SIZING STEAM TRAPS

HOW TO DETERMINE THE PROPER SIZE TRAP

Capacity tables that follow show maximum discharge rates in pounds per hour. To select the correct size trap from these tables, the normal condensing rate should be converted to a "pounds per hour" basis and multiplied by a safety factor.

REASON FOR SAFETY FACTORS

For steam applications, the condensation rate varies with:

(1) The starting or warming-up condition.

(2) The normal operating condition.

(3) Any abnormal operating condition.

Of these, the condensing rate for the normal condition is occasionally known, or it can be estimated with sufficient accuracy for trap selection; the loads imposed by warm-up and abnormal conditions are seldom known and practically impossible to predict.

During warm-up the trap load is heavy, since air as well as large quantities of condensate must be discharged. Condensate forms at a rapid rate as the cold equipment and connecting piping are brought up to temperature. This usually results in pressure drop at the trap inlet, thereby reducing its capacity during the period when the load is maximum.

Safety factors are therefore necessary, to compensate for start-up conditions, variation of steam pressure and product initial temperature, the process cycle speed required, and discrepancies between assumed and actual conditions which determine the normal condensing rate.

The selection of a safety factor depends on the type of trap and the operating conditions. If the known or calculated normal condensing rate is multiplied by the recommended factor from the pages which follow, efficient trapping will be assured.

EFFECT OF BACK PRESSURE ON TRAP CAPACITY

Most trap installations include piping the outlet into a common return system or to an available disposal location. In either case a constant static back pressure may exist, against which the trap must discharge. This back pressure may be unintentional or deliberately produced.

Unintentional back pressure in condensate return piping is caused by lifting the condensate to a higher level, piping which is too small for the volume of liquid conveyed, piping with insufficient or no pitch in the direction of flow, pipe and fittings clogged with rust, pipe scale or other debris, leaking steam traps, etc. In steam service an intentional back pressure is instigated by means of a pressure regulating or spring-loaded valve in the discharge system, when a supply of flash steam at a pressure less than the trap pressure is needed.

If very hot condensate is discharged to a pressure less than that existing in the trap body, some of it will flash into steam, with a tremendous increase in volume and consequent choking and build-up of pressure in the trap's discharge orifice and the passages and piping adjacent thereto. For condensate at or close to steam temperature, this flash pressure is quite high, usually considerably higher than any static back pressure existing in the trap outlet piping.

For this reason, capacity tables for thermostatic and thermodynamic traps are based on gage pressure at the trap inlet, instead of on the difference between trap inlet and discharge pressures. Experiments have shown that, for the temperatures applying to these tables, unless the static back pressure in the return piping exceeds 25% of the trap inlet pressure, no reduction of the trap capacity results. For back pressures greater than 25% of the trap inlet pressure there is a progressive decrease of trap capacity.

Thus, if the return piping static pressure is less than 25% of the trap inlet pressure, the capacities shown in these tables should be utilized for trap selection. If the return piping pressure is greater than 25% of the trap inlet pressure, reduce the table capacities by the percentage indicated in second line of Table A on the following pages.

Above data does not apply to float and thermostatic traps, capacities are based on differential pressure, obtained by subtracting any static back pressure from trap inlet pressure.

WHEN THE NORMAL CONDENSING RATE IS KNOWN

Normal condensing rate means the pounds of steam condensed per hour by the average conditions which prevail when the equipment drained is at operating temperature.

If this amount is known, simply multiply by the safety factor recommended for the service and conditions, obtained from the pages which follow, and determine size directly from the capacity tables for the type of trap selected.

Example: 4000 pounds per hour normal condensing rate from heat exchanger with submerged single coil, gravity drained, 80 PSIG constant steam pressure. What size thermostatic bellows trap to use?

Solution:

1. On page 3 recommended safety factor for single coil, gravity drained is 2. Multiplying, 4000 x 2 = 8000.
2. In Table G, page 5, the 3/4 Types B and C traps have a rated capacity of 8895 pounds per hour at 80 pounds pressure, and one of these should be specified.

WHEN THE NORMAL CONDENSING RATE IS UNKNOWN

Determine by utilizing proper formula from pages 2 thru 4 for the service and equipment to be trapped. Multiply the result by safety factor recommended for the operating conditions. See examples on the following pages.

SIZING STEAM TRAPS CONT'D.

EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS USED IN NORMAL CONDENSING RATE FORMULAS

A = Heating surface area, square feet (see Table B)

B = Heat output of coil or heater, BTU per hour

C = Condensate generated by submerged heating surfaces, lbs/hr/sq ft (Table F)

D = Weight of material processed per hour after drying, pounds

F = Steam flow, lbs/hr

G= Gallons of liquid heated per unit time

H = Heat loss from bare iron or steel heating surface, BTU/sq ft/°F/hr

L = Latent heat of steam at pressure utilized, BTU/lb (see Table C or obtain from Steam Table)

M = Metal weight of autoclave, retort or other pressure vessel, pounds

Qh = Condensate generated, lbs/hr

Qu = Condensate generated, lbs/unit time (Always convert to lbs/hr before applying safety factor. See Examples using formulas 7 and 10 on next page).

S = Specific heat of material processed, BTU/lb/°F

Ta = Ambient air temperature, °F

Tf = Final temperature of material processed, °F

Ti = Initial temperature of material processed, °F

Ts = Temperature of steam at pressure utilized, °F (see Table C or obtain from Steam Table)

U = Overall coefficient of heat transfer, BTU/sq ft/°F/hr (see Table E)

V = Volume of air heated, cubic feet/minute

Wg= Liquid weight, lbs/gallon

Wh = Weight of material processed per hour, lbs

Wu = Weight of material processed per unit time, lbs

X = Factor for $\frac{Tf-Ti}{L}$ (obtain from Table D)

Y = Factor for $\frac{H(Ts-Ta)}{L}$,lbs/hr/sq ft (obtain from Table C)

AIR HEATING

Steam Mains; Pipe Coil Radiation; Convectors; Radiators; etc. (Natural Air Circulation)

(1) Qh = A Y

Recommended Safety Factors

For Steam Mains

Ambient Air Above Freezing:

1st Trap After Boiler……………….	3
At End of Main…………………….	3
Other Traps ……………………….	2

Ambient Air Below Freezing:

At End of Main …………………….	4
Other Traps ……………………….	3

Steam mains should be trapped at all points where condensate can collect, such as at loops, risers, separators, end of mains, ahead of valves, where mains reduce to smaller diameters, etc., regardless of the condensate load. Installation of traps at these locations usually provides ample capacity.

For Pipe Coil Radiation, Convectors and Radiators

Single Continuous Coil …………..	2
Multiple Coil ………………………..	4

Damp Space Pipe Coil Radiation; Dry Kilns; Greenhouses; Drying Rooms; etc. (Natural Air Circulation)

(2) Qh = 2.5 A Y

Recommended Safety Factors

Single Continuous Coil ………….	2
Multiple Coil ………………………..	4

Steam Line Separators; Line Purifiers

(3) Qh = .10 F

Recommended Safety Factors

Indoor Pipe Line …………………..	2
Outdoor Pipe Line ………………..	3
If Boiler Carry-Over Anticipated…	4 to 6

(Depending on probable severity of conditions)

Unit Heaters; Blast Coils (Forced Air Circulation)

(4) When BTU Output is Known:

$$Qh = \frac{B}{L}$$

(5) When BTU Output is Unknown, Heat Transfer Area is Known:

Qh = 5 A Y

(6) When Volume of Air Heated is Known:

Qh = 1.09 V X

Recommended Safety Factors

Intake Air Above Freezing - Constant Steam Pressure ……….	3
Intake Air Above Freezing - Variable Steam Pressure ………..	4
Intake Air Below Freezing - Constant Steam Pressure ……….	4
Intake Air Below Freezing - Variable Steam Pressure …………	5

Example: 11,500 cubic feet of air per minute heated by blast coil from 50°F to 170°F with 50 PSIG constant steam pressure.

Solution: By formula (6), Qh = 1.09 x 11,500 x .132 = 1655 lbs/hr. Recommended safety factor, 3 for intake air above freezing and constant steam pressure. 3 x 1655 = 4965 lbs/hr trap capacity required.

SIZING STEAM TRAPS CONT'D.

LIQUID HEATING

Submerged Coils; Heat Exchangers; Evaporators; Stills; Vats; Tanks; Jacketed Kettles; Cooking Pans; etc.

(7) When Quantity of Liquid to be Heated in a Given Time is Known:

Qu = G Wg S X

(8) When Quantity of Liquid to be Heated is Unknown:

Qh = A U X

(9) When Heating Surface Area is Larger than Required to Heat Known Quantity of Liquid in a Given Time:

Qh = A C

When maximum heat transfer efficiency is desired, or when in doubt, use formula (9) in preference to formulas (7) and (8).

Recommended Safety Factors

For Submerged Coil Equipment; Heat Exchangers; Evaporators; etc.

