NEC 2020 CODE UPDATES

The adoption of the **2020 National Electrical Code (NEC)** introduced significant changes that directly impact the design, labeling, and construction of service equipment across the electrical industry. These updates, driven by enhanced safety requirements, improved access for first responders and more defined compartmentalization of energized components. We have taken a proactive, engineering-led approach to aligning our product portfolio with NEC 2020 requirements.

Industry Context: NEC 2020 Adoption

NEC 2020 revisions impact service equipment used in residential and light commercial applications nationwide. While adoption varies by state and local jurisdiction, many markets have already implemented or are in the process of adopting the 2020 code cycle. Because utility specifications and inspection requirements can vary, distributors should continue to confirm local serving utility requirements prior to ordering or installation.

Relevant Code Change #1 | Emergency Disconnect - NEC 230.85

Section 230.85 requires that one- and two-family dwellings include an outdoor, readily accessible emergency disconnect. The intent is to enable first responders to disconnect power quickly in emergency situations without waiting for utility intervention. If multiple disconnects are provided, they must be grouped and properly marked. Disconnects must be labeled as one of the following:

- EMERGENCY DISCONNECT, SERVICE DISCONNECT
- EMERGENCY DISCONNECT, METER DISCONNECT, NOT SERVICE EQUIPMENT
- EMERGENCY DISCONNECT, NOT SERVICE EQUIPMENT

Milbank's Response to NEC 230.85

Milbank has fully implemented Section 230.85(1) labeling requirements across all applicable meter main products. Milbank meter mains are 100% compliant with Section 230.85(1). For distributors, this means reduced compliance uncertainty, simplified specification and ordering, and increased confidence when serving jurisdictions enforcing **NEC 2020**. All Milbank meter mains are marked in accordance with NEC 230.85 (1). Emergency disconnect labeling has been standardized across compliant products, and no field modifications are required.

Service Equipment (Enclosed or Guarded) - NEC 230.62(A), (B), & (C)

Relevant Code Change #2

Section 230.62 strengthens requirements related to inadvertent contact with energized parts within service equipment. Key updates include that energized parts must be enclosed or guarded, barriers must prevent exposure to uninsulated, ungrounded service busbars or terminals, and guarded installations must include provisions for locking or sealing - all with the goal to significantly reduce risk during servicing of load terminations.

Engineering Implications

Unlike labeling changes, compliance with **Section 230.62** often requires structural redesign. Some changes require verification by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL), such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). These structural redesigns include:

- Addition of plastic insulators and barriers
- Internal sheet metal modifications
- Formed insulator integration
- Factory process changes
- Potential product size adjustments

Milbank's Solutions

Milbank has implemented multiple compliance strategies across affected product lines. These solutions are engineered to maintain product reliability, minimize dimensional disruption where possible, and support compliance without sacrificing installation efficiency. For distributors, this ensures continuity of product availability while meeting evolving safety standards.

- **Breaker-Fed Designs:** Breaker set screws are filled with compliant plugs, wire insulation stripping processes have been modified, and line-side live parts have been completely isolated.
- **Aluminum Bus Designs:** Molded plastic snap-in bus barriers with a secondary snap-in barrier at center opening. Bus sections have been fully isolated.
- **Large Frame Breaker Designs:** Added Formex™ insulators covering live parts, extended sheet metal barriers beneath dead-front, and included raceway opening coverage where required.

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Two to Six Service Disconnecting Means - NEC 230.71

Relevant Code Change #3

Section 230.71(B) modifies requirements for multi-disconnect installations. Disconnecting means must now be installed within separate compartments, each isolated to prevent incidental contact when servicing adjacent sections. The emphasis is on physical compartmentalization and barrier separation. Acceptable configurations include:

- Separate enclosures
- Panelboards with individual main disconnects
- Switchboards with separated vertical sections
- Metering centers with isolated compartments

Milbank's Implementation

Milbank horizontal meter mains now include full-depth sheet metal dividers, front-to-back compartment isolation, and individual service disconnect separation. These changes ensure code-compliant compartmentalization, safer servicing conditions, and Alignment with UL 67 requirements for metering centers. **NEC 2020** introduces higher safety standards and more defined structural requirements. For distributors, this translates into increased customer education needs, more complex product selection considerations, and greater emphasis on verified compliance.

Utility and Jurisdiction Considerations

While Milbank products are designed to meet **NEC 2020** requirements, distributors should continue to consult:

- Local serving utilities
- Local electrical inspectors
- Jurisdictional adoption schedules

Specifications and approvals vary by region and may require additional verification. For project-specific questions or regional approvals, contact your local Milbank sales representative.

The Bottom Line

The **NEC 2020** updates represent a meaningful shift in service equipment safety and design. Rather than reacting to code changes, Milbank has taken a proactive approach, integrating compliant labeling, engineered barriers, structural compartmentalization, and NRTL validation into our product portfolio. For our distribution partners, this means reliable, code-aligned inventory, reduced compliance risk, simplified specification support, and continued trust in Milbank engineering Milbank remains committed to supporting distributors with NEC-compliant solutions and technical expertise.

NEC 2020 Updates Video

For more information on NEC 2020 Code updates, watch our full video by scanning the QR Code.

NEC 2020 Updates White Paper

For more information on NEC 2020 Code updates, read our full white paper by scanning the QR code.

Learn more about our NEC 2020 compliant products by visiting **milbankworks.com.**