

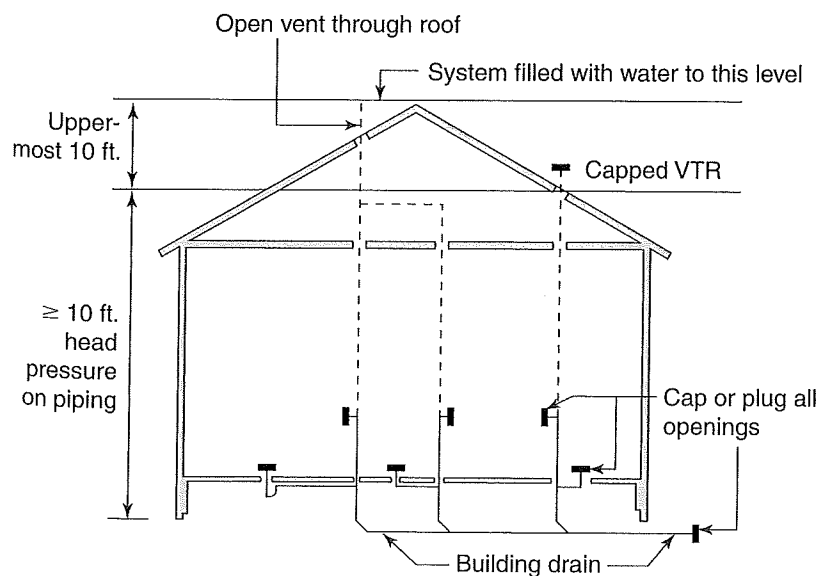
CHANGE TYPE: Modification

CHANGE SUMMARY: The IRC no longer permits air testing of plastic piping in DWV systems.

2012 CODE: P2503.5.1 Rough Plumbing. DWV systems shall be tested on completion of the rough piping installation by water or, for piping systems other than plastic, air with no evidence of leakage. Either test shall be applied to the drainage system in its entirety or in sections after rough piping has been installed, as follows:

1. Water test. Each section shall be filled with water to a point not less than 10 feet (3048 mm) above the highest fitting connection in that section, or to the highest point in the completed system. Water shall be held in the section under test for a period of 15 minutes. The system shall prove leak free by visual inspection.
2. Air test. The portion under test shall be maintained at a gauge pressure of 5 pounds per square inch (psi) (34 kPa) or 10 inches of mercury column (34 kPa). This pressure shall be held without introduction of additional air for a period of 15 minutes.

CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE: Air testing of plastic piping in DWV systems is no longer permitted in the plumbing provisions of the IRC, which brings the code into agreement with Section 312.1 of the *International Plumbing Code (IPC)*. Previously, the IRC prohibited the testing of plastic water piping with air but did not specifically prohibit air testing of plastic DWV piping. Although the minimum required test pressure of 5 psi for the DWV system is significantly less than the 50 psi required for air testing of water piping, consensus in the industry is that plastic piping systems should not be tested with air, even at low pressures. The Plastic Pipe and Fittings Association, the appropriate ASTM standards, and most manufacturers of plastic pipe warn against testing plastic pipe with air because it is a life-safety hazard. Compared to water, compressed air can release significantly greater amounts of energy if there is a failure in the piping system, with the potential for causing serious injury.



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Water test on plastic pipe DWV system.