

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A VARIANCE

REFERENCE: Except as limited by subsection (b)(3) of Section 180.70 23 Illinois Administrative Code, when a requirement or standard set forth in any code incorporated in 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 180 can be satisfied by an alternative means, a school board may apply for a variance as defined in Section 180.30 of this Part.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF BOARD OF EDUCATION United Township High School District 30 1275 Avenue of the Cities East Moline, IL 61244	NAME OF CONTACT Janice Roome	PHONE NUMBER 309-752-1633
	COUNTY Rock Island	FAX NUMBER

NAME OF FACILITY WHICH VARIANCE IS BEING SOUGHT:

United Township High School

1. Indicate the specific rule from which a variance is being sought:

Designated building code is 2024 IBC. 2024 IBC references 2023 National Electric Code. 2023 National Electric Code, Section 240.24(E): Over Current Protection Devices.
 Refer to next page for explanation in greater detail.

2. Describe the variance being sought:

This variance is requesting that the newer version of the National Electric Code - 2026 be used in lieu of the currently referenced National Electric Code - 2023.

3. Describe proposed alternative:

The electric panel "CD", located in the Men's Locker Room, would remain in the same location that it has been located since 1958. This location does not caused safety concerns. It is located around two corners and approximately 50 feet from the Locker Room water source. This panel would be replaced with a new, modern electric panel. Refer to plan and picture, following.

4. Describe the basis upon which the board of education is seeking the variance:

This variance is requested based on using the newer version of the 2026 National Electric Code, in lieu of the currently referenced 2023 National Electric Code.

5. Indicate the date upon which the board of education adopted a resolution to seek the variance:

June 8, 2026

6. Include by attachment, the Design Professional's certification, documenting in what particular respects the proposed alternative provides performance or protection equal or superior to that provided by the code requirements from which a variance is sought.

AUTHORIZATION:

 Date Signature of President, Local Board of Education

 Date Signature of Secretary, Local Board of Education

 Date Signature of District Superintendent

RECOMMENDATION BY REGIONAL SUPERINTENDENT:

- APPROVE
 DISAPPROVE

 Date Signature of Regional Superintendent

240.24(E) Overcurrent Devices (electric panels) in Bathrooms.

2023 Code Language:

240.24(E) Not Located in Bathrooms. Overcurrent protective devices, other than supplementary overcurrent protection, shall not be located in bathrooms, showering facilities, or locker rooms with showering facilities.

2026 Code Language:

240.24(E) Not Located in Bathrooms. OCPDs, other than supplementary overcurrent protection, shall not be located in bathrooms, showering facilities, or locker rooms with showering facilities.

Exception: OCPDs shall be permitted to be installed in existing panelboards that were installed in compliance with previous editions of this code that permitted OCPDs to be installed in bathrooms.

Code Change Summary: A new exception in 240.24(E) permits OCPDs to remain in existing panelboards located in bathrooms if they were installed under previous editions of the NEC® that allowed such installations.

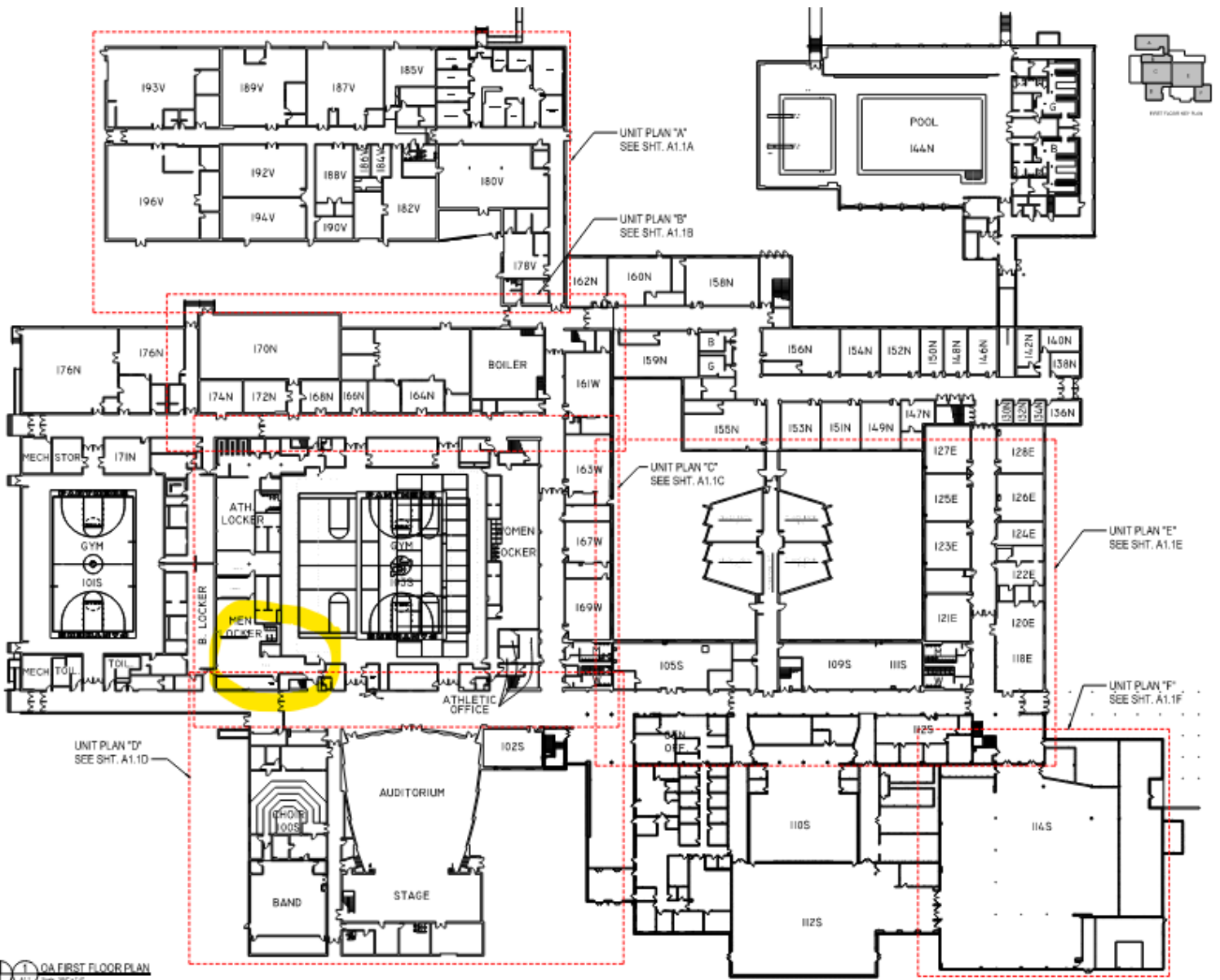
SME commentary: The addition of an exception to 240.24(E) in the 2026 NEC® resolves a gray area in the code that arose after the 2023 NEC® expanded the prohibition on overcurrent protective devices (OCPDs) in bathrooms. Prior to 2023, OCPDs were prohibited only in bathrooms of dwelling units, dormitory units, and guest rooms or guest suites. This earlier restriction did not apply to other occupancies, provided the OCPD was not a service disconnect as addressed in 230.70(A)(2).

