

**ASME B31.3-2022**  
(Revision of ASME B31.3-2020)

# Process Piping

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# FOREWORD

Responding to evident need and at the request of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), the American Standards Association initiated Project B31 in March 1926, with ASME as sole administrative sponsor. The breadth of the field involved required that membership of the Sectional Committee be drawn from some 40 engineering societies, industries, government bureaus, institutes, and trade associations.

Initial publication in 1935 was as the American Tentative Standard Code for Pressure Piping. Revisions from 1942 through 1955 were published as American Standard Code for Pressure Piping, ASA B31.1. It was then decided to publish as separate documents the various industry Sections, beginning with ASA B31.8-1955, Gas Transmission and Distribution Piping Systems. The first Petroleum Refinery Piping Code Section was designated ASA B31.3-1959. ASA B31.3 revisions were published in 1962 and 1966.

In 1967–1969, the American Standards Association became first the United States of America Standards Institute, then the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The Sectional Committee became American National Standards Committee B31 and the Code was renamed the American National Standard Code for Pressure Piping. The next B31.3 revision was designated ANSI B31.3-1973. Addenda were published through 1975.

A draft Code Section for Chemical Plant Piping, prepared by Section Committee B31.6, was ready for approval in 1974. It was decided, rather than have two closely related Code Sections, to merge the Section Committees and develop a joint Code Section, titled Chemical Plant and Petroleum Refinery Piping. The first edition was published as ANSI B31.3-1976.

In this Code, responsibility for piping design was conceptually integrated with that for the overall processing facility, with safeguarding recognized as an effective safety measure. Three categories of Fluid Service were identified, with a separate Chapter for Category M Fluid Service. Coverage for nonmetallic piping was introduced. New concepts were better defined in five Addenda, the fourth of which added Appendix M, a graphic aid to selection of the proper Fluid Service category.

The Standards Committee was reorganized in 1978 as a Committee operating under ASME procedures with ANSI accreditation. It is now the ASME Code for Pressure Piping, B31 Committee. Section committee structure remains essentially unchanged.

The second edition of Chemical Plant and Petroleum Refinery Piping was compiled from the 1976 Edition and its five Addenda, with nonmetal requirements editorially relocated to a separate Chapter. Its new designation was ANSI/ASME B31.3-1980.

Section Committee B31.10 had a draft Code for Cryogenic Piping ready for approval in 1981. Again, it was decided to merge the two Section Committees and develop a more inclusive Code with the same title. The work of consolidation was partially completed in the ANSI/ASME B31.3-1984 Edition.

Significant changes were made in Addenda to the 1984 Edition: integration of cryogenic requirements was completed; a new stand-alone Chapter on high-pressure piping was added; and coverage of fabrication, inspection, testing, and allowable stresses was reorganized. The new Edition was designated as ASME/ANSI B31.3-1987 Edition.

Addenda to the subsequent five Editions, published at 3-year intervals, were primarily used to keep the Code up to date. New Appendices were added, however, on requirements for bellows expansion joints, estimating service life, submittal of Inquiries, aluminum flanges, and quality control in the 1990, 1993, 1999, and 2002 Editions, all designated as ASME B31.3.

In a program to clarify the application of all Sections of the Code for Pressure Piping, changes were made in the Introduction and Scope statements of the 1996 Edition, and its title was changed to Process Piping.

Under direction of ASME Codes and Standards management, SI (metric) units of measurement were emphasized. With certain exceptions, SI units were listed first in the 1996 Edition and were designated as the standard. Instructions for conversion were given where SI units data were not available. U.S. Customary units also were given. By agreement, either system may have been used.

Beginning with the 2004 Edition, the publication cycle of ASME B31.3 was changed to biennial. Other changes made in the 2004 Edition included the introduction of the weld joint strength reduction factor,  $W$ , and the additions of Appendix P, Alternative Rules for Evaluating Stress Range, and Appendix S, Piping System Stress Analysis Examples.

Changes that were made to the 2006 and 2008 Editions of ASME B31.3 included the requirement that valves have blowout-proof stems and the addition of a definition for elevated temperature fluid service, respectively. The most significant change that was made to the 2010 Edition of ASME B31.3 was the addition of Chapter X, High Purity

Piping. In the 2012 Edition, Tables A-1M and A-2M were added to Appendix A that give allowable design values in SI units, and Appendix N, Application of ASME B31.3 Internationally, was also added.

For the 2016 Edition, the allowable design values in SI units as shown in Tables A-1M and A-2M were changed from for information only to values that may be used to meet the requirements of the Code.

In this Edition, SI units are given first, with U.S. Customary units in parentheses. The values in Tables A-1, A-2, B-1, and K-1 are given in U.S. Customary units, and the SI values are given in Tables A-1M, A-2M, B-1M, and K-1M. Either the U.S. Customary units or the SI units for these values may be used. Values in SI units are to be regarded as the standard, unless otherwise agreed between the contracting parties.

Interpretations, Code Cases, and errata to the ASME B31.3 Code on Process Piping are published on the following ASME web page: <http://go.asme.org/B31committee>.

ASME B31.3-2022 was approved by ANSI on August 24, 2022.



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## Code for Pressure Piping

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# INTRODUCTION

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The ASME B31 Code for Pressure Piping consists of a number of individually published Sections, each an American National Standard, under the direction of ASME Committee B31, Code for Pressure Piping.

