

Old-style electrical distribution box for cold storage



Overview

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Key Takeaways

Old-style electrical distribution boxes for cold storage are typically porcelain or metal junction boxes with surface-mounted or flush-mounted designs, often featuring multiple inlets and knockout entries for wiring.

Types and Materials

Porcelain and metal boxes were commonly used in older cold storage facilities due to their durability and resistance to moisture and low temperatures. Porcelain boxes often have plastic or metal inlets, while aged metal boxes may include black or white porcelain outlets for switches and connections. These boxes are designed for surface installation or flush mounting, depending on the original setup.

Dimensions and Features

Vintage boxes vary in size, with common dimensions including:

- 78 x 43 mm (3.1 x 1.7 in.) with four plastic inlets and six knockout entries
- 95 x 45 mm (3.7 x 1.8 in.) for slightly larger connections



- 125 x 175 x 50 mm (4.92 x 6.89 x 1.97 in.) for multi-element setups Many old-style boxes were designed to accommodate multiple circuits or switches, making them suitable for cold storage environments where multiple refrigeration units or lighting circuits were needed.

Sourcing Options

- Antique and vintage marketplaces: eBay and Etsy offer a variety of collectible and functional vintage electrical boxes, including porcelain fuse boxes, bakelite plugs, and industrial brass switches .
- Specialty retro-style suppliers: Sekelskifte provides high-quality retro-inspired junction boxes that replicate early 20th-century designs, suitable for both decorative and functional use .
- Modern old-work boxes: Amazon and hardware stores sell retrofit-compatible old work boxes in plastic or PVC, which can be used to replace or upgrade older installations while meeting current safety standards .

Considerations for Cold Storage

When selecting an old-style electrical box for cold storage:

- Ensure material resistance to low temperatures and moisture. Porcelain and metal are preferred over standard plastic.
- Verify compatibility with modern wiring and circuit requirements, especially if retrofitting.
- Consider surface-mounted designs for easier maintenance in cold storage environments.
- Check for multiple knockout entries to accommodate complex wiring setups typical in refrigeration systems. By combining vintage aesthetics with functional durability, these old-style electrical boxes can maintain the historical look of a cold storage facility while ensuring safe and reliable electrical distribution.

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