

February 21, 2017

## ***Gas Lines in Return Air Plenums***

In response to an inquiry from the Calgary region, CHBA – Alberta contacted the Province regarding changes that may have occurred in relation to running gas lines in concealed spaces, especially in furnace return air plenums.

In 2004, STANDATA G-04-01-B149.1 published and noted that a joist space used as a return air supply for a residential forced air furnace is equivalent to a false ceiling space. Changes in the 2005 B149.1 Natural Gas and Propane Installation Code removed this installation method unless the covering of the return air space/space used as a duct can be removed without the use of a tool.

Section 6.7 of the Gas Code allows gas lines to run in a false ceiling space including a false ceiling space used as a return air plenum of a central warm-air or air-conditioning system. However, the Gas Code defines a false ceiling space as a ceiling space enclosed with tiles or panels that are removable without the use of a tool. A typical example of this is a T-bar suspended ceiling. If a joist space is used to convey return-air to the furnace in a residential application, and the covering of the joist acting as a plenum is permanently fixed in place, the gas line would require a sleeve or chase.

This also means a gas line isn't allowed in a return-air space located above a lowered/insulated dry walled ceiling. For example, a bonus room above a garage with a gas line that is not be accessible without the use of tools is not permitted. However, the gas line could run in a sleeve or chase separating it from the return air plenum.

Fittings and joints are allowed in the chase but must be inspected and tested before being concealed.

Please review section 6.7 in the 2015 B 149.1 Gas and Propane Installation Code and share this information with your heating contractor.

STANDATA are reviewed with each change in code and may be revised or removed. Current STANDATA, related to the current gas codes are located on the Municipal Affairs [website](#).

### ***For further clarification contact:***

The Plumbing and Gas Duty Officer with Municipal Affairs at 1-866-421-6929.

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