

# Good Workmanship, It's In Your Job

## Description

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Many years ago, “well not that many,” while piping up a boiler I was setting up multi zones with circulators. I had all the circulators lined up perpendicular, all square in perfect formation. The electrician asked why I piped them in a straight line, and why I didn't put them at an angle. Apparently it would have been a little easier for him to wire... my answer, because I'm a Plumber. He had this confused look, I said to myself, “he's an electrician, what does he know about running anything straight?”

Well now that I have added electricians to the list that hate me, that's ok jump on board still plenty of room on the bus, but I think it's filling up fast. Let's get to the point.

The title of Plumber was derived from the word “plumb” and the Latin word “plumbeus” meaning a worker of lead. Plumb is defined as “exactly vertical or true” and “to work as a plumber.” The definition of plumbing, is the art of using Plumb. Now I didn't really want to give that explanation to the electrician, besides he was already mad enough at me for ignoring him. It really all comes down to good workmanship.

Our code spells it out clearly. Section 10.05,7 *Workmanship* *Workmanship shall conform to generally accepted good practice. Particular attention shall be applied to all piping installations in regard to the alignment of piping (straight, level, plumb)*. Even though it's right in your title, Plumber, I constantly see piping arrangements piped at angles, like the gas piping in the photos. Now sometimes it is necessary to pipe certain arrangements at an angle. But most of the time there is no good reason for it, that's poor workmanship. How much more effort would it have taken to just square it off?

Our code is filled with references to good workmanship, some direct like in the previous mentioned section, and some indirect that should be obvious but is not too many. One example of this can be found in section 10.06,2 and 10.07,1 they basically say the same thing, *when installing a fitting or inserting piping into an existing portion of a soil stack, waste stack, vent stack or drain, the fitting or piping shall be of the same material as the existing stack or drain using a joining method outlined in 248 c.m.r. 10.07*. Incredibly I see this much too often. A plumber will cut into a cast iron stack or drain and put back a section of p.v.c. pipe or a p.v.c. fitting. Now it probably will never leak, but it looks awful. Think about it, you go into a basement and see this cast iron horizontal drain, with a section of p.v.c. right in the middle of it. That's poor workmanship.

Good workmanship, next to piping a system that operates properly, is the most important part of the job, and certainly the most visible. But they should go hand in hand. I have seen systems piped by plumbers that looked like it was done by a homeowner blindfolded, worked great, looked terrible. Then again I have seen just as many perfectly piped systems that could be on the cover of a magazine, but didn't work for\_\_\_\_\_. I think you get the idea. So pay close attention to your workmanship, and pipe it plumb, after all you are a plumber aren't you?

Now for all those riding aboard the Hate Me Bus, I will leave you with these words by Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, in a recent interview on 60 minutes

explaining a part of his reputation. “ *I do not attack people, I attack ideas. It just so happens that there are many good people with some very bad idea.* ” I could not have said it better myself.