

SECTION XII A

AESTHETICS

Did you ever ask yourself why all electrical equipment is the same color? Who picked "battleship gray" anyway?

Unless you are installing the equipment on a battleship, it just doesn't match anything.

Did you ever complete a meter installation and wish there was a way to make it less visible?

You know the utility company's specifications are drawn for ease of installation, removal, maintenance, meter reading and safety considerations. Wouldn't it be great if, with a little planning, the equipment could also be hidden from view?

The good news is, meter pans, current transformer cabinets, end line boxes and standpipes can easily be made less visible. More "aesthetically pleasing" installations are possible. Here are some remedies you can use.

PAINTING

Let's consider the simple overhead service.

A 1½-inch shiny silver galvanized pipe extends up the side of the house for 16 to 18 feet, and a battleship gray meter pan is at eye level. Just think how much better this installation would look if it were painted to match the color of the siding. Yes, you can paint the meter pan! You may want to paint the standpipe before you install it, to keep the paint off the siding.

How about an underground service?

A 2-inch shiny silver galvanized pipe, maybe an end line box and a meter pan, all battleship gray, are right on the side of the house.

Once again, a simple coat of paint would allow the equipment to blend into the overall look of the house.

Painting is only one of the many ways that electrical equipment can be made to look better, without spending much money.

Here are some other examples of the difference a little care and planning can make.

SCREENING

Screen the equipment with shrubbery, a fence or a trellis. Our specifications for outdoor meter installations are very liberal in their requirements. Meter equipment can be as low as 2-feet to its bottom or as much as 7-feet to its top. Choose a height that can be easily screened on each house. Although for our meter installers and meter readers' sake we prefer the meter equipment to be at eye level, if aesthetics and/or field conditions warrant it, the lower height limit can be used.

We do require that the equipment be on the face of the building or as close as possible to the front.

In many cases you may have a situation where both gas and electric metering equipment are required. Yes, gas meters are also "battleship gray". These combination installations can also be screened.

GROUPING

Our requirement for spacing between gas and electric meters is 1-foot over, under or to the side when the installation is outdoor and it's residential. This allows you to group the meters in one location so that screening can be done easily. See our "Spacing Requirements" on page 32A.

