



Protection is a concrete idea.



INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE

AND ITS SERIOUS IMPACT ON

SINGLE WYTHE MASONRY WALLS

BY D.L. NICKERSON, P.E.
20 FEBRUARY 2007

Concrete Block Insulating Systems
P.O. Box 1000
Freight House Road
West Brookfield, MA 01585-1000

508.867.4241
800.628.8476
Fax: 508.867.5702

www.cbisinc.com
E-mail: CBISINC@AOL.COM
Member of NCMA, SPI and EPSMA

Commercial Energy Code Adoption:

The most current issue of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) is the 2006 version. (Exhibit "A"). Several states have already accepted this, while other states are in the process of adopting it. Nearly half the states have already used some version of the IECC.

Chapter 5 of the IECC (Exhibit "B"), Paragraphs 502.2.3 and 502.2.4, give the specific thermal R-value requirements for masonry walls and do not acknowledge the use of integral insulation within the cores of masonry units to determine compliance.

Section 103 – Alternate Materials for Insulation Systems (Exhibit "C") of the IECC, does allow the use of approved insulating systems if the Code Official feels those systems meet the intent of the Code.

The United States is divided into specific climate zones (Exhibit "D") by the IECC. Table 502.2 (1) (Exhibit "E") of the IECC details the thermal R-values for Building Envelope Requirements – Opaque Assemblies, based on the climate zones spelled out in Exhibit "D".

One can see the thermal R-values shown for above grade mass walls in Exhibit “E”, require a continuous insulation value or insulation over the entire face of the masonry wall, for a major portion of the United States.

Many designers seek alternate materials other than masonry, when they find the table for R-values requires single wythe masonry walls to be furred or studded out and continuously insulated in order to meet Codes.

Methods That Can be Used to Meet IECC:

Initially, the interpretation of the Code leads one to believe that single wythe masonry construction requires added costs to achieve compliance. The IECC does allow alternate methods of insulating (Exhibit “C”) and individuals should consider this approach to design with masonry.

The majority of states allow the use of the COMcheck Compliance Software Program as furnished by the United States Department of Energy (DOE) to show Code compliance, rather than the more restrictive method of using a single table (Exhibit “E”). The COMcheck Program allows the designer to select building envelope products and to trade-off R-values to achieve compliance.

Conclusion:

The designers who use single wythe masonry walls must be made aware of this potential issue. The direct contact with these individuals by NCMA published information, as well as state masonry associations' efforts are needed to prevent market share loss.

A Member of the International Code Family®



INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE®

2006

CHAPTER 5

COMMERCIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY

This chapter has been reformatted; some deletions are not marked.

SECTION 501
GENERAL

501.1 Scope. The requirements contained in this chapter are applicable to commercial buildings, or portions of commercial buildings. These commercial buildings shall meet either the requirements of ASHRAE/IESNA Standard 90.1, *Energy Standard for Buildings Except for Low-Rise Residential Buildings*, or the requirements contained in this chapter.

501.2 Application. The requirements in Sections 502 (Building envelope), 503 (Building mechanical systems), 504 (Service water heating) and 505 (Lighting) shall each be satisfied on an individual basis. Where one or more of these sections is not satisfied, compliance for that section(s) shall be demonstrated in accordance with the applicable provisions of ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1.

Exception: Buildings conforming to Section 506, provided Sections 502.4, 502.5, 503.2, 504, 505.2, 505.3, 505.4, 505.6 and 505.7 are each satisfied.

SECTION 502
BUILDING ENVELOPE REQUIREMENTS

502.1 General. (Prescriptive).

502.1.1 Insulation and fenestration criteria. The building thermal envelope shall meet the requirements of Tables 502.2(1) and 502.3 based on the climate zone specified in Chapter 3. Buildings with a vertical fenestration area or skylight area that exceeds that allowed in Table 502.3 shall comply with the building envelope provisions of ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1.

502.2 Specific insulation requirements (Prescriptive).
Opaque assemblies shall comply with Table 502.2(1).

502.2.1 Roof assembly. The minimum thermal resistance (R -value) of the insulating material installed either between the roof framing or continuously on the roof assembly shall be as specified in Table 502.2(1), based on construction materials used in the roof assembly.

Exception: Continuously insulated roof assemblies where the thickness of insulation varies 1 inch (25.4 mm) or less and where the area weighted U -factor is equivalent to the same assembly with the R -value specified in Table 502.2(1).

Insulation installed on a suspended ceiling with removable ceiling tiles shall not be considered part of the minimum thermal resistance of the roof insulation.

