


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0122

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date:	September 16, 2025
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Foamed Plastic Insulation on the Inside Face of a Concrete Wall
Keywords:	Foamed plastic, insulation, concrete, wall
Building Code Reference(s):	3.2.3.8.(1) & (3), 3.1.5.5.(2), 3.1.5.6.(1)(b)(ii)
Questions: <p>An exposing building face is constructed as a solid concrete wall with foamed plastic insulation on the inside face of the wall and 12mm gypsum board on the inside face of the foamed plastic insulation.</p> <p>Is this foamed plastic insulation permitted in an exposing building face in a sprinklered building that is > 3 storeys in building height when the maximum permitted area of unprotected openings in Tables 3.2.3.1.-D to 3.2.3.1.-E is less than 10%?</p>	
Interpretation: <p>Yes.</p> <p>In a building that is more than 3 storeys in building height, Sentence 3.2.3.8.(1) permits the use of foamed plastic insulation in an exposing building face when the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The maximum permitted area of unprotected openings is greater than 10%, and• The exterior surface of the exposing building is protected with either:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Concrete or masonry not less than 25 mm thick, or○ Noncombustible material that meets the criteria stated in 3.2.3.8.(2) when tested to CAN/ULC S101. <p>Sentence 3.2.3.8.(3) waives the requirements of Sentence 3.2.3.8.(1) for wall assemblies that comply with the requirements of Article 3.1.5.5., with reference to Not A-3.1.4.1.(1).</p> <div><hr/></div> <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> <p>2025-09-26</p>	

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Article 3.1.5.5. applies to Combustible Cladding on Exterior Walls. Since this wall assembly has noncombustible cladding, Article 3.1.5.5. does not apply.

For this wall assembly, the concrete wall itself fully complies with the requirements of Subsection 3.2.3. since it is noncombustible construction, noncombustible cladding and has a fire-resistance rating of either 1 hour or 2 hour as applicable.

The addition of foamed plastic insulation on the inside face as part of the furring system does not compromise the fire performance of the solid concrete wall with respect to protection of the exterior building face as required by Article 3.2.3.8.



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

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