Constant Steam Pressure:

Single Coil, Gravity Drainage 2
Single Coil, Siphon Drainage 3
Multiple Coil, Gravity Drainage 4

Variable Steam Pressure:

Single Coil, Gravity Drainage 3
Single Coil, Siphon Drainage 4
Multiple Coil, Gravity Drainage 5

For Siphon Drained Equipment, specify traps with "Steam Lock Release Valve".

For Jacketed Equipment; Cooling Kettles; Pans; etc.

Slow Cooking:
Gravity Drainage 3
Siphon Drainage 4
Moderately Fast Cooking:
Gravity Drainage 4
Siphon Drainage 5
Very Fast Cooking:
Gravity Drainage 5
Siphon Drainage 6

For Siphon Drained Equipment, specify traps with "Steam Lock Release Valve".

Example: Heat exchanger with single submerged coil, gravity drained, heating 1250 gallons of petroleum oil of 0.51 specific heat, weighing 7.3 lbs/gal, from 50°F to 190°F in 15 minutes, using steam at 100 PSIG.

Solution: By formula (7), Qu = 1250 X 7.3 x .51 x .159 = 740 pounds of condensate in 15 minutes, or 4 x 740 = 2960 lbs/hr. Recommended safety factor is 2 for single coil, gravity drained. 2 x 2960 = 5920 lbs/hr trap capacity required.

DIRECT STEAM CONTACT HEATING

Autoclaves; Retorts; Sterilizers; Reaction Chambers; etc.

(10) Qu = Wu S X + .12 M X

Recommended Safety Factors

Slow Warm-up Permissible 3
Fast Warm-up Desired 5

Example: An autoclave which weighs 400 pounds before loading is charged with 270 pounds of material having a specific heat of .57 and an initial temperature of 70°F. Utilizing steam at 50 PSIG, it is desired to bring the temperature up 250°F in the shortest possible time.

Solution: By formula (10), Qu = (270 x .57 x .198) + .12(400 x .198) = 40 pounds of condensate. Using safety factor of 5 recommended for fast warm-up and assuming 5 minutes as the time required to complete the reaction, a trap capacity of 40 x 12 x 5 = 2400 lbs/hr is required.

INDIRECT STEAM CONTACT HEATING

Cylinder Dryers, Drum Dryers, Rotary Steam Tube Dryers, Calenders; etc.

$$(11)\ Qh = \frac{970\ (W-D)}{L} + Wh\ X$$

Recommended Safety Factors

For Siphon or Bucket Drained Rotating Cylinder, Drum and Steam Tube Dryers; Cylinder Ironers; etc.

Small or medium Size,
Slow Rotation 4
Small or Medium Size,
Fast Rotation 6
Large Size, Slow Rotation 6
Large Size, Fast Rotation 8

For Siphon or Bucket Drained Equipment, specify traps with "Steam Lock Release Valve". Each cylinder should be individually trapped.

For Gravity Drained Chest Type Dryers and Ironers

Each Chest Individually Trapped... 2
Entire Machine Drained By
Single Trap .... 4 to 6
Depending on number of Chests

For Platen Presses

Each Platen Individually Trapped ... 2
*Entire Press Drained by Single Trap,
Platens Piped in Series 3
*Entire Press Drained by Single Trap,
Platens Piped in Parallel ...... 4 to 6
Depending on number of Platens

Example: A medium size rotary steam tube dryer with condensate lifted to a discharge passage in the trunion, dries 4000 lbs/hr of granular material to 3300 pounds, with 15 PSIG steam, initial temperature of material 70°F, final temperature 250°F.

Solution: By formula (11) Qh =

$$\frac{970\ (4000 - 3300)}{945} + (4000 \times .191)$$

= 1483 lbs/hr. Using safety factor of 4 recommended for medium size, slow rotation: 4 x 1483 = 5932 lbs/hr trap capacity required.

**A separate trap for each heating surface (coil, chest, platen, etc.) is recommended for maximum heating efficiency. Sluggish removal of condensate and air is certain when more than one unit is drained by a single trap, resulting in reduced temperatures, slow heating and possible water-hammer damage.*

TABLE A — EFFECT OF BACK PRESSURE ON STEAM TRAP CAPACITY

Back Pressure as Percent of Inlet Pressure	10	20	25	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
Percent Reduction of Trap Capacity	0	0	0	2	5	12	20	30	40	55

TABLE B – SQUARE FEET OF SURFACE PER LINEAL FOOT OF PIPE

Nominal Pipe Size (In.)	1/2"	3/4"	1"	1-1/4"	1-1/2"	2"	2-1/2"	3"	4"	5"	6"	8"	10"	12"	14"	16"	18"	20"	24"
Area, Sq. Ft. per Lineal Foot	.22	.28	.35	.44	.50	.63	.76	.92	1.18	1.46	1.74	2.26	2.81	3.34	3.67	4.19	4.71	5.24	6.28