502.2.2 Classification of walls. Walls associated with the building envelope shall be classified in accordance with Section 502.2.2.1 or 502.2.2.2.

502.2.2.1 Above-grade walls. Above-grade walls are those walls covered by Section 502.2.3 on the exterior of

the building and completely above grade or walls that are more than 15 percent above grade.

502.2.2.2 Below-grade walls. Below-grade walls covered by Section 502.2.4 are basement or first-story walls associated with the exterior of the building that are at least 85 percent below grade.

502.2.3 Above-grade walls. The minimum thermal resistance (R -value) of the insulating material(s) installed in the wall cavity between the framing members and continuously on the walls shall be as specified in Table 502.2(1), based on framing type and construction materials used in the wall assembly. The R -value of integral insulation installed in concrete masonry units (CMU) shall not be used in determining compliance with Table 502.2(1). "Mass walls" shall include walls weighing at least (1) 35 pounds per square foot (170 kg/m²) of wall surface area or (2) 25 pounds per square foot (120 kg/m²) of wall surface area if the material weight is not more than 120 pounds per cubic foot (1,900 kg/m³).

502.2.4 Below-grade walls. The minimum thermal resistance (R -value) of the insulating material installed in, or continuously on, the below-grade walls shall be as specified in Table 502.2(1), and shall extend to a depth of 10 feet (3048 mm) below the outside finish ground level, or to the level of the floor, whichever is less.

502.2.5 Floors over outdoor air or unconditioned space. The minimum thermal resistance (R -value) of the insulating material installed either between the floor framing or continuously on the floor assembly shall be as specified in Table 502.2(1), based on construction materials used in the floor assembly.

"Mass floors" shall include floors weighing at least (1) 35 pounds per square foot (170 kg/m²) of floor surface area or (2) 25 pounds per square foot (120 kg/m²) of floor surface area if the material weight is not more than 12 pounds per cubic foot (1,900 kg/m³).

502.2.6 Slabs on grade. The minimum thermal resistance (R -value) of the insulation around the perimeter of unheated or heated slab-on-grade floors shall be as specified in Table 502.2(1). The insulation shall be placed on the outside of the foundation or on the inside of a foundation wall. The insulation shall extend downward from the top of the slab for a minimum distance as shown in the table or to the top of the footing, whichever is less, or downward to at least the bottom of the slab and then horizontally to the interior or exterior for the total distance shown in the table.

502.2.7 Opaque doors. Opaque doors (doors having less than 50 percent glass area) shall meet the applicable requirements for doors as specified in Table 502.2(1) and be considered as part of the gross area of above-grade walls that are part of the building envelope.

EXHIBIT "C"

102.1.1.1 Blown or sprayed roof/ceiling insulation. The thickness of blown in or sprayed roof/ceiling insulation (fiberglass or cellulose) shall be written in inches (mm) on markers that are installed at least one for every 300 square feet (28 m²) throughout the attic space. The markers shall be affixed to the trusses or joists and marked with the minimum initial installed thickness with numbers a minimum of 1 inch (25 mm) in height. Each marker shall face the attic access opening. Spray polyurethane foam thickness and installed *R*-value shall be listed on certification provided by the insulation installer.

102.1.2 Insulation mark installation. Insulating materials shall be installed such that the manufacturer's *R*-value mark is readily observable upon inspection.

102.1.3 Fenestration product rating. *U*-factors of fenestration products (windows, doors and skylights) shall be determined in accordance with NFRC 100 by an accredited, independent laboratory, and labeled and certified by the manufacturer. Products lacking such a labeled *U*-factor shall be assigned a default *U*-factor from Table 102.1.3(1) or 102.1.3(2). The solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) of glazed fenestration products (windows, glazed doors and skylights) shall be determined in accordance with NFRC 200 by an accredited, independent laboratory, and labeled and certified by the manufacturer. Products lacking such a labeled SHGC shall be assigned a default SHGC from Table 102.1.3(3).

**TABLE 102.1.3(1)
DEFAULT GLAZED FENESTRATION U-FACTOR**

FRAME TYPE	SINGLE PANE	DOUBLE PANE	SKYLIGHT	
			Single	Double
Metal	1.20	0.80	2.00	1.30
Metal with Thermal Break	1.10	0.65	1.90	1.10
Nonmetal or Metal Clad	0.95	0.55	1.75	1.05
Glazed Block	0.60			

**TABLE 102.1.3(2)
DEFAULT DOOR U-FACTORS**

DOOR TYPE	U-FACTOR
Uninsulated Metal	1.20
Insulated Metal	0.60
Wood	0.50
Insulated, nonmetal edge, max 45% glazing, any glazing double pane	0.35

**TABLE 102.1.3(3)
DEFAULT GLAZED FENESTRATION SHGC**

SINGLE GLAZED		DOUBLE GLAZED		GLAZED BLOCK
Clear	Tinted	Clear	Tinted	
0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6

102.2 Installation. All materials, systems and equipment shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions and the *International Building Code*.

