

## FAQ:

# Can I utilize sanitary venting methods other than Section P-919 of the 2018 Philadelphia Plumbing Code when designing the sanitary plumbing system for an existing building or structure?

### Background:

The 2018 Philadelphia Plumbing Code (PPC) is a combination of the 2018 International Plumbing Code and local City of Philadelphia amendments. Section P-919, Philadelphia Single-Stack Waste and Vent System, is one of these amendments. The technical provisions of Section P-919 have applied to almost all existing plumbing systems constructed in the City of Philadelphia. As such, alterations to these existing plumbing systems must be made in a manner that continues the effective use of the underlying Philadelphia Single-Stack Waste and Vent System.

In “wet-vented” systems, which the Philadelphia Single-Stack Waste and Vent System is a type of, the drainage pipe’s size allows for airflow above the wetted perimeter within the pipe to be utilized as ventilation air to maintain and protect trap seals. Such pipe sizes are restricted based on drainage fixture unit (DFU) loads within the system – with due consideration to allow for free ventilation air in addition to the flow of drainage. Therefore, alterations to existing systems are effectively limited by downstream pipe sizes that must maintain this free ventilation air.

As such, alterations that mix non-“wet-vented” drainage systems, or portions thereof, to “wet-vented” systems, or portions thereof, create conditions that may advertently restrict airflow, in a manner that may compromise trap seals within the system. It is due to these potential issues that PPC Section P-919.1 prohibits the mixing of system vented in accordance with Section P-919 with other venting methods, stating (bolded text added for emphasis):

***P-919.1 Scope. [...] This section is intended to be used as an option for any modifications or rebuilding of any of these existing structures, homes, or buildings or any planned new construction in the future.***

***Systems utilizing this section shall not be permitted to incorporate any other methods of design contained in other sections of this chapter.***

### Answer:

No. Due to the possibility of compromising existing trap seals when mixing venting methods, systems utilizing the Philadelphia Single-Stack Waste and Vent System may not use any other venting methods when performing alterations.

The widespread use of EZ Permits for plumbing work within the City of Philadelphia makes the application of different DFU limits between Section P-919 venting methods difficult to track. Therefore, mixing venting methods is administratively prohibited.

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### Questions?

Call 311 or (215) 686-8686 (if outside Philadelphia) or submit an online form via <http://www.phila.gov/li/get-help>.

### Disclaimer:

This interpretation, policy or code application is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code application to specific projects may vary. There may be other ways to comply with the Code. If so, you are not required to use this method. You may want to investigate other options or consult with a professional identifying an equally code compliant solution.