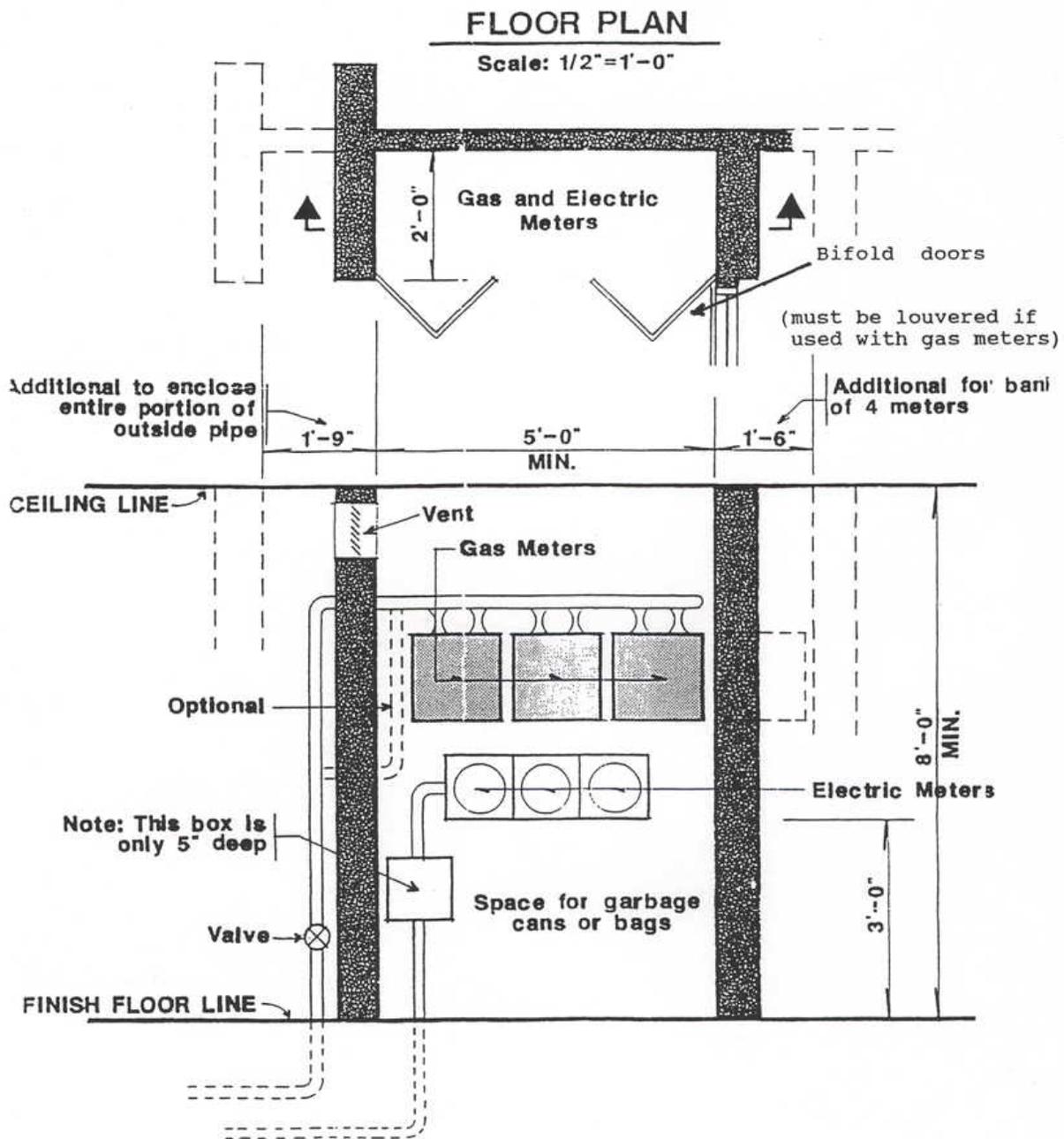
ENCLOSING

You may want to enclose the meter equipment in a meter closet or a cabinet on the side of the house. Our spacing requirements for electric meter closets are shown on page 79, Specification 528. Some grouping clearance information is also provided on pages 30 and 31. Putting gas meters or gas equipment in an enclosure is also permissible as long as it's properly ventilated and the spacing requirements of the particular installation are met. See pages 29 - 32, and the sketches on pages 40-C and 40-D. You may also want to consult us before proceeding with an enclosure.

We all have an obligation to our customers to design electric installations that are less conspicuous. It's not just up to the builders and homeowners. We should be providing them with guidance to accomplish aesthetically pleasing and unobtrusive installations.

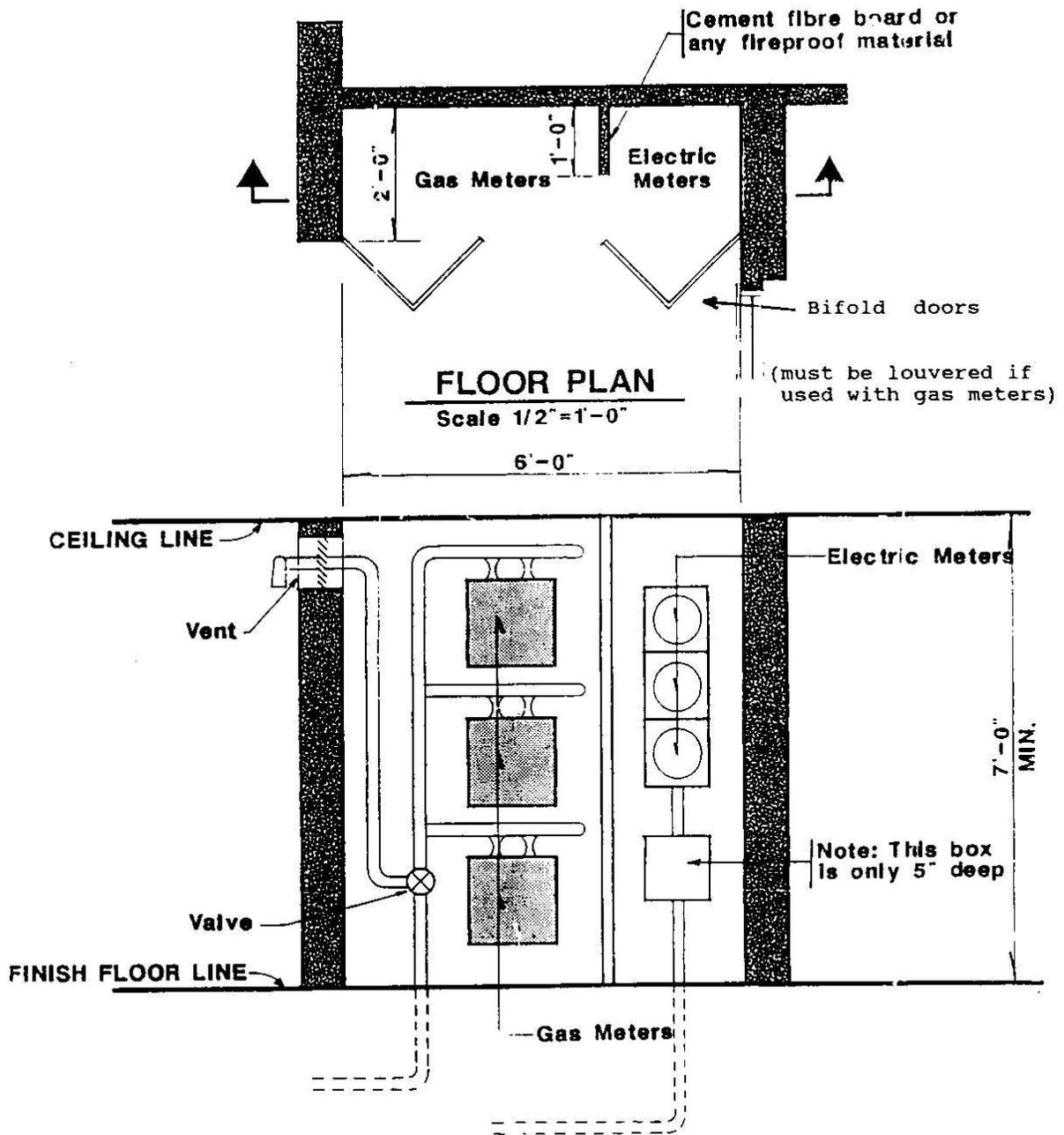
Outdoor metering is a requirement on 1, 2 and 3 family residential buildings, but with a little effort, that requirement can coexist with a pleasing installation.