102.2.1 Protection of exposed foundation insulation. Insulation applied to the exterior of basement walls, crawl-space walls and the perimeter of slab-on-grade floors shall have a rigid, opaque and weather-resistant protective covering to prevent the degradation of the insulation's thermal performance. The protective covering shall cover the exposed exterior insulation and extend a minimum of 6 inches (153 mm) below grade.

102.3 Maintenance information. Maintenance instructions shall be furnished for equipment and systems that require preventive maintenance. Required regular maintenance actions shall be clearly stated and incorporated on a readily accessible label. The label shall include the title or publication number for the operation and maintenance manual for that particular model and type of product.

**SECTION 103
ALTERNATE MATERIALS—METHOD
OF CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN
OR INSULATING SYSTEMS**

103.1 General. This code is not intended to prevent the use of any material, method of construction, design or insulating system not specifically prescribed herein, provided that such construction, design or insulating system has been approved by the code official as meeting the intent of this code.

103.1.1 Above code programs. The code official or other authority having jurisdiction shall be permitted to deem a national, state or local energy efficiency program to exceed the energy efficiency required by this code. Buildings approved in writing by such an energy efficiency program shall be considered in compliance with this code.

**SECTION 104
CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS**

104.1 General. Construction documents and other supporting data shall be submitted in one or more sets with each application for a permit. The code official is authorized to require necessary construction documents to be prepared by a registered design professional.

Exception: The code official is authorized to waive the requirements for construction documents or other supporting data if the code official determines they are not necessary to confirm compliance with this code.

104.2 Information on construction documents. Construction documents shall be drawn to scale upon suitable material. Electronic media documents are permitted to be submitted when approved by the code official. Construction documents shall be of sufficient clarity to indicate the location, nature and extent of the work proposed, and show in sufficient detail pertinent data and features of the building, systems and equipment as herein governed. Details shall include, but are not limited to, insulation materials and their *R*-values; fenestration *U*-factors and SHGCs; system and equipment efficiencies, types, sizes

EXHIBIT "D"

