

121 Triple Diamond Blvd
Unit #16
North Venice, FL
34275

Phone: 941-488-1700
Fax: 941-488-3834
E-mail:
calcsplus111@gmail.com

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BE PREPARED!!!

After the new code goes into effect on 3/15/12, HVAC load calculations (Manual J) will be required for replaced equipment. See Sec. 101.4.7.1.2 of the Florida Building Code, Energy Conservation, below.

101.4.7 Building systems. Thermal efficiency standards are set for the following building systems where new products are installed or replaced in existing buildings, and for which a permit must be obtained. New products shall meet the minimum efficiencies allowed by this code for the following systems:

- Heating, ventilating or air conditioning systems;
- Service water or pool heating systems;
- Electrical systems and motors;
- Lighting systems.

Exceptions:

1. Where part of a functional unit is repaired or replaced. For example, replacement of an entire HVAC system is not required because a new compressor or other part does not meet code when installed with an older system.
2. If the unit being replaced is itself a functional unit, such as a condenser, it does not constitute a repair. Outdoor and indoor units that are not designed to be operated together must meet the U.S. Department of Energy certification requirements contained in Section 403.6.2.1.1. Matched systems are required; this match may be verified by any one of the following means:
 - a. AHRI data
 - b. Accredited laboratory
 - c. Manufacturer's letter
 - d. Letter from registered P.E. State of Florida
3. Where existing components are utilized with a replacement system, such as air distribution system ducts or electrical wiring for lights, such components or controls need not meet code if meeting code would require that component's replacement.
4. Replacement equipment that would require extensive revisions to other systems, equipment or elements of a building where such replacement is a like-for-like replacement, such as through-the-wall condensing units and PTACs, chillers, and cooling towers in confined spaces.

101.4.7.1 Replacement HVAC equipment

101.4.7.1.1 Duct sealing upon equipment replacement (Mandatory). At the time of the total replacement of HVAC evaporators and condensing units, all accessible (a minimum of 30 inches clearance) joints and seams in the air distribution system shall be inspected and sealed where needed using reinforced mastic or code approved equivalent and shall include a signed certification by the contractor that is attached to the air handler unit stipulating that this work has been accomplished.

Exceptions:

1. Ducts in conditioned space.
2. Joints or seams that are already sealed with fabric and mastic.
3. If system is tested and repaired as necessary.

101.4.7.1.2 Replacement equipment sizing (Mandatory). An A/C contractor or licensed Florida PE shall submit a nationally recognized method based sizing calculation to the code official at the time of permit application for total replacement of the condensing and evaporator components of HVAC systems in accordance with Florida law and the provisions of Section 403.6.1 or Section 503.2.1, as applicable.

101.4.7.1.3 Existing equipment efficiencies. Existing cooling and heating equipment need not meet the minimum equipment efficiencies of Sections 403.6.2.2 or 403.6.2.3 except to preserve the original approval or listing of the equipment.

Next Issue's Topic: New Requirements for Fenestration SHGC