

Division 15 Mechanical

Estimating Tips

151 Pipe & Fittings

This subdivision is primarily basic pipe and related materials. The pipe may be used by any of the mechanical disciplines, i.e., plumbing, fire protection, heating, and air conditioning.

- The piping section lists the add to labor for elevated pipe installation. These adds apply to all elevated pipe, fittings, valves, insulation, etc., that are placed above 10' high. CAUTION: the correct percentage may vary for the same pipe. For example, the percentage add for the basic pipe installation should be based on the maximum height that the craftsman must install for that particular section. If the pipe is to be located 14' above the floor but it is suspended on threaded rod from beams, the bottom flange of which is 18' high (4' rods), then the height is actually 18' and the add is 20%. The pipe coverer, however, does not have to go above the 14' and so his add should be 10%.
- Most pipe is priced first as straight pipe with a joint (coupling, weld, etc.) every 10' and a hanger usually every 10'. There are exceptions with hanger spacing such as: for cast iron pipe (5') and plastic pipe (3 per 10'). Following each type of pipe there are several lines listing sizes and the amount to be subtracted to delete couplings and hangers. This is for pipe that is to be buried or supported together on trapeze hangers. The reason that the couplings are deleted is that these runs are usually long and frequently longer lengths of pipe are used. By deleting the couplings the estimator is expected to look up and add back the correct reduced number of couplings.

- When preparing an estimate it may be necessary to approximate the fittings. Fittings usually run between 25% and 50% of the cost of the pipe. The lower percentage is for simpler runs, and the higher number is for complex areas like mechanical rooms.

152 Plumbing Fixtures

- Plumbing fixture costs usually require two lines, the fixture itself and its "rough-in, supply and waste".

153 Plumbing Appliances

- Remember that gas and oil fired units need venting.

154 Fire Protection

- Include all valves needed for fire protection system.

155 Heating

- When estimating the cost of an HVAC system, check to see who is responsible for providing and installing the temperature control system. It is possible to overlook controls, assuming that they would be included in the electrical estimate.
- When looking up a boiler be careful on specified capacity. Some manufacturers rate their products on output while others use input.
- Include HVAC insulation for pipe, boiler and duct (wrap and liner).

156 HVAC Piping Specialties

- Be careful when looking up mechanical items to get the correct pressure rating and connection type (thread, weld, flange).

157 Air Conditioning & Ventilation

- Combination heating and cooling units are sized by the air conditioning requirements. (See Reference No. R157-020 for preliminary sizing guide.)
- A ton of air conditioning is nominally 400 CFM.
- Rectangular duct is taken off by the linear foot for each size, but its cost is usually estimated by the pound. Remember that SMACNA standards now base duct on internal pressure.
- Prefabricated duct is estimated and purchased like pipe: straight sections and fittings.
- Note that cranes or other lifting equipment are not included on any lines in Division 15. For example, if a crane is required to lift a heavy piece of pipe into place high above a gym floor, or to put a rooftop unit on the roof of a four-story building, etc., it must be added. Due to the potential for extreme variation—from nothing additional required, to a major crane or helicopter—we feel that including a nominal amount for "lifting contingency" would be useless and detract from the accuracy of the estimate. When using equipment rental from Means do not forget to include the cost of the operator(s).

Reference Numbers

Reference numbers are shown in bold squares at the beginning of some major classifications. These numbers refer to related items in the Reference Section. The reference information may be an estimating procedure, an alternate pricing method or technical information.

Note: Not all subdivisions listed here necessarily appear in this publication.