as an air bound system will not heat readily nor properly. In designing the piping arrangement it is desirable to maintain equivalent resistances in the supply and return piping to and from a radiator. Arranging the piping so the total distance from the boiler to the radiation is the same as the return piping distance from the heating unit back to the boiler tends to obtain such a result. The condensation which occurs in steam piping as well as in radiators must be drained to prevent impeding the ready flow of the steam and air. The effect of back pressure in the returns and excessive reevaporization, such as occurs where condensation is released from pressures considerably higher than the vacuum or pressure in the return, must be avoided.

The piping design of a heating system is greatly influenced by its operating characteristics. Heating systems do not operate under constant conditions as they are continually changing due to variation in load. As the system is being filled with steam the pressure existing in various