



CAL FIRE - OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Information Bulletin 26-003

Issued: February 10, 2026

ASHRAE Standard 15-2024 Addendum A Exempted Spaces and Shaft Alternatives

OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to inform local jurisdictions and building owners about the approved Addendum A to ASHRAE Standard 15-2024, modifying Sections 7.2.3.1.1 *Exempted Spaces* and 9.12.1.5.1 *Shaft Alternatives* to create an exception for the shaft requirement, provided that the “continuous refrigerant pipe or tube, including joints and connections, has been tested in accordance with Section 9.13.”

DEFINITIONS:

GHG: Greenhouse gas

GWP: Global warming potential

ASHRAE: American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

ASHRAE Standard-15: Safety Standards for Refrigeration Systems

INFORMATION:

ASHRAE Standard-15 addresses safety considerations for refrigerants, including low-GWP refrigerants. The standard includes requirements for routing certain refrigerant piping through enclosed, fire-rated, and ventilated shafts.

On May 30, 2025, ASHRAE approved Addendum A, which provides an alternative to the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning System (HVAC) piping shaft requirement. Under this addendum, the fire-rated enclosed shaft may be omitted if the refrigerant piping is continuous and tested in compliance with Section 9.13, including the joints and connections.

Recognizing that local jurisdictions and building owners may wish to use this method of construction, note that section 1.2.3 of the 2025 California Mechanical Code authorizes local building/fire officials the ability to approve alternate designs and methods of construction provided the proposed design complies with the intent of the code and, and that the material, method or work proposed is, for the purpose intended, at least the equivalent of that prescribed in the code by means of quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability and safety.



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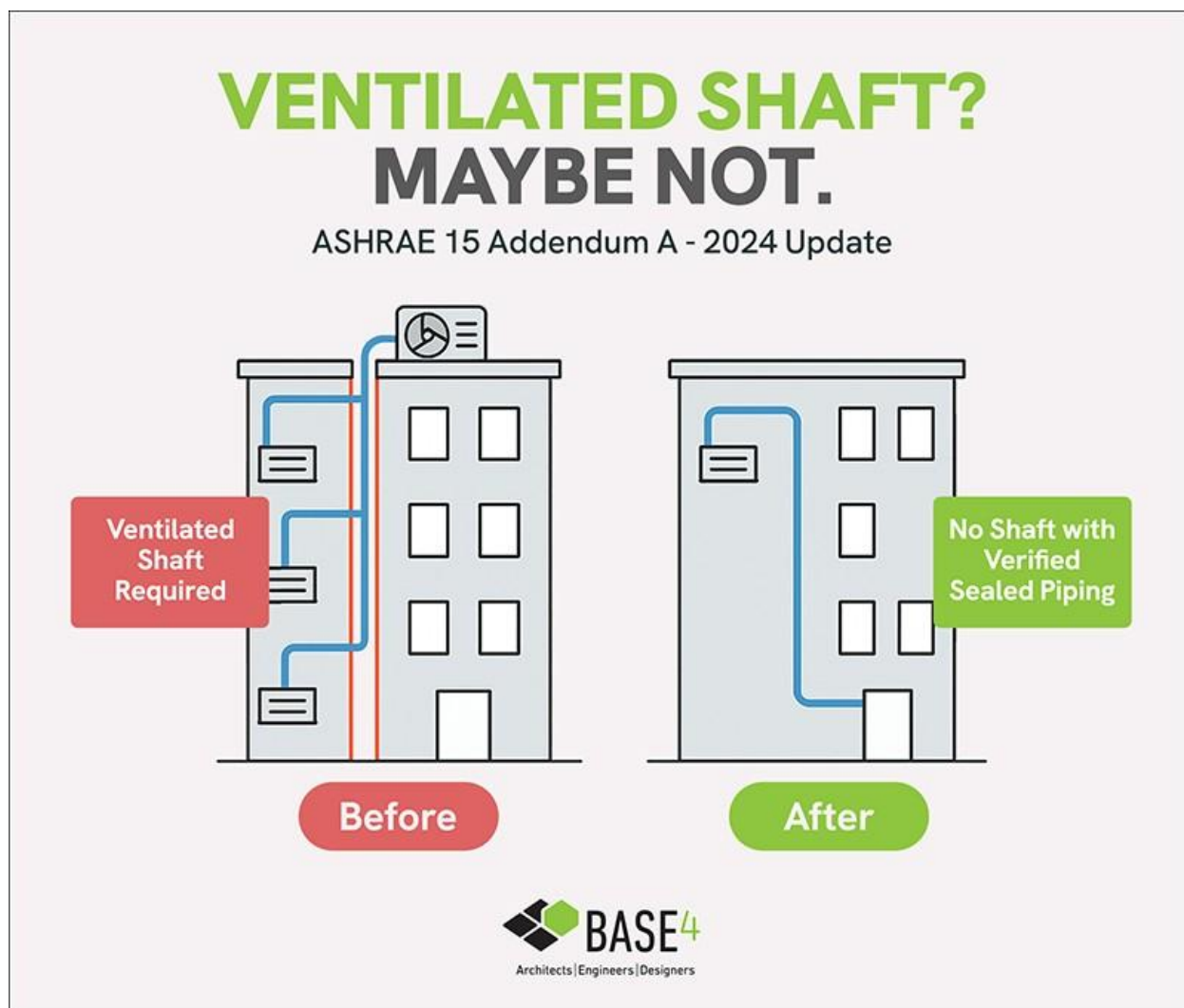


Fig. 1: The graphic illustrates two buildings with HVAC systems using low-GWP refrigerants. On the left is a building with the piping enclosed in a fire-rated shaft. The image on the right illustrates an HVAC system piping that complies with ASHRAE 15 Addendum A. (Graphic by Hildahl, Blair BlairH@base-4.com. "Ventilated shaft? Maybe Not." Base 4. 2026. [[ASHRAE 15-2024 Update: Changed the Game for Refrigerant Piping](#)])

FOR QUESTION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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