

Recommended Practice for Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations at Petroleum Facilities Classified as Class I, Division 1 and Division 2

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Contents

	Page
1 Scope	1
1.1 Purpose	1
1.2 Scope	2
2 Normative References	2
2.1 General	2
2.2 Industry Codes, Guides, and Standards	2
2.3 Government Codes, Rules, and Regulations	4
3 Terms, Definitions, and Acronyms	5
3.1 Definitions	5
3.2 Acronyms and Abbreviations	10
4 Basic Conditions for a Fire or Explosion	11
5 Flammable and Combustible Liquids, Gases and Vapors	12
5.1 General	12
5.2 Flammable and Combustible Liquids	12
5.3 Flammable Highly Volatile Liquids	13
5.4 Flammable Lighter-than-air Gases	13
5.5 National Electrical Code Grouping of Atmospheric Mixtures	13
6 Classification Criteria	14
6.1 General	14
6.2 National Electrical Code Criteria	14
6.3 Ventilation	18
6.4 Adjacent Areas	21
6.5 Use of Combustible Gas Detection Equipment	21
7 Extent of a Classified Location	24
7.1 General	24
7.2 Outdoor Locations	24
7.3 Enclosed Locations	25
8 Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations— Common Applications	25
8.1 General	25
8.2 Recommendations for Areas Surrounding Specific Equipment	26
9 Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations in Petroleum Refineries	42
9.1 Introduction	42
9.2 Recommendations	42
10 Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations at Drilling Rigs and Production Facilities on Land and on Marine Fixed Platforms	49
10.1 General	49
10.2 Drilling Areas	50
10.3 Production Facilities	51
10.4 Drilling Wells	52
10.5 Producing Oil and Gas Wells	60
10.6 Oil And Gas Processing and Storage Equipment	66
10.7 Automatic Custody Transfer (ACT) Units	69

10.8	Flammable Gas-blanketed Equipment and Produced/Processed/Injected Water Handling Equipment	70
10.9	Compressor or Pump Handling Flammable Liquids, Gases, or Vapors	72
10.10	Drip Pans	73
10.11	Instruments	74
10.12	Sumps	6
10.13	Drains	7
10.14	Reserved for Future Use	31
10.15	Screwed Connections, Flanges, Valves, and Valve Operators	81
10.16	Control Panels Containing Instrumentation Utilizing or Measuring Flammable Liquids, Gases or Vapors	82
10.17	Gas Meters	84
11	Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations on Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODUs)	85
11.1	General	85
11.2	Definitions Specific to MODUs	86
11.3	Reserved for Future Use	87
11.4	Classified Locations on Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (Modus)	87
11.5	Basis for Area Classification	88
11.6	Classification of Hazardous (Classified) Locations	89
11.7	Drill Floor and Derrick Areas	91
11.8	Substructure or Moonpool Areas	91
11.9	Mud System Processing Equipment Overview	93
11.10	Mud Tanks (After Discharge of Final Degasser)	93
11.11	Mud Ditches or Troughs	97
11.12	Mud Pumps	100
11.13	Mud Processing Equipment (Between the Bell Nipple and Mud Discharge of Final Degasser)	100
11.14	Desander or Desilter (Between Mud Discharge of Final Degasser and The Mud Pit)	100
11.15	Choke Manifold	103
11.16	Cement Unit	104
11.17	Degasser	104
11.18	Vents	105
11.19	Diverter Line Outlet	105
11.20	Blowout Preventer (BOP)	106
11.21	Well Test Equipment Area	106
11.22	Rooms Used to Store Paint (Paint Lockers)	107
11.23	Battery Rooms	107
11.24	Helicopter Fuel Storage Areas	107
11.25	Classification of Adjacent Spaces	107
12	Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations at Drilling Rigs and Production Facilities on Floating Production Units	108
12.1	General	108
12.2	Floating Production Storage and Offloading Units (FPSOs), Floating Storage and Offloading Units (FSOs)	109
12.3	Tension Leg Platforms (TLPs)	109
12.4	Spars, Caissons, and Similar Units	109
12.5	Classification of Adjacent Spaces	109
13	Reserved for Future Use	113
14	Recommendations for Determining Degree and Extent of Classified Locations at Petroleum Pipeline Transportation Facilities	113

