

Chapter E 384

SWITCHBOARDS AND PANELBOARDS

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E 384.01 Scope. (1) The requirements of this chapter shall apply to all switchboards, panelboards, and distribution boards installed for the control of light and power circuits.

(a) *Exception No. 1.* Switchboards in utility company operated central stations or substations, which directly control energy derived from generators or transforming devices.

(b) *Exception No. 2.* Switchboards or portions thereof used exclusively to control signal circuits operated by batteries.

(2) The requirements of this chapter shall apply to battery-charging panels where current is taken from light or power circuits.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.02 Application of other chapters. Switches, circuit-breakers and overcurrent devices used on switchboards, panelboards and distribution boards, the boards and their enclosures, shall conform to the requirements of chapters E 240, E 250, E 370, E 380 and other chapters which apply. Switchboards and panelboards in hazardous locations shall conform to the requirements of chapters E 500 to E 517 inclusive.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.03 Support and arrangement of bus-bars and conductors. (1) Conductors and bus-bars on a switchboard, panelboard or control board shall be so located as to be free from physical damage and shall be held firmly in place.

(2) The arrangement of bus-bars and conductors shall be such as to avoid overheating due to inductive effects.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

A. SWITCHBOARDS

E 384.04 Location of switchboards. Switchboards which have any exposed live parts shall be located in permanently dry locations and then only where under competent supervision and accessible only to qualified persons.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.05 Wet locations. Where a switchboard is in a wet location or outside of a building, it shall be enclosed in a weather-proof enclosure or cabinet installed to conform to section E 373.02.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.06 Location relative to easily ignitable material. Switchboards shall be so placed as to reduce to a minimum the probability of communicating fire to adjacent easily ignitable material.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.07 Clearance from ceiling. Switchboards shall not be built up to a non-fireproof ceiling; a space of 3 feet being left between the ceiling and the board, unless an adequate fireproof shield is provided between the board and the ceiling.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.08 Clearance back of switchboard. Where the equipment or wiring on the back of the switchboard is accessible only from the space behind the board, there shall be a clear space of at least 18 inches between such equipment or wiring and the wall for a single panel switchboard not exceeding 42 inches in width, and at least 24 inches when the board consists of a wider panel or more than one panel. Where the space behind the board is accessible only from one end, these spaces shall be increased by at least 6 inches. The space back of the board shall be kept clear of foreign material and shall not be used for storage purposes, nor as passageways.

Note 1. Reduction of clearances for short intervals by building columns behind the switchboard, or by equipment on a single panel in the switchboard, is permitted provided the clearances are not reduced below those required for a single panelboard.

Note 2. Some of the above dimensions are exceptions to section E 195.16.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.09 Conductor covering. Insulated conductors where closely grouped, as on the rear of switchboards, shall each have a flame-retardant outer covering. The conductor covering shall be stripped back a sufficient distance from the terminals so as not to make contact with them. Insulated conductors used for instrument and control wiring on the back of switchboards shall be flame-retardant, either inherently or by means of an outer covering, such as one of the following types: R, RH, RW, RHH, RHW, V, AVA, AVB, T, TA, TBS, TW, THW, MI, or other types specifically approved for the purpose.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.11 Grounding switchboard frames. Switchboard frames and structures supporting switching equipment shall be grounded, except that frames of direct-current single-polarity switchboards need not be grounded if effectively insulated.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.12 Grounding of instruments, relays, meters and instrument transformers on switchboards. Instruments, relays, meters and instrument transformers located on switchboards shall be grounded as specified in sections E 250.121 to E 250.125.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

B. PANELBOARDS

E 384.13 General. All panelboards shall have a rating not less than the minimum feeder capacity required for the load as computed from chapter E 220.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.14 Lighting and appliance branch circuit panelboard. For the purposes of this rule, a lighting and appliance branch circuit panelboard is one having more than 10% of its overcurrent devices rated 30 amperes or less, for which neutral connections are provided.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.15 Number of overcurrent devices on one panelboard. Not more than 42 overcurrent devices of a lighting and appliance branch circuit panelboard shall be installed in any one cabinet or cutout box.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.16 Overcurrent protection. (1) A lighting and appliance branch circuit panelboard supplied by conductors having overcurrent protection greater than 200 amperes shall be protected on the supply side by overcurrent devices having a rating not greater than that of the panelboard.

(a) *Exception.* Except as installed for service as in subsection E 230.090 (1).

(2) Panelboards equipped with snap switches rated at 30 amperes or less, shall have overcurrent protection not in excess of 200 amperes.

(3) The overcurrent protective devices of all panelboards installed in industrial or commercial buildings where loads continue for long periods of time, shall have a rating not less than 125% of the circuit loading, as determined by chapters E 210 and E 220.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.17 Panelboards in damp or wet locations. Panelboards in damp or wet locations shall be installed in conformity to section E 373.02.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.18 Enclosure. Panelboards shall be mounted in cabinets or cutout boxes.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.19 Relative arrangement of switches and fuses. Panelboards having switches on the load side of any type of fuses shall not be installed except for use as service equipment as provided in section E 230.094.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

C. CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS

E 384.20 Panels. The panels of switchboards shall be made of moisture-resistant, noncombustible material.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.21 Bus-bars. Bus-bars may be of bare metal provided they are rigidly mounted.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.22 Protection of instrument circuits. Instruments, pilot lights, potential transformers, and other switchboard devices with potential coils, except where the operation of the overcurrent device might introduce a hazard in the operation of devices, shall be supplied by a circuit that is protected by standard overcurrent devices of a rating not greater than 15 amperes, except that for ratings of 2 amperes or less special types of enclosed fuses may be used.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.23 Component parts. Switches, fuses, and fuseholders used on panelboards shall conform to the requirements of chapters E 240 and E 380 so far as they apply.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.24 Knife switches. Knife switches shall be so arranged that the blades, when exposed during operation, will be dead when the switches are open.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.25 Color-coding. On switchboards or panelboards that are provided with color markings to indicate the main bus-bars to which branch circuit bus-bars are connected, the colors shall conform to the color coding of section E 210.05.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.

E 384.26 Spacings. (1) Except at switches and circuit-breakers, the distance between bare metal parts, bus-bars, etc., shall be not less than specified in the following table:

TABLE E 384.26
SPACINGS BETWEEN BARE METAL PARTS

| | Opposite Polarity When Mounted on the Same Surface | Opposite Polarity When Held Free in Air | *Live Parts to Ground |
|-------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| Not over 125 volts..... | $\frac{3}{4}$ inch | $\frac{1}{2}$ inch | $\frac{1}{2}$ inch |
| Not over 250 volts..... | $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch | $\frac{3}{4}$ inch | $\frac{1}{2}$ inch |
| Not over 600 volts..... | 2 inches | 1 inch | 1 inch |

*For spacing between live parts and doors of cabinets, see subsection E 378.11(1).

Note: It should be noted that the above distances are the minimum allowable, and it is recommended that greater distances be provided wherever the conditions will permit.

(2) At switches, enclosed fuses, etc., parts of the same polarity may be placed as close together as convenience in handling will allow, unless close proximity causes excessive heating.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1961, No. 71, eff. 12-1-61.