
WHERE DID MY NAMEPLATE GO?



This story starts with a nameplate that was originally tack welded to the pressure vessel as was often done back “in the day.” Over time, water worked its way underneath the nameplate and began to corrode the vessel. In an effort to deal with this, the facility removed the nameplate in order to clean up the corrosion and stop it by painting the vessel. For a time, this nameplate was lost, until the facility maintenance manager was cleaning out a drawer in his desk and he happened upon it. Realizing that it needed to stay with the vessel, he had it secured near the vessel using wire. An admirable thought, but it is an epic fail.

First, the National Board Inspection Code states that: “When the stamping on a pressure-retaining item becomes indistinct or the nameplate is lost, illegible, or detached, but traceability to the original pressure-retaining item is still possible, the Inspector shall instruct the owner or user to have the nameplate or stamped data replaced.” First off, an

inspector will require that this nameplate be replaced. Second, the key lies in the traceability. If the facility has the original manufacturer’s data sheet and, preferably, the original drawing as well, then traceability is fairly easy and approval for installing a replacement nameplate is fairly easy. The real issue come to bear when the documentation for the vessel cannot be obtained, whether because the original nameplate was lost after it became detached, or because the vessel was not registered with the National Board and the manufacturer is long since out of business. When this happens, it becomes very difficult and expensive to have a professional engineer re-certify an existing vessel in order for a new nameplate to be fabricated and attached.



Let’s say that the manufacturer’s documentation for the vessel is available. Should this be the case, a new nameplate can be fabricated and applied by someone holding an R

stamp from the National Board. The application of the new nameplate must be witnessed by a National Board commissioned inspector. All of this costs money.

Here's the rub. The National Board Inspection Code states that: "Permission from the Jurisdiction is not required for the reattachment of nameplates that are partially attached. So, if a nameplate is still partially attached, as in the photo below, it can be reattached using rivets or screws by facility personnel and it does not need to be inspected by a National Board commission inspector.



So, it pays to inspect the nameplates of your vessels, particularly if they are hidden under insulation. Because once they fall off completely, the real problems start. In addition, it pays to identify corrosion before it leads to material loss so that it may be cleaned up and arrested before it affects the safe working pressure of the vessel.

If you have photos of an Epic Fail please pass them on to nh3isB2L@gmail.com.

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