14.1 General	113
14.2 Use of Figures	113
14.3 Figures	113
Annex A (informative) Sample Calculation to Achieve Adequate Ventilation of an Enclosed Area by Natural Means Using Equation 1 and Equation 2	125
Annex B (informative) Calculation of Minimum Air Introduction Rate to Achieve Adequate Ventilation Using Fugitive Emissions	129
Annex C (informative) Development of Ventilation Criteria	132
Annex D (informative) An Alternate Method for Area Classification	134
Annex E (informative) Procedure for Classifying Locations	143
Annex F (informative) Preferred Symbols for Denoting Class I, Division 1 and Division 2 Hazardous (Classified) Locations	146

Figures

1 Increase in Flow Caused by Excess of One Opening Over Another	20
2 Adequately Ventilated Nonenclosed Area Adjacent to a Classified Area	22
3 Enclosed Area Adjacent to a Classified Area	22
4 Enclosed Area Adjacent to a Classified Area	22
5 Enclosed Area Adjacent to a Classified Area	22
6 Fixed Roof Flammable Liquid Storage Tank in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	27
7 Open Top Floating Roof Flammable Liquid Storage Tank in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	28
8 Combustible Liquid Storage Tank in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	29
9 Tank Car or Tank Truck Loading and Unloading Via Closed System. Product Transfer Through Dome Only	30
10 Tank Car or Tank Truck Loading and Unloading Via Closed System. Product Transfer Through Dome Only	31
11 Tank Car or Tank Truck Loading and Unloading Via Closed System. Product Transfer Through Bottom Only	31
12 Tank Car or Tank Truck Loading and Unloading Via Open System. Product Transfer Through Top Or Bottom	32
13 Tank Car or Tank Truck Loading and Unloading via Closed System Product Transfer Through Bottom Only	33
14 Process Equipment in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	34
15 Instrument or Control Device Vent in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	34
16 Atmospheric Vent From a Division 1 Area	35
17 Atmospheric Vent From a Division 2 Area	35
18 Relief Valve in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	35
19 Marine Terminal Handling Flammable Liquids	36
20 Adequately Ventilated Process Location With Heavier-than-air Gas or Vapor Source Located Near Ceiling	43
21 Inadequately Ventilated Process Location With Heavier-than-air Gas or Vapor Source Located Above Grade	43
22 Inadequately Ventilated Process Location With Heavier-than-air Gas or Vapor Source	44
23 Adequately Ventilated Compressor Shelter With Lighter-than-air Gas or Vapor Source	45
24 Adequately Ventilated Process Location With Lighter-than-air Gas or Vapor Source	45
25 Inadequately Ventilated Compressor Shelter With Lighter-than-air Gas or Vapor Source	46
26 Inadequately Ventilated Process Location With Lighter-than-air Gas or Vapor Source	47
27 Separators, Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) Units, and Biological Oxidation (BIOX) Units	48

