Installation, Operation and Maintenance of Air Filtration Systems Manual

Fourth Edition, 2018



NAFA®

The National Air Filtration Association® (NAFA) is the trade association for heating, ventilating and air conditioning air filter manufacturers and distributors around the world. NAFA® has over 850 members and provides educational programs on the benefits of clean indoor environments through their membership. NAFA® also publishes The NAFA Guide To Air Filtration and The Installation, Operations and Maintenance of Air Filtration Systems. NAFA® accredits individual members through their Certified Air Filter Specialist and NAFA Certified Technician program. Contact NAFA® at www.nafahq.org for further information or comments.



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Additional copies of <u>The Installation</u>, <u>Operation and Maintenance of Air Filtration Systems</u> are available from NAFA® Headquarters.

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NAFA® encourages architects, engineers and endusers to contact NAFA® member companies for air filter information, products and services. NAFA® members subscribe to the NAFA® Code of Ethics, and receive continuing education and training on best practice applications and emerging technologies in the air filter industry. Certified members study and pass thorough national examinations to achieve accreditation - Certified Air Filter Specialist, (CAFS); NAFA Certified Technician Level I (NCT I) and NAFA Certified Technician Level II (NCT II).

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Publication Information

Foreword

The Installation, Operation and Maintenance of Air Filtration Systems was developed by the National Air Filtration Association®. This manual will be of use to all those directly involved with the correct and proper installation, operation and maintenance of air filtration systems including:

- mechanical engineers
- HVAC system designers
- mechanical contractors
- building owners
- facility managers
- air filter service personnel
- building operations personnel

The First Edition of this manual (1997) was compiled and written by the NAFA® Technical Committee in conjunction with Robert H. Avery as technical writer and consultant. For each subsequent reprint, each chapter has been reviewed and revised to reflect the most current and accurate information concerning systems and equipment.

This manual is specifically published to help educate and accredit HVAC&R Technicians working with air filter systems and to serve as a resource guide for all building operations personnel.

It is hoped that through increased knowledge of the different aspects involved in air filtration, and the different alternatives available, air filtration systems will be operated to the best advantage of any particular application.

For additional information and comments or questions about the information in this book contact NAFA® international headquarters at www.nafahg.org.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose

This book is intended to serve as a guide for all those involved in the installation, operation and maintenance (I.O.M.) of air filtration systems. These three functions are rarely performed by the same person or group of people. Systems are designed by mechanical engineers, installed by mechanical contractors, operated by building engineers, and maintained by air filter service personnel. The work by the mechanical contractor may be done by its sheet metal (ventilation) department or by subcontract to a separate ventilation contractor. Air filter service may be performed by the building maintenance department or may be contracted to an air filter service organization.

This book is not a substitute for the I.O.M. instructions which air filter system manufacturers supply with their equipment. Such information is usually equipment-specific. If copies have been lost, request replacements or links to online information from the supplier or the manufacturer. This book must paint with a broad stroke. It is impossible to include all the equipment and every variation which may be encountered. However, all systems have common characteristics important to their proper operation. The purpose of this book is to highlight the important details involved in the I.O.M. of most air filtration systems.

It is important that people responsible for the I.O.M. of air filtration systems communicate effectively with each other. If this does not occur, the venti-

lation contractor may be challenged to properly install filters in the space allocated to them by the system designer. The building maintenance department may be totally unaware of what to expect from the air filter system, and it may have no information about required maintenance. The group responsible for filter changing may find that it has no information about the air filters to be replaced. Without adequate planning, the I.O.M. of filters can be stressful, cumbersome and even hazardous.

System Design Considerations

While this book is not intended specifically for the air filtration system designer, designers may use it as a check-list of the details required for an effective air filtration system. It makes no suggestion as to what type, efficiency, or capacity of air filters should be used. Those issues are the responsibility of the design engineer. However, this book suggests that, over the life of the filter system, the design of the air filter system, specifically the housing in which the filters are installed; the arrangement and location of filters within the housing; and the connecting ductwork can be as important as the proper selection of filters.

Regardless of the type of air filtration system selected, there are considerations any designer must keep in mind.

1. All applicable safety regulations must be met in both the fabrication and operation of the air filtration system. When airborne hazardous

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materials are involved, special provisions must be taken in the design of the filtration system to help minimize the exposure of air filter service personnel to these hazardous materials.

