

## Conformance of Victaulic IPS Grooved Couplings and Fittings to ASME B31.3 Process Piping Code (2004) Requirements

The American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) established the B31 Pressure Piping Code Committees to promote safety in pressure piping design and construction through published engineering criteria. The basic consideration of the Codes is safety, however, the Codes are not designed to replace competent engineering design or judgement. Most importantly, the Codes do not “approve”, “rate”, or “endorse” any items of construction; proprietary devices, or activity. The Codes do not put a limit on conservatism and, conversely, the Codes also allow for designs that are capable of more rigorous engineering analysis which justifies less conservative designs. A final point of importance is that the Codes strive to keep abreast of all current technologies regarding improvements to materials, fabrication, and any other new developments in the piping industry. They are not intended to limit the introduction of new products. Numerous sections of the B31 Codes provide the necessary guidelines to analyze new or nontraditional products so that sound engineering judgments can be made regarding Code conformance.

Victaulic Standard IPS couplings and grooved end fittings may be utilized on ASME B31.3 Process Piping Code applications within their published temperature and pressure parameters. ASME B31.3 designates the use of mechanical joints, specifically grooved joints that use gaskets as method of leak resistance under Paragraph 300.2, Definitions, which defines a Mechanical Joint as:

*“A joint for the purpose of mechanical strength or leak resistance, or both, in which the mechanical strength is developed by threaded, grooved, rolled, flared, or flanged pipe ends; or by bolts, pins, toggles, or rings; and the leak resistance is developed by threads and compounds, gaskets, rolled ends, caulking, or machined and mated surfaces.”*

Also, grooving is designated as a means of pipe preparation within paragraph 300.2 in the definition of fabrication which is:

*“The preparation of piping for assembly, including cutting, threading, grooving, forming, bending, and joining of components into subassemblies. Fabrication may be performed in the shop or in the field.”*

While there is not specific mention of grooved couplings, and grooved end fittings within ASME B31.3, they are permissible through Paragraphs 302.2.3 Unlisted Components, 306.1.2 Unlisted Fittings, and 318.1.2 Unlisted Joints. Each of these paragraphs reference Paragraph 304.7.2, Unlisted Components and Elements, for pressure design qualification.

Paragraph 304.7.2 (a) allows the use of Victaulic products through:

*“Extensive, successful service experience under comparable conditions with similarly proportioned components of the same or like material.”*

Victaulic grooved products have over 80 years of proven successful installation performance under a large variety of service conditions. In addition, Victaulic grooved joints will provide excellent qualifying working pressures based on the pressures within their published parameters in accordance with UG-101 in Section VIII, Division 1 of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code. Extensive testing is performed on all Victaulic products before and after they are made available to the piping industry. Victaulic is an ISO 9001 certified company, which has stringent requirements for quality systems, design control, process control, traceability, inspection, measurement, and testing of our products.

A piping system properly designed and installed utilizing Victaulic flexible and rigid couplings is ideal for accommodating both primary and secondary stresses. Flexible couplings provide for both deflection and axial movement at each coupling joint. The available deflection and axial movement can then be used to virtually eliminate any secondary thermal piping stresses. Both flexible and rigid couplings have proven performance benefits in reducing primary stresses such as seismic and induced system vibration. The rigid coupling also provides sufficient joint rigidity to allow hanger spacing to ASME B31.1 or B31.9 hanger spacing requirements. To assist design engineers, Victaulic provides published engineering design data and suggested methods for accommodating thermal movement and vibration attenuation in a piping system. Request 26.01, 26.02 and 26.03. Both flexible and rigid coupling hanger spacing requirements can be found on page 5 of Section 26.01.

The use of Victaulic couplings and fittings for B31.3 applications should also be reviewed by the piping system designer for the specific application. Victaulic grooved end products will be acceptable on applications within the scope of the published limitations. Services such as hot and cold fluids, compressed air, and non-combustible gases are permitted provided the system temperature is within our published temperature range for the gasket utilized, and the system pressure is at or less than the published working pressure.

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### US & WORLD HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 31  
Easton, PA 18044-0031 USA

4901 Kesslersville Road  
Easton, PA 18040 USA

1-800-PICK-VIC (1-800-742-5842)  
1-610-559-3300  
1-610-250-8817 (fax)  
pickvic@victaulic.com

[www.victaulic.com](http://www.victaulic.com)

### CANADA

905-884-7444  
905-884-9774 (fax)  
viccanada@victaulic.com

### EUROPE

32-9-381-15-00  
32-9-380-44-38 (fax)  
viceuro@victaulic.be

### UNITED KINGDOM

44 (0) 1438741100  
44 (0) 1438313883 (fax)  
viceuro@victaulic.be

### CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

1-610-559-3300  
1-610-559-3608 (fax)  
vical@victaulic.com

### ASIA PACIFIC

86-21-54253300  
86-21-54253671 (fax)  
vicap@victaulic.com

### MIDDLE EAST

971-4-883-88-70  
971-4-883-88-60 (fax)



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