



18 Inch Stands and Gas Water Heater Installation

The 2002 edition of the National Fuel Gas Code has been changed to reflect the new flammable vapor ignition resistant (FVIR) product. The FVIR product is a new American National Standards Institute (ANSI) testing standard that will prevent a water heater from igniting flammable vapors outside the combustion chamber. The new ANSI standard Z21.10.1-2001 will go into effect July 1, 2003. All 30, 40 and 50 gallon conventional vent gas-fired water heaters, both propane and natural gas, will have to meet the FVIR standard. PowerVent models and all remaining residential gas products such as 75 and 100 gallons and direct vent models will follow.

The 2002 National Fuel Gas Code reads as follows:

8.1.10 Installation in residential garages

8.1.10.1 Gas utilization equipment in residential garages and in adjacent spaces that open to the garage and are not part of the living space of a dwelling unit shall be installed so that all burners and burner ignition devices are located not less than 18 in. (460mm) above the floor unless listed as flammable vapor ignition resistant.

The 2003 International Fuel Gas Code has also been changed to reflect the exception:

305.3 Elevation of Ignition Source:

Exception: Elevation of ignition sources are not required for appliances that are listed as flammable vapor resistant and for installation without elevation.

Do you have to put an FVIR compliant water heater on an 18-inch stand? The answer to that question will depend on the local, city, county or state codes that govern the installation of gas water heaters where you live. IF the local codes advise you to put the gas water heater on an 18-inch stand, then you must do so.

You should comply with the local codes and governing agencies until their codes relating to 18-inch stands have changed. If in doubt, please contact your local plumbing inspector.