



Replacement In Kind: Mechanical Systems

Replacing Mechanical Systems In-Kind

Although a key component of the preservation philosophy is to replace material in-kind great latitude is given with the replacement of service mechanical systems because of their use, code issues, and system integrity and longevity. Even though a system may no longer be viable and replacing in-kind is not feasible due to code or safety considerations it is very important to consider the historical and interpretive importance of the system before removal.

The following are guidelines to help staff plan their projects and determine the levels of retention that is appropriate.

General Guidelines for Replacing Mechanical Systems In-Kind

- Systems installed before the acquisition of the property by Historic New England should be considered part of the historic fabric of the structure and will be referred to as a “historic system”.
- The primary option for historic systems no longer in use is to deactivate the system and leave all the components in situ.
- Any visible historic system located above the basement level, whether the space is currently designated museum or other, should be considered part of the historic fabric and great lengths should be taken to preserve the integrity or appearance of that system.
- Historic system components hidden behind the walls or otherwise not in general public view should also be considered part of the historic fabric of the system.
 - It is recognized that limited opportunities and space for upgrades may inhibit the ability to save the material.
- Historic systems located in the basement should also be retained as a record. Due to the generally open structure of a basement it may be possible to work around those systems and leave them in situ.
- Historic systems should be documented in situ with diagrams and photographs. If removal is ultimately deemed necessary appropriate samples should be retained.

These guidelines should be generally applied to mechanical systems such as: telephone, call systems and other communication wiring, electric systems, water and waste systems, and heating and cooling systems.

Specific guidelines have been created for:

- Electrical Systems
- Water and Waste Lines