TABLE C - FACTOR Y - H(Ts-Ta)/L - APPROXIMATE CONDENSING RATE FOR BARE IRON AND STEEL PIPE*

Steam Pressure - PSIG	1	2	5	10	15	20	25	50	75	100	150	200	250	300	350	400	450	500	600
Steam Temperature - °F	215	219	227	239	250	259	267	298	320	338	366	388	406	422	436	448	460	470	489
Latent Heat - BTU/lb	968	966	961	952	945	939	934	911	895	879	856	839	820	804	790	776	764	751	728
Factor Y Cond - lbs/hr/sq. ft	0.45	0.46	0.49	0.53	0.56	0.59	0.71	0.84	1.02	1.10	1.34	1.47	1.58	1.80	1.91	2.00	2.35	2.46	2.65

*Based on still air at 60F, recommended safety factors compensate for air at other temperatures. Used for steam trap selection only.

TABLE D — FACTOR X = (Tf–Ti)/L

Tf-Ti	STEAM PRESSURE - PSIG																		
°F	1	2	5	10	15	20	25	50	75	100	150	200	250	300	350	400	450	500	600
40	.041	.041	.042	.042	.042	.043	.043	.044	.045	.045	.047	.048	.049	.050	.051	.052	.052	.053	.055
60	.062	.062	.062	.063	.064	.064	.064	.066	.067	.068	.070	.072	.073	.075	.076	.077	.079	.080	.082
80	.083	.083	.083	.084	.085	.085	.086	.087	.089	.091	.093	.096	.098	.100	.101	.103	.105	.106	.110
100	.103	.103	.104	.105	.106	.106	.107	.110	.112	.114	.117	.120	.122	.124	.127	.129	.131	.133	.137
120	.124	.124	.125	.126	.127	.128	.129	.132	.134	.136	.140	.144	.146	.149	.152	.155	.157	.160	.165
140	.145	.145	.146	.147	.148	.149	.150	.154	.156	.159	.163	.167	.171	.174	.177	.180	.183	.186	.192
160	.165	.166	.167	.168	.169	.170	.172	.176	.179	.182	.187	.191	.195	.199	.203	.206	.210	.213	.220
180			.187	.189	.191	.192	.193	.198	.201	.204	.210	.215	.220	.224	.228	.232	.236	.240	.248
200				.211	.212	.213	.214	.219	.224	.227	.234	.239	.244	.249	.253	.258	.262	.266	.275
220						.235	.236	.242	.246	.250	.257	.262	.268	.274	.279	.283	.288	.293	.303
240								.263	.268	.273	.280	.286	.292	.299	.304	.309	.314	.319	.330
260									.290	.296	.304	.310	.317	.324	.329	.335	.340	.346	.357
280									.313	.319	.327	.334	.342	.349	.354	.361	.367	.373	.385
300											.350	.358	.366	.373	.380	.387	.393	.400	.412

TABLE E — FACTOR U, HEAT TRANSFER COEFFICIENTS BTU/HR/SQ FT/°F TEMP. DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE OF HEAT EXCHANGER	AVERAGE DESIGN VALUES	
	NATURAL CIRCULATION	FORCED CIRCULATION
STEAM TO WATER	125	300
STEAM TO OIL	20	45
STEAM TO MILK	125	300
STEAM TO PARAFFIN WAX	25	80
STEAM TO SUGAR & MOLASSES SOLUTIONS	75	150

Coefficients shown are suggested average design values. Higher or lower figures will be realized for many conditions. Use for

TABLE F — FACTOR C, APPROXIMATE CONDENSING RATE FOR SUBMERGED SURFACES, LBS/HR/SQ FT

HEATING SURFACE	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN STEAM TEMPERATURE AND MEAN WATER TEMPERATURE*											
	25	50	75	100	125	150	175	200	225	250	275	300
IRON OR STEEL	1.6	5	10	17	25	34	45	57	70	84	99	114
BRASS	2.6	8	16	27	40	54	72	91	112	134	158	182
COPPER	3.2	10	20	34	50	68	90	114	140	168	198	228

* Mean water temperature is 1/2 the sum of inlet temperature plus outlet temperature. Table based on heating surfaces submerged in water with natural circulation. Safety factor of 50% has been included to allow for moderate scaling. If surface will remain bright, multiply above figures by 2. Use for steam trap selection only.