The following pages provide you with actual examples of creative methods used by customers to meet our specifications in an aesthetically pleasing manner.



METER ENCLOSURE CLEARANCES

GAS METER OVER ELECTRIC METER INSTALLATION



SECTION ELEVATION

Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

METER ENCLOSURE CLEARANCES

SIDE BY SIDE INSTALLATION



Example of painting, grouping and screening

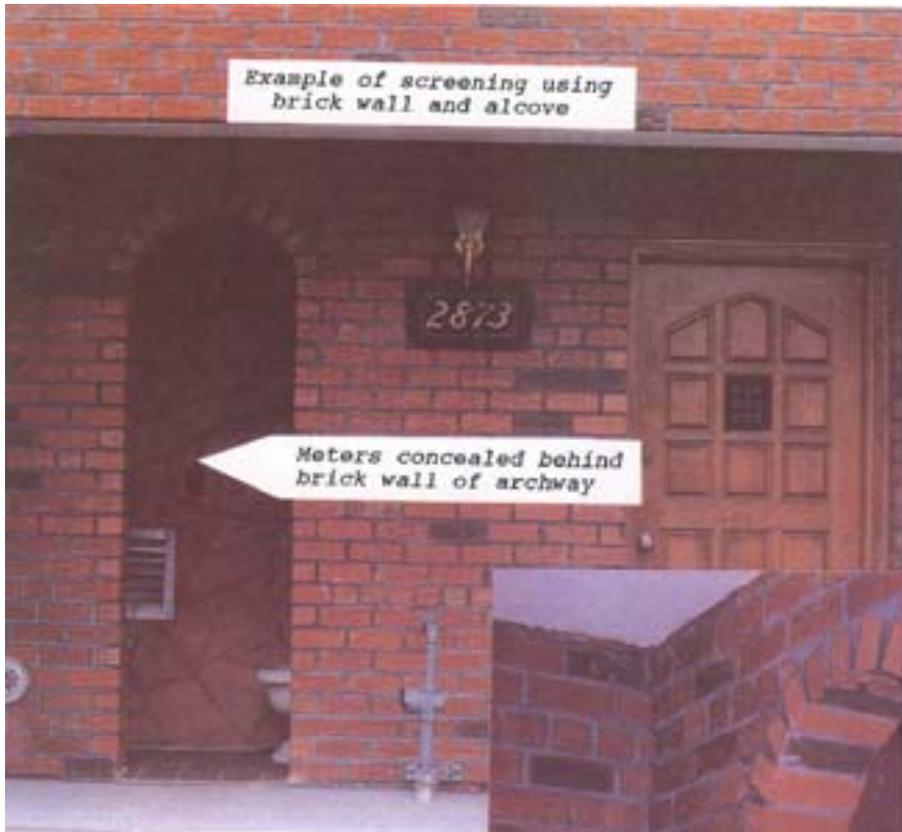
Equipment painted to blend in with brick

