

Relevant Codes

2006 National Standard Plumbing Code

Page 240, Section 10.15.9 Drip Pans

10.15.9.a Where Required

Where water heaters or hot water storage tanks are installed in locations where leakage will cause damage to the building structure, the tank or water heater shall be installed *in a drip pan* in accordance with section 10.15.9.b (Emphasis added)

10.15.9.b Construction

1. Drip pan shall be watertight and constructed of corrosion-resistant materials. Metallic Pans shall be 24 gauge minimum. Non-metallic pans shall be .0625-inch minimum thickness. Pans shall be not less than 1-1/2" deep and shall be of sufficient size to hold the heater without interfering with drain valves, burners, controls, and any other accessories.
2. High impact plastic pans shall be permitted under gas fired water heaters where the heater is listed for zero clearance for combustible floors¹ and the application is recommended by the manufacturer².

2006 International Residential Code

Page 401, chapter 28 –Water Heaters, Section P2801 General

P2801.5 Required Pan

Where hot water heaters or hot water storage tanks are installed in locations where leakage of the tanks or connections will cause damage, the tank or water heater shall be installed in a galvanized steel pan having a minimum thickness of 24 gauge (.016 inch) (0.4mm) or other pans for such use. Listed pans shall comply with CSA LC3

P2805.5.1 Pan Size and Drain The Pan shall be not less than 1.5 inches (38mm) deep and shall be of sufficient size to receive all dripping and condensate from the tank or water heater. The pan shall be drained by an indirect waste pipe having a minimum diameter of ¾" (19mm) or the outlet of the relief valve, whichever is larger.

2006 Universal Plumbing Code

Section 508.1 "where damage may result from a leaking water heater, a watertight pan of corrosion-resistant materials shall be installed beneath the water heater"

Relevant Codes

Commentary:

These codes clearly indicate that **any** water heater installed inside a structure where a leak from the heater or joints could cause damage must be installed **IN** a suitable drain pan. A floor mounted pan several feet below a wall mounted heater would not meet these codes. Also it would offer very little protection due to the fact that any leak would most likely run down the wall and behind the floor pan rendering it useless.

Our pan offers complete satisfaction of the intent of these codes. Also by being able to install a tankless water heater or wall mounted boiler within the limits of the back and side splashes, we are able to provide the best possible protection to the structure in the event of a failure of the unit or connections.

Drain pans are not required in unfinished areas (unless a finished area is below) including garages, unfinished basements or external installations. A good rule of thumb is anywhere a drain pan would be required for a tank water heater, one should be required for a tankless.

¹. Most tankless water heaters are listed and labeled as zero clearance to combustibles.

². For those localities who defer to manufacturer's recommendations on the need for the pan, most all major tankless water heater manufacturers recommend the use of a drain pan if the unit is installed in a location where a leak could cause damage to the structure. Takagi, Rheem, Rinnai, Bosch, Steible Eltron, Seisco, etc, all have this clause in their current installation instructions.