



CIPH PROMOTES HEALTH AND SAFETY THROUGH AMENDMENT TO 1995 NATIONAL PLUMBING CODE

September 29, 2003 – At a recent meeting of the National Research Council (NRC) Standing Committee on Building and Plumbing Services in Toronto, the Committee unanimously adopted a Canadian Institute of Plumbing and Heating (CIPH) proposal that would limit the maximum temperature of hot water supplied by fittings to fixtures in residential occupancy to 49°C (120° F). This position is endorsed by the Canadian Advisory Council on Plumbing (CACP), a technical advisory committee consisting of the Plumbing Industry Advisory Council, plumbing regulators, standards development organizations, accredited certification organizations, accredited testing laboratories and Health Canada.

The Committee considered this change during a three-day meeting to review public comment on the 2005 National Plumbing Code. The interim change to the 1995 NPC would promote safe hot water tap temperatures by encouraging safe practices in the installation of residential plumbing systems and could reduce the potential for scalds and burns.

Setting the temperature at 49°C (120° F) at the hot water heater was not deemed to be a viable alternative because storing water at temperatures below 55°C may lead to the survival and or growth of Legionella bacteria. The committee accepted the recommendation for automatic compensating mixing valves or other devices that can be installed at each fixture or a master automatic compensating mixing valve that can be used to meet the objective.

“While this change will affect new construction only, it establishes how a minor adjustment to a plumbing installation can have a meaningful impact on public health and safety. It also demonstrates the industry’s commitment to protecting the consumer,” reported Plumbing Industry Advisory Council (PIAC) Chair Alain Lanthier [IPEX].

The request will now have to be considered and approved by the Provinces and Territories and the Commission on Building and Fire Codes. If they accept the proposal and issue it as an interim change, the change could be implemented by mid 2004 and there will be no need to wait until the 2005 NPC for this change to come into effect.

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- Information on the CIPH is on the institute’s web site at: www.ciph.com
- Information on CIPH’s position on hot water tap temperatures can be found at <http://www.ciph.com/PIAC%20-%20CACP%20Water%20Heater%20Position%20Statement.pdf>
- Information on the National Plumbing Code can be found at http://www.nationalcodes.ca/npc/index_e.shtml