28	Mechanical Draft Cooling Tower Handling Process Cooling Water	49
29	Drilling Rig, Adequate Ventilation in Substructure, and Derrick is Not Enclosed, But is Equipped With a Windbreak, Open Top, and Open V-Door	53
30	Drilling Rig, Adequate Ventilation in Enclosed Derrick (Open Top), and Inadequately Ventilated Substructure	54
31	Platform Drilling Rig, Adequately Ventilated in Substructure and Inside Derrick, Several Producing Wells Beneath in an Adequately Ventilated Area	55
32	Platform Drilling Rig, Adequate Ventilation in Substructure and Inside Derrick, Several Producing Wells Beneath in an Inadequately Ventilated Location	56
33	Mud Tank in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	57
34	Mud Tank in an Inadequately Ventilated Area	57
35	Shale Shaker in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	58
36	Desander or Desilter in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	58
37	Desander or Desilter in an Adequately Ventilated Enclosed Area	58
38	Degasser Vent in Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	59
39	Flowing Well in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area and Without a Cellar or Below Grade Sump	61
40	Flowing Well in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area With an Inadequately Ventilated Cellar or Below Grade Sump	61
41	Flowing Well in an Inadequately Ventilated Enclosed Area	62
42	Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Well on Which Wireline Work is Being Performed	62
43	Nonenclosed Beam Pumping Well in an Adequately Ventilated Area Without a Cellar	63
44	Nonenclosed Beam Pumping Well in an Adequately Ventilated Area With an Inadequately Ventilated Cellar	64
45	Electric Submersible Pumping Well in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area Without a Cellar ..	64
46	Electric Submersible Pumping Well in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area With an Inadequately Ventilated Cellar	65
47	Junction Box in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area Connected to an Electric Submersible Pump	65
48	Hydrocarbon Pressure Vessel or Protected Vessel in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	67
49	Ball or Pig Launching or Receiving Installation in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	69
50	Flammable Gas-blanketed and Produced/Processed/Injected Water-handling Equipment [Tank (in lower figure) and Floating Cell (in upper figure)] in a Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	71
51	Compressor or Pump In An Adequately Ventilated Nonenclosed Area	72
52	Compressor or Pump In An Adequately Ventilated Nonenclosed Area	72
53	Compressor or Pump in an Adequately Ventilated Enclosed Area	73
54a	Compressor or Pump in an Inadequately Ventilated Enclosed Area	74
54b	Turbine Driven Compressor or pump in an Adequately Ventilated Nonenclosed Area	75
55	Flammable Gas Operated Instruments in an Adequately Ventilated Enclosed Area With All Devices Vented to the Outside	76
56	Flammable Gas Operated Instruments in an Inadequately Ventilated Enclosed Area	77
57	Open Sump in Nonenclosed Adequately Ventilated Area	77
58	Type 1 Open Drain System	78
59	Type 2 Open Drain System	79
60	Type 3 Open Drain System in Nonenclosed Area	79
61	Type 3 Drain System In Enclosed Area	80
62	Type 4 Open Drain System in Nonenclosed Area	80
63	Type 4 Open Drain System in Enclosed Area	81
64	Control Panel With Flammable Gas Vented to the Inside of the Enclosure	83
65	Inadequately Ventilated Control Panel with Instruments Inside	84

