Attachment of Exterior Wall Coverings Through Foam Sheathing to Wood or Steel Wall Framing

Installation Instructions
Revised August 31, 2018
Applied Building Technology Group (ABTG) is committed to using sound science and generally accepted engineering practice to develop research supporting the reliable design and installation of foam sheathing. ABTG’s educational program work with respect to foam sheathing is provided through a grant by the Foam Sheathing Committee (FSC) of the American Chemistry Council.

ABTG is a professional engineering firm, an approved source as defined in Chapter 2 and independent as defined in Chapter 17 of the IBC.

Foam sheathing research reports, code compliance documents, educational programs and best practices can be found at www.continuousinsulation.org.

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This presentation is based off solutions that are now recognized in the 2015 and 2018 editions of the *International Building Code (IBC)* and the *International Residential Code (IRC)*.

The code language affirms current research that has been done on the topic:

- [NYSERDA Fastening Systems for Continuous Insulation](https://example.com) (2010)
- [Baker/DOE Cladding Attachment Over Thick Exterior Insulating Sheathing](https://example.com) (2014)
Foam Plastic Insulating Sheathing (FPIS) Products

- Offered in three types:
  - Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) - ASTM C578
  - Extruded Polystyrene (XPS) - ASTM C578
  - Polyisocyanurate (Polyiso) - ASTM C1289

- Come in many thicknesses to accommodate almost any end use
  - In this situation limited to 4” thickness

- FPIS as continuous exterior insulation is seeing increased recognition in the market for compliance with the energy codes.
Attachment Methods

- Exterior wall coverings are attached directly through the FPIS into the framing or to furring attached through the FPIS to framing

- FPIS installed in accordance with:
  - [DRR No. 1303-04](#) or
  - [ABTG Report No. 1503-02](#)
  - Manufacturer’s installation instructions
  - The following general installation guidelines
Step 1: Verify FPIS and Framing

- FPIS must have min. compressive strength of 15 psi
- Must comply with ANSI/SBCA FS100 where wind pressure resistance is required

Note: Wind speeds shown in Table 1 are $V_{ASD}$. Where $V_{ULT}$ is used, multiply wind speeds by a factor of 1.26
Step 1: Verify FPIS and Framing

- Wood framing may be any softwood species with specific gravity 0.42 or higher
- Steel framing must be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thickness</th>
<th>Minimum $F_b$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33 mil, 43 mil</td>
<td>33 ksi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 mil</td>
<td>50 ksi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Verify Fasteners

- Exterior coverings may be attached through FPIS directly to structural members:
Step 2: Verify Fasteners

- Exterior coverings may be attached through FPIS to furring:

![Diagram of Cladding Attachment through Furring to Wood Stud](image1)

![Diagram of Cladding Attachment through Hat Channel Furring aligned Perpendicular to Steel Stud](image2)

![Diagram of Cladding Attachment through Wood Furring aligned Parallel to Steel Stud](image3)
Step 2: Verify Fasteners

- Exterior coverings may be attached through FPIS to wood structural panels (WSP):
Step 2: Verify Fasteners

- Fasteners must meet penetration requirements per IRC 2018 Table R703.3(1) into:
  - Framing
  - Sheathing

- Where penetration into framing is not required, fasteners must extend ¼" beyond the opposite face of the sheathing per IRC 2018 R703.3.3 & Table R703.3.3
Step 3: Place Insulation Boards

- Ensure wall is square and true
- Align boards with bottom edge of wall
Step 3: Place Insulation Boards

- Verify stud spacing, blocking, and bracing requirements with manufacturer
- Provide framing or blocking for attachment of siding and trim at transitions
  - Seams should not be visible from interior unless allowed by manufacturer
Step 4: Attach Insulation Boards

- Space fasteners per manufacturer’s instructions
  - Around edges of panel
  - Through panels and into interior members
Step 4: Attach Insulation Boards

- Drive nails flush and snug
- Do not overdrive nails
- Do not underdrive nails
  - Exception: Leave 1/32" gap (or as required by manufacturer) to allow for lengthwise thermal expansion of vinyl or aluminum siding
Step 5: Trim Boards at Openings

- Trim boards at all window and door openings
- Cover all framing with FPIS
- Fit joints tightly

FPIS
Continuous Insulation
Step 6: WRB and Flashing

- Ensure that a code compliant water-resistive barrier (WRB) and required flashing is provided
- If using FPIS as a WRB:
  - Seal all joints and openings and penetrations per manufacturer’s installation instructions
Step 6: WRB and Flashing

- At pipe and other small penetrations, seal gaps with silicone or expanding spray foam sealant
- Seal joints and openings with joint tape per manufacturer’s instructions
Step 6: WRB and Flashing

- Repair damaged areas per manufacturer’s instructions
Suggested Resources

- Cladding Attachment - ContinuousInsulation.org
- Structural Application - ContinuousInsulation.org