BSR/ASHRAE Addendum ab
to ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 15-2022

First Public Review Draft

Proposed Addendum ab to
Standard 15-2022, Safety Standard
for Refrigeration Systems

First Public Review (August 2024)
(Draft shows Proposed Changes to Current Standard)

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FOREWORD

There is historical precedent for machinery room spaces to be used for housing or storing other equipment or systems within the room that are not related to the machinery systems the room is specifically designed and intended to house. This creates a situation that often requires unauthorized non-utility personnel to access the space and the equipment they are operating, inspecting, or maintaining. This increases the risk of an accident that Section 8.9.4 was trying to minimize. The concern is particularly heightened as many facilities begin their transition to A2L refrigerant systems.

The proposed revisions emphasize the existing normative requirements of the standard and provide information in Appendix A as to what types of equipment are generally expected to be in a machinery room and types of equipment and materials that should not be located in a machinery room. In addition, the proposed changes provide further information on the “authorized personnel” requirements for accessing a machinery room by Section 8.9.4.

Note: This addendum makes proposed changes to the current standard. These changes are indicated in the text by underlining (for additions) and strikethrough (for deletions) except where the reviewer instructions specifically describe some other means of showing the changes. Only these changes to the current standard are open for review and comment at this time. Additional material is provided for context only and is not open for comment except as it relates to the proposed changes.

**Addendum ab to Standard 15-2022**

Modify Section 8 as follows. The remainder of Section 8 remains unchanged.

8.9.1* Machinery rooms are not prohibited from housing other mechanical equipment unless specifically prohibited elsewhere in this standard. Where equipment other than machinery is located in a machinery room, any personnel who must access the machinery room to operate, inspect, repair, or maintain such equipment shall comply with Section 8.9.4.

8.9.1.1 A machinery room shall be so dimensioned that parts are accessible with space for service, maintenance, and operations.

8.9.1.2 There shall be clear head room of not less than 7.25 ft (2.2 m) below equipment situated over passageways.

[ ... ]

8.9.4* Access. Access to the refrigerating machinery room shall be restricted to authorized personnel. Doors shall be clearly marked, or permanent signs shall be posted at each entrance to indicate this restriction.

[ ... ]
Modify Informative Appendix A as follows. The remainder of the appendix is unchanged.

INFORMATIVE APPENDIX A
EXPLANATORY MATERIAL

Sections of the standard with associated explanatory information in this appendix are marked with an asterisk “*” after the section number.

[ ... ]

Section 8.9.1
The primary function of refrigerating machinery rooms is to safely house refrigerating machinery and related support equipment such as secondary fluid pumps, condenser water pumps, condenser water sumps, condenser water treatment systems, etc. A refrigerating machinery room is not intended to house or store other unrelated equipment, materials, and supplies such as irrigation equipment and their control panels, telecommunications equipment, window washing equipment, janitorial supplies, pallets, boxes, seasonal furniture, etc. The reason to prohibit locating other equipment or supplies in a machinery room is threefold. First, added equipment within a machinery room increases hazards within the room and the likelihood of an incident by the presence of co-located equipment and supplies the room as well as by reducing the space available for inspections, tests, and operating the refrigerating machinery. Second, locating unrelated equipment and supplies in a machinery room increases the likelihood that unauthorized personnel lacking appropriate refrigerating machinery room safety training will access the machinery room. Third, locating unrelated equipment and supplies in a machinery room must not impact or alter safety systems such as refrigerant detection and machinery room ventilation air flow. Although this section does permit housing other mechanical equipment in the room, it is essential that all personnel accessing a machinery room are authorized to do so by the owner in accordance with Section 8.9.4.

Section 8.9.4
The purpose of restricting machinery room access to authorized personnel is to ensure those occupying the machinery room understand the hazards that exist within the room as well as evacuation/response plans should a refrigerant leak be detected or another type of incident occur. In addition, authorized personnel need to have appropriate training that enables them to safely perform assigned work within the room. The owner is responsible for establishing the threshold requirements and instruction/training to credential each individual considered as “authorized” for machinery room access. In the case of authorizing contractors or other outside personnel, the owner is obligated to inform a representative from the contractor’s organization or other outside personnel of hazards within the space, alarms & emergency action planning, and to ensure they have appropriate training for the work they are expected to conduct within the space. The informed contractor or other outside personnel is then responsible to ensure all of its employees who will conduct work on-site have been trained according for authorization. In cases where non-authorized personnel require access to the space, such as AHJs, consultants, etc., authorized facility personnel can serve as their escort during periods where they must access the machinery room.