



PRESSURE, TEMPERATURE AND DIFFERENTIAL PRESSURE SWITCH SELECTION

Before making your selection, consider the following:

1. Actuator

The actuator responds to changes in pressure, temperature or differential pressure and operates the switch element in response to these changes.

The actuator is normally exposed to process fluid and must therefore be chemically compatible with it. The following may be used to help select actuator type:

For nominal pressure ranges 0-15 psi through 0-3000 psi, the standard actuator is a diaphragm-sealed piston. In this actuator, process pressure acting on the piston area causes it to overcome the adjustment spring force and actuate a snap-action switch. A diaphragm and O-ring seal the process media from this mechanism. These are available in various materials, i.e.: Buna N, Teflon and Viton. The standard process connection is stainless steel. Optional monel pressure connection is available.

For H_2O Pressure and Differential Pressure Ranges, a diaphragm actuator is used. In this design, the standard pressure connections are carbon steel. Diaphragms are available in Viton, Buna N and Teflon. Always review process temperature limits before making seal selections.

Optional stainless steel pressure connections are available (option XTA).

For High Differential Pressure Actuator Ranges, 3-15 to 60-600 psid, a Dual Diaphragm-Sealed Piston Actuator is used. This actuator is designed for high static-pressure applications. The standard pressure connections are nickel-plated brass. Diaphragms are available in Viton, Buna N and Teflon. Always review process temperature limits before making seal selections. Optional stainless steel pressure connections are available (option XUD).

For all temperature ranges the standard Ashcroft® temperature actuator operates on the vapor pressure principle: the vapor pressure in a sealed thermal system is applied to a sensing element, which in turn actuates a switch. This is known as a SAMA Class II system. Various filling materials are used, including Propane, Butane, Methyl Alcohol, N Propyl Alcohol and Xylene. High overtemperature capability is possible with this type of system. The interface between liquid and vapor is the point at which sensing occurs. This is the "sensitive" portion of the bulb. Bulb extensions and capillary are normally filled with vapor, and have little effect on the setpoint, regardless of ambient temperature variations; therefore, no ambient compensation is required. For best results, the bulb should be mounted within 60 degrees of vertical to assure the liquid remains in the bulb.

2. Enclosure

The enclosure protects the switch element and mechanism from the environment and has provisions for mounting and wiring. All Ashcroft switch enclosures are epoxy-coated aluminum or stainless steel for maximum corrosion resistance. Choose between watertight NEMA 4, 4X for most industrial applications and explosion-proof NEMA 7/9 for most process applications.

Ashcroft enclosures include watertight cover gaskets, external mounting holes and one or two $\frac{3}{4}$ NPT electrical conduit holes for ease of installation. Pressure switches may also be mounted directly to the process by means of the standard $\frac{1}{4}$ NPTF or optional $\frac{1}{2}$ NPT pressure connection.

Note: When installing Ashcroft switches, refer to instruction sheets included with each switch, the National Electrical Code, and any other local codes or requirements to assure safety.

3. The Switching Function

Next, consider the switching function. Most applications for alarm and shutdown are satisfied by single setpoint, fixed deadband models. For high/low or alarm and shutdown, the dual setpoint models may be selected. For pump, compressor, level and other control applications, an adjustable deadband model is often the best choice.

4. The Switch Element

Finally, the electrical switching element must be compatible with the electrical load being switched. For ease of selection, all electrical

switching elements are snap acting, SPDT (single pole-double throw), or 2 (SPDT). Select a switch element with electrical rating that exceeds the electrical rating of the device being controlled by the switch. For better reliability and safety, optional Hermetically Sealed switching elements may be specified.

ADDITIONAL SWITCH TERMINOLOGY

Accuracy – (See repeatability) Accuracy normally refers to conformity of an indicated value to an accepted standard value. There is no indication in switch products; thus, instead, the term repeatability is used as the key performance measure. Ashcroft switch accuracy is 1% of nominal range.

Automatic Reset Switch – Switch which returns to normal state when actuating variable (Pressure or Temperature) is reduced.

Adjustable or Operating Range – That part of the nominal range over which the switch setpoint may be adjusted. Normally about 15% to 100% of the nominal range for pressure and differential pressure switches and the full span for temperature switches.

Burst Pressure – The maximum pressure that may be applied to a pressure switch without causing leakage or rupture. This is normally at least 400% of nominal range for Ashcroft switches. Switches subjected to pressures above the nominal range can be permanently damaged.

Deadband – The difference between the setpoint and the reset point, normally expressed in units of the actuating variable. Sometimes referred to as differential.