- 2. Air filter systems must be designed and fabricated so that there is adequate space to install the filters and to maintain them properly. Three considerations are involved here:
 - c. The first is adequate in-line space between the filter bank and upstream air sources. High velocity air from blowers or ducts blasting into the filter plenum can create uneven airflow across the filter system and possibly damage filters. When this condition cannot be avoided, take provisions to protect the filters from any blasts by the use of diffusers or other devices which intercept the blast and make the airflow more uniform.
 - d. The second consideration is adequate space both upstream and downstream of the air filtration equipment to easily remove dirty filters, install clean ones, and do whatever maintenance is required. If filters cannot be installed easily and conveniently at the time of system start-up, this problem will not go away; it will exist as long as the filter system is in use.
 - e. The third consideration is adequate access to the filter system for clean filters to be delivered to and dirty filters safely removed from the filter site. This also applies to roll filter media and any filter-servicing equipment which may be required.
- 3. Air filters only clean the air that passes through them. The design engineer must clearly specify an air filter holding system that uses a positive-seal clamping mechanism. Proper gasketing should also be specified to prevent bypass air between a filter and its holding system.
- 4. In all mechanical air filter systems, the life of a filter is determined by the allowable build-up of resistance of the filter as it loads with dust. Air filter manufacturers' literature frequently provides a "final pressure drop," at which point, air filters should be changed. System design may dictate some other value be used, regardless of the pressure drop at which filters should be changed, (See Chapter 11: Time to Change Filters) a pressure drop device should be installed for maintenance personnel to know when this threshold has been reached.

HEPA Filters and Systems

Because High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters and their holding devices and systems are special in their design and operation, Chapter 8 of this manual deals specifically with HEPA filters. All other chapters present information on standard types of filters, filter framing and system information unless otherwise noted.

Changing Filters

Do not change air filters when the HVAC system is operating. Reasons for this include:

- 1. the possibility that dust which has been captured by the filter will be released into the air-stream during filter changing
- 2. the chance that service personnel may be injured by filters which become airborne by the airstream, and
- 3. the likelihood that air filter system servicing will not be as thorough in an environment stressful to the service person.

Make sure that the person changing filters has suitable respiratory protection when handling filters which have captured toxic or hazardous materials. (See Chapter 13.)

Filter Efficiency

As a matter of convenience, there may be times in this book when air filter types are identified by efficiency. For the purposes of this book, the following classifications by the ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 52.2-2007 are used.

Low Efficiency: MERV 1-4

Medium Efficiency: MERV 5-12

High Efficiency: MERV 13-16

Filters with an efficiency greater than MERV 16 by ANSI/ASHRAE Standard 52.2 are usually rated by the DOP (dioctylphthalate), or other challenge, test method. This test is based on the ability of a filter to remove an aerosol consisting of 0.3 micrometers (μ) particles of a test challenge, usually DOP or another suitable challenge agent.

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Dimensions and Measurements

All measurements are given in English values, which are most commonly used in the United States. SI (International System of Units) values, in parentheses, follow the English Measurements. They are included only when they provide key measurement data.

Technical Assistance

The selection of the correct air filtration system for any specific application is a precise science which considers more than filter efficiency. The assistance of National Air Filtration Association® Certified Air Filter Specialists (CAFS) is available to those who have this responsibility.

The installation, operation and maintenance of these systems is no less important. A NAFA® member, designated a CAFS, has a background of training and experience to offer help in any of these areas to those who need it.

The NAFA Certified Air Filter Specialist (CAFS) program is the first and only educational and certification program designed specifically for air filtra-

tion professionals. Anyone engaged in specifying, manufacturing, distribution or sales and service of air filters will benefit from this accreditation.

CAFSs are involved in a formalized structure for ongoing education and recertification. The NAFA® publication, NAFA Guide to Air Filtration, is required reading for the CAFS Certification Exam.

The NAFA Certified Technician Program Level I (NCT I) is a certification program for techni-

Level I (NCT I) is a certification program for technicians involved in the installation, operation, and maintenance of commercial air filtration systems.

The program has been designed and tailored to meet the needs of facility managers, building owners, HVAC&R service contractors, and others who employ technicians in the HVAC&R industry. The testing program provides education for staff on the service of air filtration systems and recognizes the knowledge and expertise of technicians.

NCTs are involved in a formalized structure for ongoing education and recertification. This manual is required reading for the NCT Certification Exam.

Because of the complex nature of hospitals and healthcare facilities, an NCT program has been designed specifically for this group of technicians.

The NAFA Certified Technician Program Level II (NCT II) is an advanced certification utilizing the knowledge and skill of the NCT, plus additional testing and training for Bag In / Bag Out (BIBO) procedures.

Due to the biohazard nature of BIBO filter systems, special skill sets, additional training, tools and PPE equipment are required. NAFA® provides this training and certification for the safety of the technicians and the integrity of the system.

To learn more about the NAFA Certified Technician and Certified Air Filter Specialist Programs, log onto www.nafahq.org



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