Rules for each Section reflect the kinds of piping installations considered during its development, as follows:

- B31.1 Power Piping: piping typically found in electric power generating stations, in industrial and institutional plants, geothermal heating systems, and central and district heating and cooling systems
- B31.3 Process Piping: piping typically found in petroleum refineries; onshore and offshore petroleum and natural gas production facilities; chemical, pharmaceutical, textile, paper, ore processing, semiconductor, and cryogenic plants; food and beverage processing facilities; and related processing plants and terminals
- B31.4 Pipeline Transportation Systems for Liquids and Slurries: piping transporting products that are predominately liquid between plants and terminals and within terminals, pumping, regulating, and metering stations
- B31.5 Refrigeration Piping and Heat Transfer Components: piping for refrigerants and secondary coolants
- B31.8 Gas Transmission and Distribution Piping Systems: piping transporting products that are predominately gas between sources and terminals, including compressor, regulating, and metering stations; gas gathering pipelines
- B31.9 Building Services Piping: piping typically found in industrial, institutional, commercial, and public buildings, and in multi-unit residences, which does not require the range of sizes, pressures, and temperatures covered in B31.1
- B31.12 Hydrogen Piping and Pipelines: piping in gaseous and liquid hydrogen service and pipelines in gaseous hydrogen service

This is the B31.3 Process Piping Code Section. Hereafter, in this Introduction and in the text of this Code Section B31.3, where the word *Code* is used without specific identification, it means this Code Section.

It is the owner's responsibility to select the Code Section that most nearly applies to a proposed piping installation. Factors to be considered by the owner include limitations of the Code Section; jurisdictional requirements; and the applicability of other codes and standards. All applicable requirements of the selected Code Section shall be met. For some installations, more than one Code Section may apply to different parts of the installation. The owner is also responsible for imposing requirements supplementary to those of the Code if necessary to assure safe piping for the proposed installation.

Certain piping within a facility may be subject to other codes and standards, including but not limited to

- ANSI Z223.1 National Fuel Gas Code: piping for fuel gas from the point of delivery to the connection of each fuel utilization device

- NFPA Fire Protection Standards: fire protection systems using water, carbon dioxide, halon, foam, dry chemicals, and wet chemicals

- NFPA 99 Health Care Facilities: medical and laboratory gas systems

- building and plumbing codes, as applicable, for potable hot and cold water, and for sewer and drain systems

The Code specifies engineering requirements deemed necessary for safe design and construction of pressure piping. While safety is the primary consideration, this factor alone will not necessarily govern the final specifications for any piping installation. The Code is not a design handbook. Many decisions that must be made to produce a sound piping installation are not specified in detail within this Code. The Code does not serve as a substitute for sound engineering judgments by the owner and the designer.

To the greatest possible extent, Code requirements for design are stated in terms of basic design principles and formulas. These are supplemented as necessary with specific requirements to ensure uniform application of principles and to guide selection and application of piping elements. The Code prohibits designs and practices known to be unsafe and contains warnings where caution, but not prohibition, is warranted.

This Code Section includes the following:

(a) references to acceptable material specifications and component standards, including dimensional requirements and pressure–temperature ratings

(b) requirements for design of components and assemblies, including piping supports

(c) requirements and data for evaluation and limitation of stresses, reactions, and movements associated with pressure, temperature changes, and other forces

(d) guidance and limitations on the selection and application of materials, components, and joining methods

(e) requirements for the fabrication, assembly, and erection of piping

(f) requirements for examination, inspection, and testing of piping

Either International System (SI, also known as metric) or U.S. Customary units may be used with this edition. Local customary units may also be used to demonstrate compliance with this Code. One system of units should be used consistently for requirements applying to a specific installation. The equations in this Code may be used with any consistent system of units. It is the responsibility of the organization performing calculations to ensure that a consistent system of units is used.

ASME Committee B31 is organized and operates under procedures of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers that have been accredited by the American National Standards Institute. The Committee is a continuing one, and keeps all Code Sections current with new developments in materials, construction, and industrial practice. New editions are published at intervals of 2 years.

Code users will note that paragraphs in the Code are not necessarily numbered consecutively. Such discontinuities result from following a common outline, insofar as practical, for all Code Sections. In this way, corresponding material is correspondingly numbered in most Code Sections, thus facilitating reference by those who have occasion to use more than one Section.

This edition of Code Section B31.3 is not retroactive. Normally, agreement is made between contracting parties to use a specific edition, considering requirements

of the authority having jurisdiction. When specified as the latest edition and when no edition is specified, the specific edition is the one issued at least 6 months prior to the original contract date for the first design activity.

Users of this Code are cautioned against making use of Code revisions without assurance that they are acceptable to the proper authorities in the jurisdiction where the piping is to be installed.

The B31 Committee has established an orderly procedure to consider requests for interpretation and revision of Code requirements. To receive consideration, such request must be in writing and must give full particulars in accordance with [Appendix Z](#).

The approved reply to an inquiry will be sent directly to the inquirer. In addition, the question and reply will be published in the ASME Interpretation Database at <http://go.asme.org/InterpsDatabase>.

A Case is the prescribed form of reply when study indicates that the Code wording needs clarification, or when the reply modifies existing requirements of the Code or grants permission to use new materials or alternative constructions. The Case will be published on the B31.3 web page at <http://go.asme.org/B31committee>.

Code Cases remain available for use until annulled by the ASME B31 Standards Committee.

A request for revision of the Code will be placed on the Committee’s agenda. Further information or active participation on the part of the proponent may be requested during consideration of a proposed revision.

Materials ordinarily are listed in the stress tables only when sufficient usage in piping within the scope of the Code has been shown. Requests for listing shall include evidence of satisfactory usage and specific data to permit establishment of allowable stresses, maximum and minimum temperature limits, and other restrictions. Additional criteria can be found in the guidelines for addition of new materials in the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section II. (To develop usage and gain experience, unlisted materials may be used in accordance with [para. 323.1.2.](#))