
This technical bulletin is being provided to you by Bussmann in an effort to clear up the misinformation surrounding the use of rotary disconnects in the machine control panels assembled per the requirements in the 2002 edition of NFPA79, the Electrical Standard for Industrial Machinery.

THE CONFUSION: Can I use rotary disconnects per the upcoming NFPA79 2002 edition?

THE ANSWER: YES

Here is the issue and requirement that is upcoming in the 2002 NFPA79. First of all, rotary disconnects are not the issue, the issue is the use of a disconnecting means which uses a through the door operator and door mounted handle. This includes rotary disconnects, circuit breakers, and molded case switches - NOT JUST ROTARY DISCONNECTS. Members of the committee voiced a safety concern with the loss of control of the disconnecting means when a door mounted handle was defeated while the disconnecting means is on. When the door is opened, the handle swings away from the operating mechanism of the disconnecting means and, should something happen, operation of the disconnecting means is not easily achieved and a safety concern existed.

In order to address this, the committee accepted, in principle, a proposal from Bussmann®. The proposal allows the use of a disconnecting means with door mounted handles, provided a lockable internal handle is supplied in addition to the door mounted handle. With this setup, the disconnecting means is operable with the door open or closed and, lockable with the door open or closed.

Additional confusion over this issue lies in the fact that not all rotary disconnects use through the door operators. There are flange operated and side operated versions that will meet the requirements of the proposed NFPA79 2002 on this issue without any additional parts being added. Bussmann offers both versions.

SUMMARY: Rotary disconnects will be allowed in the upcoming 2002 edition of NFPA79. Rotary disconnects that use door mounted handles will be allowed if an internal locking means and operating means is provided in addition to the door mounted handle. Rotary disconnects that are side operated or flange operated are allowed without any additional parts required.

For Further Information on this Issue:
- Contact your local Bussmann District Sales Engineer
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- Visit Bussmann’s Website at www.bussmann.com

NEXT ISSUE: UL1077 Supplementary Protectors