



Petroleum and Petrochemical Bulletin

TANK GAUGING AND SAMPLING THROUGH UN-PERFORATED STILL PIPES (STAND PIPES)

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The risks and problems associated with the use of un-perforated still pipes for gauging and sampling are well known within the industry. The use of this apparatus can result in significant measurement errors and/or samples that subsequently prove to be unrepresentative.

For many years, the use of un-perforated still pipes has not been recommended for custody transfer measurements due to the possibility of serious errors.

The most recent revision to API MPMS Chapter 3.1A now specifically prohibits the use of un-perforated or un-slotted still pipes for tank gauging. API MPMS Chapter 3.1A, Section 8.2.4 (h) states,

“Tank gauging shall not be carried out from un-perforated or un-slotted still pipes (which are referred to as “guide poles” or “stand pipes”), since the liquid level measured inside the un-perforated or un-slotted still pipes is usually not the same the liquid level outside the still pipe. Tank gauging shall only be taken from still pipes that have perforations or slots that allow free flow of liquid into and out the still pipe. In certain locations, still pipes without slots are used to comply with local air pollution regulations. These “solid” still pipes can lead to serious liquid height measurement, temperature determination, and sampling errors.”

Where IFIA members are requested to take measurements or samples from un-perforated still pipes they should advise their principals immediately and seek instruction. Such measurements and samples shall not be used for custody transfer or other purposes without the approval of all concerned parties. Appropriate qualifying statements should be used on any documents or reports where such measurements or samples are involved.

A recommended disclaimer for IFIA Members is given below.

US Customs

The licensing requirements of the US Customs for Commercial Gaugers specify strict adherence to API MPMS standards; therefore the use of un-perforated still pipes is not acceptable for cargoes that come under their jurisdiction, such as importation, some exportation and most product movements within “Foreign Trade Zones”

Any measurements and/or samples taken from a tank with un-perforated still pipes will not be valid for any custody transfer purposes involving US Customs.

Recommended Disclaimer

Warning: *The reported findings are based on measurements/samples taken through an unperforated still pipe. This practice is prohibited under current API standards but has been used at the specific request of our principal(s). The findings should be treated with caution.*

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