



Standard Guide for Prefabricated Panel and H-bar Insulation Systems for Vessels, Ducts and Equipment Operating at Temperatures Above Ambient Air¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide describes design, fabrication, shipping, handling, jobsite storage, and installation of prefabricated panel and H-Bar insulation systems for vessels, ducts, and equipment operating at temperatures above ambient. Typical applications include, but are not limited to, air and gas ducts, steam generating units, air quality control systems, fans, storage tanks, process vessels, and coke drums

1.2 The insulation described herein is limited to systems consisting of insulating units specially designed to fit the surfaces to be insulated, and engineered for the service and environmental requirements. The insulation unit may also include special design features which facilitate the removal and replacement for maintenance and inspection.

1.3 When prefabricated panels are used, each insulation unit factory preassembled and typically comprised of the insulation, an outer lagging to which the insulation is attached, an inner retaining wire mesh, optional foil lining, and means for mechanically securing multiple units together in an assembly.

1.4 H-bar systems represent insulation units that are typically comprised of the insulation, outer lagging and a uniquely configured subgirt design which both supports the insulation and provides a means for mechanically securing multiple units together in an assembly. The design of the subgirt creates an “H” configuration which is fabricated from light gauge sheet metal. The subgirt components consist of: (1) a “J-bar” shape which frames the perimeter edges of the surface to be insulated, holds the insulation in place along the outer edge and provides a screen attachment point for the outer lagging; (2) the “H-bar” shape is placed at defined intervals. The web section of the “H-bar” supports the insulation while the exterior flange allows for the outer lagging to be attached with threaded fasteners.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C16 on Thermal Insulation and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C16.40 on Insulation Systems.

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1.5 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.6 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

NOTE 1—When prefabricated panel or H-Bar insulation systems are specified, Test Methods C167, C177 and C1061, Material Specifications A36/A36M, A463/A463M, B209, C612, and Terminology C168 should be considered.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

- A36/A36M Specification for Carbon Structural Steel
- A463/A463M Specification for Steel Sheet, Aluminum-Coated, by the Hot-Dip Process
- B209 Specification for Aluminum and Aluminum-Alloy Sheet and Plate
- C167 Test Methods for Thickness and Density of Blanket or Batt Thermal Insulations
- C168 Terminology Relating to Thermal Insulation
- C177 Test Method for Steady-State Heat Flux Measurements and Thermal Transmission Properties by Means of the Guarded-Hot-Plate Apparatus
- C612 Specification for Mineral Fiber Block and Board Thermal Insulation
- C1061 Test Method for Thermal Transmission Properties of Non-Homogeneous Insulation Panels Installed Vertically (Withdrawn 1995)³

3. Terminology

3.1 Terminology C168 shall be considered as applying to the terms in this specification.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard’s Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *convection barrier (flue stop)*—barriers to internal air flow sometimes referred to as “chimney effect”) which are placed between the inner liner and the hot surface being insulated. The barriers are generally a combination of sheet metal and with the insulation material mechanically attached. Convection barriers are required when the insulation is not in direct contact with the plate surface and only on vertical and sloping surfaces of less than 45° incline.

3.2.2 *flashing*—sheet metal of the same material as the lagging, used to cover openings in the insulation typically occurring at locations, such as corners, penetrations framing of doors and closures. Flashing may be fixed (permanent) or removable to allow for inspection and maintenance, that is, expansion joints.

3.2.3 *inner liner*—the innermost surface or cover of the prefabricated panel (closest to the hot surface) composed of reflective aluminum foil and wire mesh.

3.2.4 *insulation*—essentially homogenous insulation, generally in semi-rigid board form and, in which relevant properties are not a function of position within the material itself, but may be a function of such variables as time and temperature.

3.2.5 *lagging*—the outermost cover or sheet of the prefabricated panel or H-bar system (farthest from the hot surface), which performs a structural function as well as provides protection from weather and mechanical abuse. The lagging is generally fabricated from corrugated, ribbed, or flat sheet; smooth or stucco-embossed; mill finish or painted; clad or non-clad.

3.2.6 *penetrations*—openings through a unit of insulation from the hot plate surface through to the exterior cold surface. Penetrations such as test ports should be covered with removable insulation assemblies. The insulation thickness should be equal to the surface being insulated.

3.2.7 retaining devices

3.2.7.1 *prefabricated panels*—metallic members passing through the insulation between the hot surface and the cold surface. Generally, these include: pins, prongs, or other acceptable means used and secured with washers and speed clips to hold the assembly together.

3.2.7.2 *H-bar systems*—H-bar systems includes retaining devices such as a backing strap or expanded metal between the H-bar. These devices are placed midway between the insulation boards and provide support on wall applications. On top of surfaces, the H-bar retaining device may be either expanded metal or a corrugated inner-liner to hold the insulation in the H-bar track

3.2.8 *support member (subgrit)*—straps, bars, or angles attached to the plate surface or external casing stiffeners being insulated and to which the insulation units are attached.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 The purpose of this guide is to ensure that a functional system will result when considering the use of prefabricated panel or H-bar insulation systems. Both systems require a varying degree of pre-engineering and prefabrication so that

the insulation will produce the specified thermal, mechanical and environmental design requirements Both the prefabricated panels and H-bar systems which can also be used in combination with each other are to be designed to:

4.1.1 Limit loss of heat from insulated surface.

4.1.2 Limit exposed surface temperatures for burn protection of personnel.

4.1.3 Maintain optimum temperatures of the insulated equipment at or above a specified minimum value required for the proper operation of the equipment.

4.1.4 Produce a system or assembly that is designed to provide allowance for thermal expansion; is structurally adequate; is of a weathertight construction; and incorporates design features that promote efficient removal for inspection, repair and maintenance where required.

5. Panel Design Specifications for Prefabricated Panel and H-bar Systems

5.1 General:

5.1.1 The purchase specification should clearly indicate the surfaces to be insulated. Either insulation type and thickness or average heat loss requirements shall be part of the specification.

5.1.2 The purchase specification should clearly indicate the operating temperature of the item to be insulated. When up-set or worst-case temperature conditions are to be considered, the maximum temperature excursion and time duration should be stated.

5.1.3 Heat loss through uninsulated surfaces, or increased heat loss that results when it is necessary to reduce insulation thickness to accommodate localized interferences with equipment, supports, hangers, etc., should be considered in the overall insulation design.

5.1.4 Conduction paths which produce high heat on exterior lagging or “cold spots” on plate interior and are attributed to the insulation subgrit design should be minimized. The use of “through-fasteners” or bolts where protruding heads can occur should be kept to a minimum. There should be no “rattling” or “free-play” of the exterior lagging.

5.1.5 Convection barriers (flue stops) are typically installed at 12 to 15 ft (3657 to 4572 mm) vertical centers as well as to close off the corners of plate surfaces. The materials generally consist of sheet metal welded to plate surfaces and covered with insulation of the same thickness that is used to insulate the exterior envelope. The insulation is secured to the metal convection barrier through use of pins and washers. When installed, the insulated convection barrier should produce a tight fit all around; including into the web of intersecting structural stiffeners; in order to minimize internal heat paths.

5.1.6 All components of the insulation units, as physical structures, must be capable of withstanding the temperatures and environmental design conditions to which they will be subjected without mechanical or structural failure or detrimental changes in physical properties.

5.1.7 When subjected to maximum service temperature and operating conditions insulation units should not warp, deform, shrink, or shift so as to affect their performance. The materials