With the 2023 revision to 240.24(E), the prohibition became broader. The specific occupancy references were deleted and the section was reworded to ban OCPDs in any bathroom, showering facility, or locker room with showering facilities. This broader language created a significant complication for code users because it retroactively called into question the compliance status of existing panelboards that had been lawfully installed in bathrooms under previous editions of the Code. For example, many commercial and industrial facilities had installed panelboards in restrooms or locker rooms prior to 2023 in full compliance with the NEC® requirements in effect at that time. Once the prohibition was broadened in 2023, questions arose when adding a branch circuit or replacing panelboard guts about whether those existing panelboards and OCPDs needed to be relocated to remain code compliant.

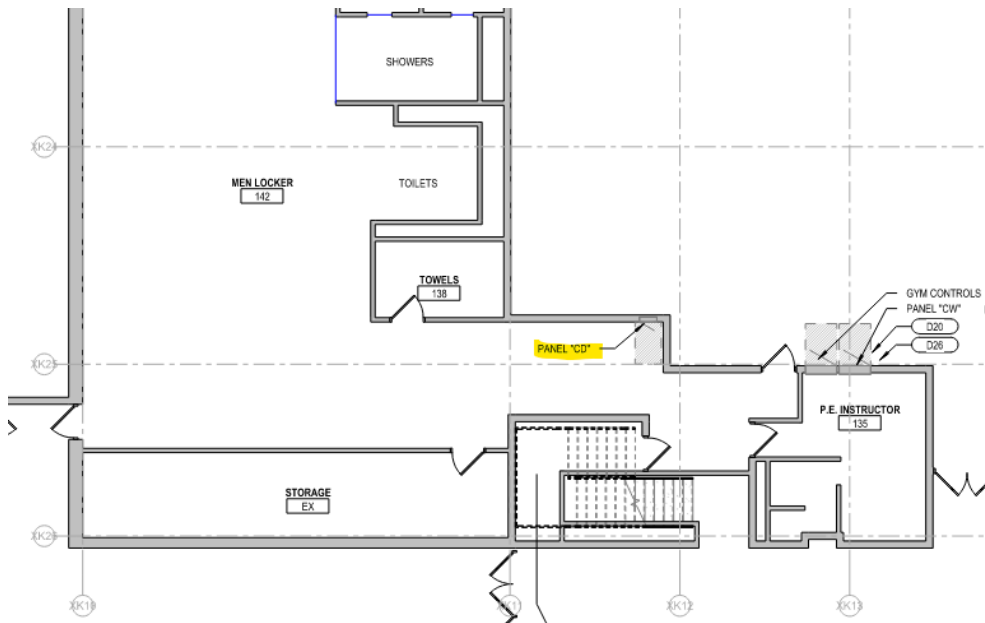
Recognizing the impact, the 2026 NEC® now introduces an important exception to 240.24(E). The exception permits OCPDs “to be installed in existing panelboards that were installed in compliance with previous editions of this code that permitted OCPDs to be installed in bathrooms”. This means that if a panelboard with OCPDs was legally placed in a bathroom under a previous edition of the Code that allowed the practice, it can continue to be used and even have new OCPDs added or replaced, without creating a violation of the current Code. The only condition is that the installation must have been compliant at the time it was made.

This change is significant for inspectors, contractors, and facility managers alike. Inspectors now have clear Code language to support leaving existing panelboards in place where they were legally installed, avoiding disputes over retroactivity. Contractors and facility managers gain assurance that ongoing maintenance or upgrades in those panelboards do not require costly and disruptive panel relocations.

The exception strikes an important balance. It upholds the 2023 NEC’s intent to prohibit new installations of OCPDs in bathrooms and showering facilities to reduce shock hazards while also providing a practical pathway for the continued use of older, code-compliant installations. This reduces unnecessary burdens on building owners and contractors while maintaining safety for future installations.



UNITED TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL



MEN'S LOCKER ROOM SHOWING ELECTRIC PANEL "CD"



Electric Panel "CD"