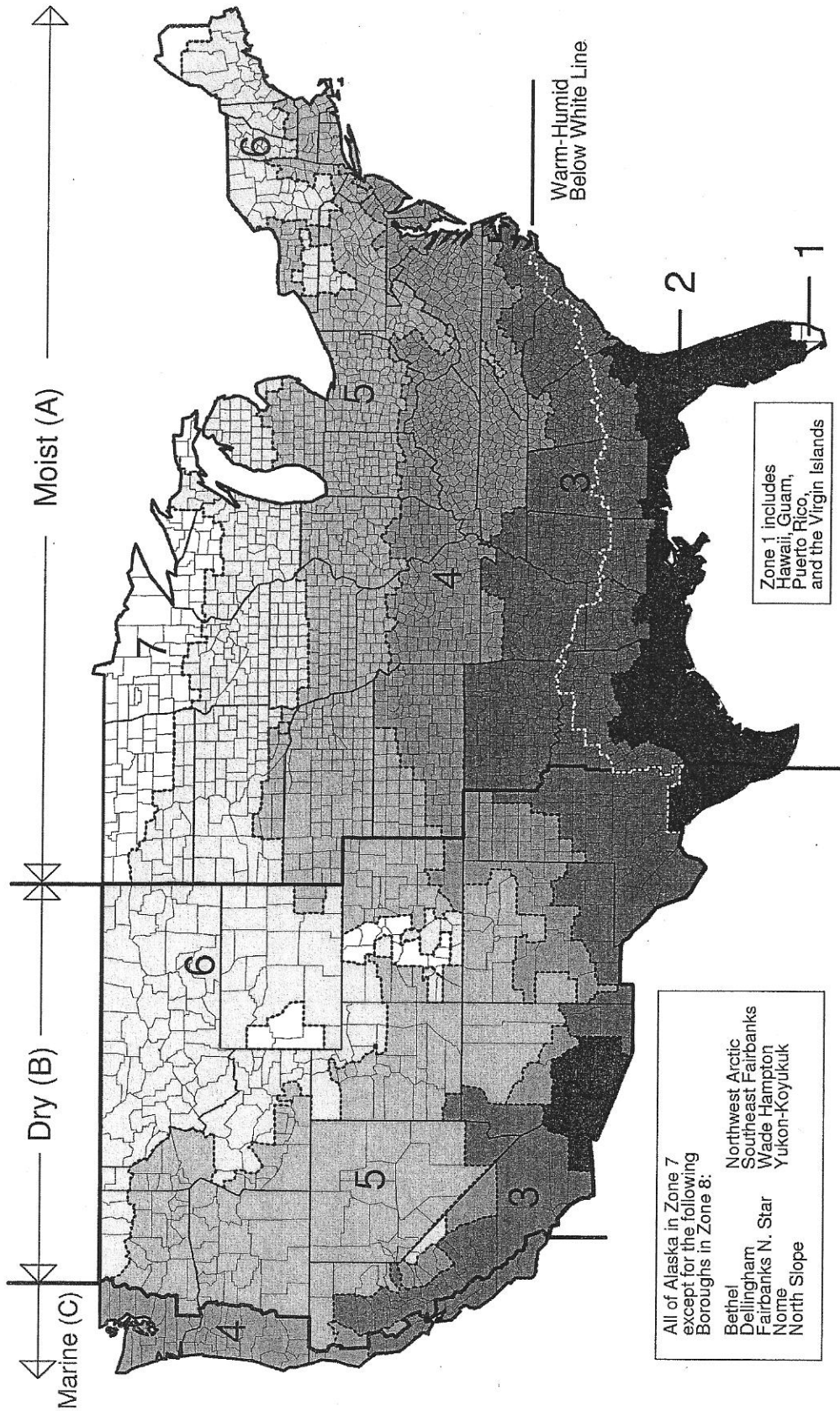


FIGURE 301.1
CLIMATE ZONES

**TABLE 502.2(1)
BUILDING ENVELOPE REQUIREMENTS – OPAQUE ASSEMBLIES**

CLIMATE ZONE	1	2	3	4 except Marine	5 and Marine 4	6	7	8
Roofs								
Insulation entirely above deck	R-15 ci	R-15 ci	R-15 ci	R-15 ci	R-20 ci	R-20 ci	R-25 ci	R-25 ci
Metal buildings (with R-5 thermal blocks ^a) ^b	R-19 + R-10	R-19	R-19	R-19	R-19	R-19	R-19 + R-10	R-19 + R-10
Attic and other	R-30	R-30	R-30	R-30	R-30	R-30	R-38	R-38
Walls, Above Grade								
Mass	NR	NR	R-5.7 ci ^{c, e}	R-5.7 ci ^c	R-7.6 ci	R-9.5 ci	R-11.4 ci	R-13.3 ci
Metal building ^b	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13 + R-13	R-13 + R-13	R-13 + R-13	R-13 + R-13
Metal framed	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13 + R-3.8 ci	R-13 + R-3.8 ci	R-13 + R-7.5 ci	R-13 + R-7.5 ci
Wood framed and other	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13	R-13 + R-7.5 ci
Walls, Below Grade								
Below grade wall ^d	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	R-7.5 ci	R-7.5 ci
Floors								
Mass	NR	R-5 ci	R-5 ci	R-10 ci	R-10 ci	R-10 ci	R-15 ci	R-15 ci
Joist/Framing	NR	R-19	R-19	R-19	R-19	R-30	R-30	R-30
Slab-on-Grade Floors								
Unheated slabs	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	R-10 for 24 in. below
Heated slabs	R-7.5 for 12 in. below	R-7.5 for 12 in. below	R-7.5 for 12 in. below	R-7.5 for 12 in. below	R-7.5 for 24 in. below	R-10 for 36 in. below	R-10 for 36 in. below	R-10 for 48 in. below
Opaque Doors								
Swinging	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.70	U - 0.50
Roll-up or sliding	U - 1.45	U - 1.45	U - 1.45	U - 1.45	U - 1.45	U - 0.50	U - 0.50	U - 0.50

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm.

ci - Continuous Insulation

NR - No Requirement

a. Thermal blocks are a minimum R-5 of rigid insulation, which extends 1-inch beyond the width of the purlin on each side, perpendicular to the purlin.

b. Assembly descriptions can be found in Table 502.2(2).

c. R-5.7 ci may be substituted with concrete block walls complying with ASTM C 90, ungrouted or partially grouted at 32 in. or less on center vertically and 48 in. or less on center horizontally, with ungrouted cores filled with material having a maximum thermal conductivity of 0.44 Btu-in./h-f² F.

d. When heated slabs are placed below grade, below grade walls must meet the exterior insulation requirements for perimeter insulation according to the heated slab-on-grade construction.

e. Insulation is not required for mass walls in Climate Zone 3A located below the "Warm-Humid" line, and in Zone 3B.