66	Adequately Ventilated Control Panel with Instruments Inside	85
67	Drilling Rig Open Derrick	91
68	Drilling Rig Semi-enclosed Derrick	92
69	Drilling Rig Derrick Fully Enclosed (Open Top)	93
70	Drilling Rig Open Substructure and Semi-Enclosed Derrick	94
71	Drilling Rig with Total Containment Substructure and Semi-enclosed Derrick	95
72	Drilling Rig Semi-enclosed Substructure and Semi-Enclosed Derrick	96
73	Drilling Rig Enclosed Moonpool and Semi-enclosed Derrick	97
74	Mud System Processing Equipment in Adequately Ventilated Enclosed Spaces	98
75	Mud System Processing Equipment in Open Spaces	99
76	Mud Tanks in Open Areas	100
77	Open Top Mud Tanks in Enclosed or Semi-Enclosed Locations With Adequate Ventilation	100
78	Closed Top Mud Tanks In Enclosed or Semi-enclosed Locations With Adequate Ventilation	101
79	Open Mud Trough in Open Space Before Degasser	101
80	Open Mud Trough in Enclosed Space With Adequate Ventilation Before Degasser	102
81	Open Mud Trough In Enclosed Space With Adequate Ventilation Downstream of Degasser	102
82	Open Mud Trough in Open Space Downstream of Degasser	102
83	Shale Shaker in Enclosed or Semi-enclosed Space with Adequate Ventilation	103
84	Shale Shaker in Open Area With Adequate Ventilation	103
85	Desander or Desilter in Enclosed or Semi-enclosed Space With Adequate Ventilation	104
86	Desander or Desilter in Open Area	104
87	Discharges of Ventilation Vents and Equipment Vents Originating in Division 1 Areas	105
88	Ventilation Vents Originating in Division 2 Areas	105
89	Diverter Line Outlet	106
90	Typical Floating Production Storage and Offloading Unit (FPSO and FSO)	110
91	Typical Tension Leg Platform (TLP)	111
92	Typical Spar, Caisson, or Similar Unit	112
93	Outdoors—Pump or Compressor Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids	114
94	Adequately Ventilated Building—Pump or Compressor Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids	115
95	Inadequately Ventilated Building Pump or Compressor Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids	116
96	Outdoors—Piping With Valves, Screwed Fittings, Flanges or Similar Accessories Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids. Also Covers Sampling Systems, Instrumentation and Instrument-sized Pumps	117
97	Adequately Ventilated Building—Piping With Valves, Screwed Fittings, Flanges or Similar Accessories Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids. Also Covers Sampling Systems, Instrumentation and Instrument-sized Pumps	118
98	Inadequately Ventilated Building—Piping With Valves, Screwed Fittings, Flanges or Similar Accessories Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids. Also Covers Sampling Systems, Instrumentation and Instrument-sized Pumps	119
99	Elevated Storage Tank or Pressure Vessel	120
100	Below Grade Sump Tank and Oil-water Separator	121
101	Below Grade Vault—Piping With Valves, Screwed Fittings, Flanges or Similar Accessories Handling Flammable Liquids or Highly Volatile Liquids. Also Covers Sampling Systems, Instrumentation and Instrument-sized Pumps	122
102	Above Grade Source With Closure	123
103	Storage Cavern	124
104	Outdoors—Compressor or Other Source Handling Lighter-than-air Flammable Gas	124
105	Adequately Ventilated Building—Compressor or Other Source Handling Lighter-than-air Flammable Gas	125

106	Inadequately Ventilated Building—Compressor or Other Source Handling Lighter-than-air Flammable Gas	126
D.1	Vapor Pressure Temperature Volatility Chart	136
D.2	Volatility Release Rate Matrix for Determining Hazard Radius	138
D.3	Adequately Ventilated Process Area With Heavier-than-air Gas or Vapor Source Located Near or Above Grade	141
F.1	Preferred Symbols for Denoting Class I, Hazardous (Classified) Locations	144

Tables

1	Pressure Adjustment Factor	50
D.1	Pumps Handling Heavier-than-air Gases or Vapors Located in Non-enclosed Adequately Ventilated Process Areas	139
D.2	Determining Hazard Radius for Sources With Restrictions for Heavier-than-air Gases or vapors	139
D.3	Atmospheric Vents and Drains Handling Heavier-than-air Gases or Vapors	139
D.4	Flanges Containing Heavier-than-air Gases or Vapors With a Higher Probability of Leakage	140

Introduction

This recommended practice is under the joint jurisdiction of the API Exploration and Production (E&P) Department, Committee on Production Equipment Standards, the API Manufacturing Distribution and Marketing (MDM) Department, Committee on Refinery Equipment, and the Pipeline Operations Technical Committee. It is based upon a level of knowledge gained through experience and through the successful application of this practice in the refining, drilling and producing, and pipeline segments of the petroleum industry. The First Edition of this recommended practice was issued June 1, 1991, under the joint jurisdiction of the API Production, Refining and Transportation Departments. The Second Edition was issued in November 1997, and reaffirmed in November 2002.