Gas meters behind shrubs



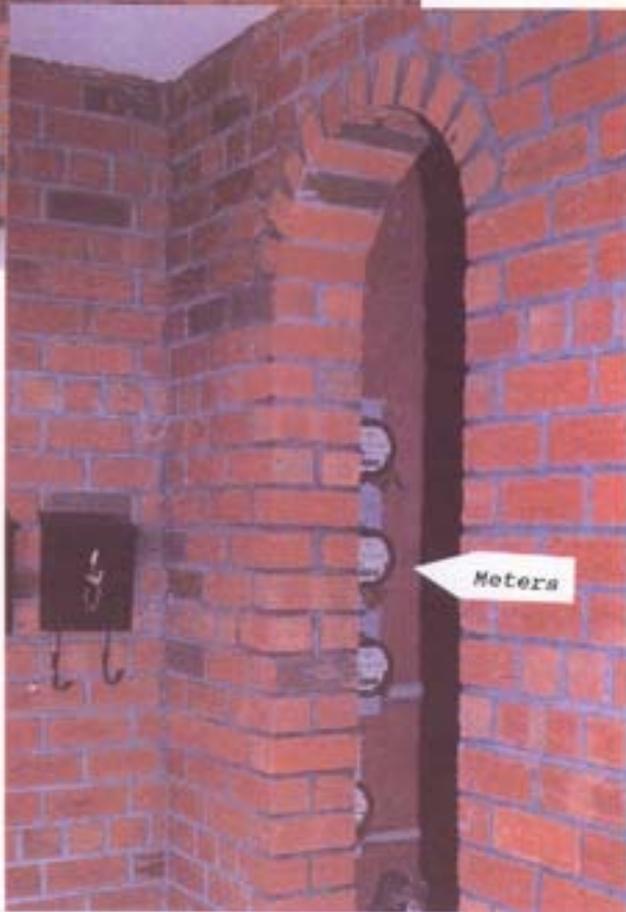
Example of grouping
and screening

Brick wall screens
meters from view



Example of screening using brick wall and alcove

Meters concealed behind brick wall of archway



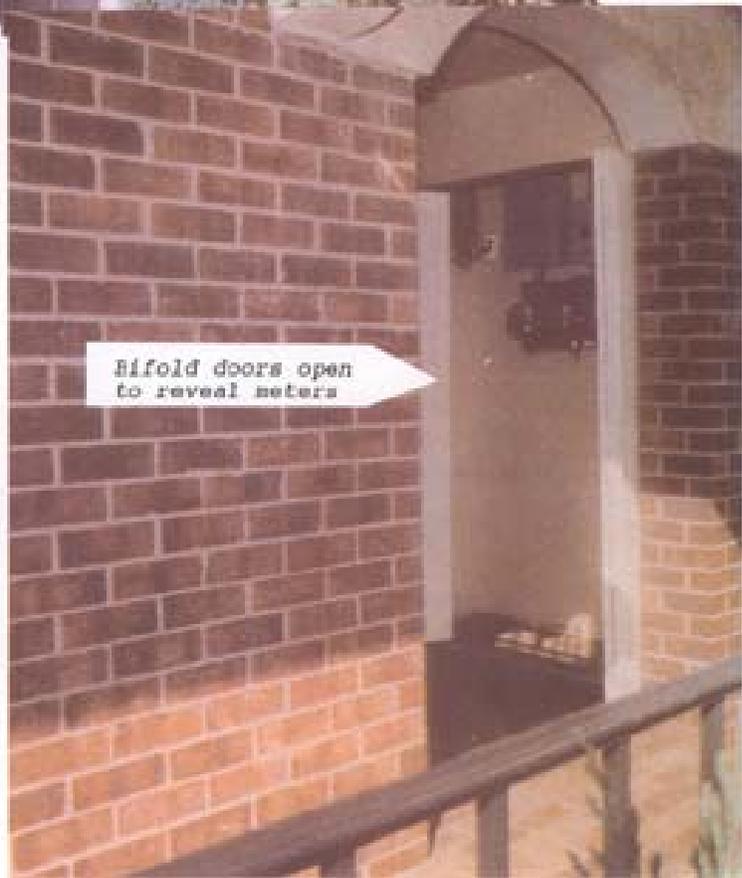
Meters





Example of enclosing

Gas and Electric meters hidden behind bifold doors



Bifold doors open to reveal meters

