


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0008

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	July 16, 2024
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Unsupported height of foundation wall
Keywords:	Unsupported, height, foundation wall
Building Code Reference(s):	9.15.4.2.(1), Table 9.15.4.2.-A, 9.15.4.3.
Question:	<p>Does Table 9.15.4.2.-A limit the height of foundation walls to 3m for Part 9 buildings when the foundation walls are constructed of solid concrete, concrete core in flat insulating concrete form, or unreinforced concrete block walls?</p>
Interpretation:	<p>Interpretation:</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>The columns entitled “Height of Foundation Wall Laterally Supported 4 to 6 of Table 9.15.4.2.-A indicates the maximum height of a foundation wall when it is laterally supported at the top in accordance with Article 9.15.4.3.</p> <p>Rows 4 to 15 of columns 4 to 6 of Table 9.15.4.2.-A indicate the maximum height of finished ground level above the basement floor or crawl space ground cover (i.e. the maximum allowable height of soil which is retained by the foundation wall).</p> <p>The scope of Part 9 limits the height of a foundation wall to 3m when it is supported at the top in accordance with Article 9.15.4.3.</p> <p>For example, a 300 mm thick solid concrete wall with a maximum height of 3m can retain up to 2.85 m of soil. Refer to Table 9.15.4.2.-A on the following page.</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p>
<p>The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local <i>Authority Having Jurisdiction</i>. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</p>	

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Table 9.15.4.2.-A
Thickness of Solid Concrete, Concrete Core in Flat Wall Insulating Concrete Form and Unreinforced Concrete Block Foundation Walls
Forming Part of Sentence 9.15.4.2.(1)

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	Maximum Height of Finished Ground Above <i>Basement Floor or Crawl Space Ground Cover, m</i>				ROW		
		Type of <i>Foundation Wall</i>	Minimum Thickness of Concrete or Concrete Block, mm	Height of <i>Foundation</i> Wall Laterally Unsupported at the Top (1) (2) COLUMN 3	Height of <i>Foundation</i> Wall Laterally Supported at the Top (1) (2)			2
				≤ 3.0 m	4	5	6	3
Solid concrete and concrete core in flat wall insulating concrete forms, (3) 15 MPa min. strength	150	0.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	4		
	200	1.2	2.15	2.15	2.1			
	250	1.4	2.3	2.6	2.5			
	300	1.5	2.3	2.6	2.85			
Solid concrete and concrete core in flat wall insulating concrete forms, (3) 20 MPa min. strength	150	0.8	1.8	1.6	1.6			
	200	1.2	2.3	2.3	2.2			
	250	1.4	2.3	2.6	2.85			
	300	1.5	2.3	2.6	2.85			
Unreinforced concrete block	140	0.6	0.8	-	-			
	190	0.9	1.2	(4)	(4)			
	240	1.2	1.8	(4)	(4)			
	290	1.4	2.2	-	-	15		

Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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