

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0144

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 2

Interpretation Date:	February 17, 2026
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Vertical exterior cladding with horizontal furring
Keywords:	Rainscreen capillary cavity, face sealed cladding
Building Code Reference(s):	9.27.2.2.(1); 9.27.2.2.(5); 9.27.2.2.(6); 9.27.3.6.
Question:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In areas that do not require capillary breaks, does horizontal furring installed directly on the sheathing membrane comply with the second plane of protection as required by Subclause 9.27.2.3.(1)(b)(ii)?2. In areas where capillary breaks are required and horizontal furring is installed for the attachment of the cladding, is vertical furring required to be installed first against the sheathing membrane before the horizontal furring?
Interpretation:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No (with exception). <p>Sentences 9.27.2.2.(5) and 9.27.2.2.(6) describe the only climatic zones, building types and exterior wall construction which waives the requirement for a capillary break.</p> <p>The Code does not explicitly prohibit horizontal furring installed directly onto the sheathing membrane where capillary breaks are not required. The issue is whether that configuration meets the performance of the second plane of protection.</p> <p>Subclause 9.27.2.3.(1)(b)(ii) requires the second plane of protection to “effectively dissipate any rain or snow to the exterior. The second plane of protection is typically provided by the sheathing membrane. Even if a capillary break is not required, the second plane of protection still must be capable to drain the water that past the first plane to the exterior. Horizontal furring installed directly on the sheathing membrane may block the drainage plane and undermining the performance of the second plane.</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>	

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0144

INTERPRETATION

Page 2 of 2

Horizontal furring installed directly on sheathing membrane alone is not considered as meeting the intent of the second plane to effectively dissipate any rain or snow to the exterior unless additional design detail or performance evidence shows the horizontal furring installation meets the second plane requirements.

2. Yes.

In areas where capillary breaks are required by Article 9.27.2.2. the wall must include a capillary break that prevents capillary transfer of water, and allows water to drain downward to the exterior. Sentence 9.27.2.2.(1) requires “a drained and vented air space not less than 9.5 mm deep behind the cladding, over the full height and width of the wall”.

Horizontal furring when installed directly against the sheathing membrane interrupts drain path downward so the water is forced to move laterally. By installing vertical furring against the sheathing membrane, it creates a continuous vertical drainage cavity.

Horizontal furring can be installed on top of the vertical furring to support cladding without compromising drainage.

Please also refer to Interpretation 18-0007 RV1 regarding fire blocking.



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

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 *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.