Division 1 – A National Electrical Code Classification of hazardous locations. In Division 1 locations, hazardous concentrations of flammable gases or vapors exist continuously, intermittently or periodically under normal conditions; frequently because of repair or maintenance operation/leakage or due to breakdown or faulty operation of equipment or processes which might also cause simultaneous failure of electrical equipment. Explosion-proof NEMA 7/9 enclosures are required in Division 1 locations.

Division 2 – A National Electrical Code Classification of Hazardous locations. In Division 2 hazardous locations, flammable or volatile liquid or flammable gases are handled, processed or used, but will normally be confined within closed containers or closed systems from which they can escape only in case of accidental rupture or breakdown or in case of abnormal operation of equipment. Either Nema 7/9 explosion-proof enclosures or any enclosure with hermetically sealed switch contacts may be used in Division 2 locations.

Explosion Proof – A term commonly used in industry referring to enclosures capable of withstanding an internal explosion of a specified gas without igniting surrounding gases. Strict installation practices in accordance with the national electrical code are also required for safety.

Fixed Deadband – The difference between the setpoint and the reset point of a pressure or temperature switch. It further signifies that this deadband is a fixed function of the pressure switch and not adjustable.

Hermetically Sealed Switch – A switch element whose contacts are completely sealed from the environment to provide additional safety and reliability. Contact arc cannot cause an explosion and atmospheric corrosive elements cannot affect the contacts.

Manual Reset Switch – Pressure or Temperature switch in which contacts remain actuated even after the actuating variable returns to normal. On Ashcroft manual reset switches, a button must be pushed to reset the contacts.

National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) – This group has defined several categories of enclosures, usually referred to as “types.” Further, they designate certain features and capabilities each type must include. For example, among other features, a NEMA 4 enclosure must include a threaded conduit connector, external mounting provision and cover gaskets. When selecting a NEMA 4 enclosure from any manufacturer, a buyer is assured of receiving these features.

NEMA 4 – Watertight and dusttight enclosures intended for use indoors or outdoors to protect the equipment against splashing, falling or hose-directed water, external condensation and water seepage. They are also sleet-resistant.

NEMA 4X – Watertight, dusttight and corrosion-resistant enclosures with same qualifications as NEMA 4, but with added corrosion resistance.

NEMA 7 – Enclosures for indoor Class I, Division 1 hazardous locations with gas or vapor atmospheres.

NEMA 9 – Enclosures for indoor Class II, Division 1 hazardous locations with combustible dust atmospheres.

Normal Switch Position – Contact position before actuating pressure (or variable) is applied. Normally closed contacts open when the switch is actuated. Normally open contacts close when the switch is actuated.

Normally Closed – Refers to switch contacts that are closed in the normal switch state or position (unactuated). A pressure change opens the contacts.

Normally Open Switch – Refers to the contacts that are open in the normal switch state or position (unactuated). A pressure change closes the contacts.

Overpressure Rating(s) – A nonspecific term that could refer to either burst or proof pressure, or both.

Proof Pressure – The maximum pressure which may be applied without causing damage. This is determined under strict laboratory conditions including controlled rate of change and temperature: This value is for reference only. Consult factory for applications where switch must operate at pressures above nominal range or reference temperature (70°F).

Repeatability (Accuracy) – The closeness of agreement among a number of consecutive measurements of the output setpoint for the same value of the input under the same operating conditions, approaching from the same direction, for full-range traverses. Ashcroft switch repeatability is 1% of nominal range.

Note: It is usually measured as nonrepeatability and expressed as repeatability in percent of span or nominal range. It does not include hysteresis or deadband.

Reset Point – The reset point is the Pressure, Temperature or Differential Pressure Value where the electrical switch contacts will return to their original or normal position after the switch has activated.

Setpoint – The setpoint is the Pressure, Temperature or Differential Pressure value at which the electrical circuit of a switch will change state or actuate. It should be specified either on increase or decrease of that variable. (See also reset point.)

Single-Pole Double Throw (SPDT) Switching Element – A SPDT switching element has one normally open, one normally closed, and one common terminal. The switch can be wired with the circuit either normally open (N/O) or normally closed (N/C). SPDT is standard with most Ashcroft pressure and temperature switches.

Snap Action – In switch terminology, snap action generally refers to the action of contacts in the switch element. These contacts open and close quickly and snap closed with sufficient pressure to firmly establish an electrical circuit. The term distinguishes products from mercury bottle types that were subject to vibration problems.

Static Pressure – For differential pressure switches, static pressure refers to the lower of the two pressures applied to the actuator.