

UBC 1997 Ductwork Restraint Rules

The following information is based on 1997 UBC Code and does not take into account more stringent specifications or local requirements.

The UBC grants several exclusions without regard to the project or ductwork system's importance factor or the expected peak ground accelerations. As such, it is not necessary to review project importance factors or seismic zone when reviewing ductwork systems for possible exclusion (Footnotes on Table 16-O).

Ductwork Exempt from Restraint Requirements

Any duct that meets all of the following criteria (Table 16-O footnotes):

- A) Lateral motion will not cause damaging impact with other systems.
- B) Lateral motion will not result in the loss of vertical support.
- C) If mounted on a post protruding up from the floor, the post is checked for stability.
- D) The duct supports are under 12" in length and contain a connection that will not allow them to carry a moment (swivel).

Rule of Thumb Exclusions

While the code does not identify any exclusions based on duct size or importance factor, most jurisdictions will apply limits to the minimum duct size that requires bracing based on SMACNA. Because the local authority has the final say on this, however, this should be confirmed for each locale.

Restraints can be excluded per SMACNA for:

- 1) All ductwork that is under 6 sq feet in area (SMACNA 3.2).

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PAGE 1 OF 1

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