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My Inspector Called to Schedule an Inspection How Should I Prepare my Boiler?

In-Service (External) Inspection

Preparation for an in-service inspection basically requires that you schedule the inspection for a time when short interruptions of the boiler will not have an adverse impact on the facility's operations. Facilities with multiple boilers generally do not have as great a concern with this as those with a single boiler. An important part of this preparation is ensuring that qualified operators and maintenance personnel are available to conduct any testing of controls and safety devices, as may be required by your Boiler Inspector. It is also important that all production personnel be notified as appropriate that an inspection is in progress. Once completed, they should be notified that operations have returned to normal.

Internal Inspection

Preparation for an internal inspection is somewhat more involved since the boiler must be shutdown and opened. The following outline provides guidance on preparing your boiler for an internal inspection. Details will, of course, vary depending on the specific jurisdictional requirements and type boiler being inspected. You should consult with your Boiler Inspector to determine any additional preparation required. See Notes 1 and 2.

1. Shut down the boiler using proper shut down procedures as required by your boiler operating instructions.
2. Lockout and tag all steam, water, and fuel valves, the ignition system, and electrical disconnects.
3. Allow boiler to cool completely, 24 to 48 hours depending on the style and size of the boiler.
4. Open all drain and vent lines and drain the boiler.
5. Remove inspection plugs in water column connectors.
6. Remove all manhole and handhole cover plates.
7. Remove all washout plugs.
8. Flush all sludge and loose scale from boiler interior. Check with your Boiler Inspector first as some inspectors prefer to leave scale and sludge in the boiler for their inspection.
9. Open all low-water fuel cutout device float chambers.
10. Open all low-water fuel cutout device cross tee piping plugs.
11. After draining and flushing the boiler, close, lockout, and tag blow off valves.

12. Open all fireside access panels/doors, front and rear.
13. Remove all soot and ash from boiler furnace surfaces and grates (if applicable). Again, check with your Boiler Inspector to see if he wants to examine the area before cleaning.
14. Have new gaskets ready for all openings; do not reuse gaskets.

NOTE 1: If a boiler has not been properly prepared for an internal inspection, the boiler inspector may refuse to make the inspection until such time as the boiler has been properly prepared.

NOTE 2: If the inspection will include an internal inspection where the Inspector must physically enter the boiler, it will be necessary to employ an appropriate Confined Space Entry Program. This occupational safety regulation applies to all involved persons whether they prepare and clean the boiler for inspection, conduct the inspection itself, or do any repair work. Check your state laws, refer to Federal OSHA (29 CFR 1910.146 & .147), or consult with your Boiler Inspector prior to his/her arrival on site.