The first edition of Recommended Practice 500A was published in February 1955 as API 500, *Recommended Practice for Classification of Areas for Electrical Installations in Petroleum Refineries*. The second edition was published in January 1957. The third edition was published as API 500A in April 1966. The third edition was reaffirmed in 1973. The fourth edition was published in January 1982 as API 500A, with a new title, *Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations in Petroleum Refineries*. The fourth edition was reaffirmed in December 1987.

API 500B was originally issued January 1961 as API 11J, *Recommended Practice for Placement of Electrical Equipment on Production Leases*. The first edition of API 500B was issued in January 1966 under the title *Recommended Practice for Classification in Areas for Electrical Installations at Production Facilities*. The title was changed in the second edition, July 1973, to *Recommended Practice for Classification of Areas for Electrical Installations at Drilling Rigs and Production Facilities on Land and on Marine Fixed and Mobile Platforms*. The third edition of API 500B, *Recommended Practice for Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations at Drilling Rigs and Production Facilities on Land and on Marine Fixed and Mobile Platforms* was issued October 1, 1987.

The first edition of API 500C was published in September 1966, under the title *Recommended Practice for Classification of Areas for Electrical Installations at Petroleum and Gas Pipeline Transportation Facilities*. The first edition was re-approved in 1974. The title was changed in the second edition, July 1984, to *Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations at Pipeline Transportation Facilities*. The second edition was reaffirmed in March 1990.

Recommended Practice for Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations at Petroleum Facilities Classified as Class I, Division 1 and Division 2

1 Scope

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this recommended practice is to provide guidelines for classifying locations Class I, Division 1 and Class I, Division 2 at petroleum facilities for the selection and installation of electrical equipment. Basic definitions given in the 2011 Edition of NFPA 70, *National Electrical Code (NEC)*, have been followed in developing this recommended practice. This publication is only a guide and requires the application of sound engineering judgment.

NOTE Recommendations for determining the degree and extent of locations classified Class I, Zone 0, Zone 1, and Zone 2 are addressed in API 505, *Recommended Practice for Classification of Locations for Electrical Installations at Petroleum Facilities Classified as Class I, Zone 0, Zone 1, and Zone 2*.

1.1.2 Electrical installations in areas where flammable liquids, flammable gases or vapors, or combustible liquids are produced, processed, stored or otherwise handled can be suitably designed if the locations of potential sources of release and accumulation are clearly defined. Once a location has been classified, requirements for electrical equipment and associated wiring should be determined from applicable publications. Applicable publications may include NFPA 70 and API 14F. Reference Section 2 for publications for other possible applications.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This document applies to the classification of locations for both temporarily and permanently installed electrical equipment. It is intended to be applied where there may be a risk of ignition due to the presence of flammable gases, flammable liquid-produced vapors, or combustible liquid-produced vapors, mixed with air, under normal atmospheric conditions (identified throughout this document as "gases and vapors"). Normal atmospheric conditions are defined as conditions that vary above and below reference levels of 101.3 kPa (14.7 psia) and 20 °C (68 °F) provided that the variations have a negligible effect on the explosion properties of the flammable materials.

The following items are beyond the scope of this document.

- a) Piping systems used for odorized natural gas used as fuel for cooking, heating, air conditioning, laundry, and similar appliances.
- b) Catastrophes such as well blowouts or process vessel ruptures. Such extreme conditions require emergency measures at the time of occurrence.
- c) The suitability of locations for the placement of non-electrical incendiary equipment.
- d) Classification of locations containing combustible dust, ignitable fibers, or flyings.

1.2.2 Recommendations for determining the degree and extent of classified locations for specific examples of situations commonly encountered in petroleum facilities are given in Section 8 through Section 14. While it is important for area classifications at refineries, production and drilling facilities, and pipeline facilities to agree to some extent, there are differences in production, drilling, transportation, and refining facilities. Some differences include the process conditions, types, and quantities of products handled, the physical size of typical facilities, and varying housing and sheltering practices.

1.2.3 Section 8 includes applications that are common to several of the facility types described in Section 9 through Section 14.