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CONFERENCE  
& TRADE SHOW  
MAY 8-9  
2018  
SALT LAKE  
CITY

AIR BARRIER EDUCATION TRACKS FOR  
THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

## Building Enclosure Commissioning

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Principal  
Wiss Janney Elstner Associates

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**fail-ure**  
/'fālyər/ ⓘ  
*noun*

- lack of success.  
"an economic policy that is doomed to failure"  
*synonyms:* lack of success, **nonfulfillment**, **defeat**, **collapse**, **foundering** [More](#)
- the omission of expected or required action.  
"their failure to comply with the basic rules"  
*synonyms:* **negligence**, **dereliction**, [More](#)

- less **resistance** to exterior environment
- less ability to **manage** infiltration
- greater **susceptibility** to problems

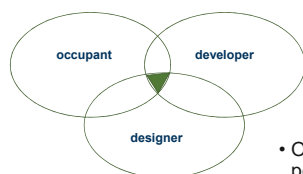
• What are the **drivers** of failure?

### Drivers – Performance

- Occupant
  - Decrease **energy** use
  - Critical facilities require **continuous operation**
- Developer
  - Whole building **integration**
  - **Schedule**
  - Adverse to **litigation**
  - **Prevention** of failure (had failure in past & not wanting to repeat)
- Designer
  - **Complex** designs and design tools



### Practice Pushing Industry



- Overlap in increased performance demands

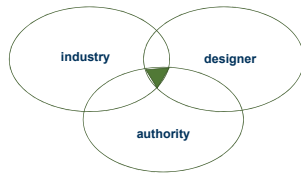


### Drivers – Materials

- Industry
  - **Competitive** environment
  - **Financial** benefit of getting product to market
  - **Proven** materials?
- Designer
  - **Misunderstanding** of material performance criteria
  - Desire to use latest "**cool**" materials
- Authority
  - More **stringent** codes



## Industry Pushing Practice



- Overlap in material options and compliance with Code criteria

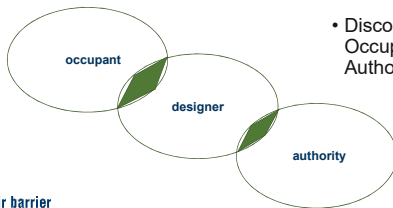
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## Drivers – Welfare & Durability

- Occupants / Owners
  - Want **healthy environment**, without disruptions
  - Want **durability** and long service
- Designer
  - Require **knowledge**
  - Challenged to stay current with **multiple** facets of buildings
- Authority
  - Lax **enforcement** of codes

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## Lack of Knowledge



- Disconnect between Occupants/Owners and Authorities

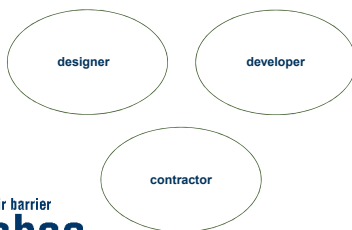
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## Drivers – Liability

- Designer
  - Pushing responsibility to Contractors (**delegation** of design)
- Developer / Owner
  - Cost **constraints**
  - **Alternative** project delivery methods
- Contractor
  - **Value engineering** of designs
  - Pushing **responsibility** to Sub-Contractors
    - Purchasing building enclosure design from **one** Sub-Contractor
    - Sub is responsible for design, coordination, quality, schedule, installation
  - **The rise of the specialty subcontractor, engineer of record, design assist and consultant**

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## Delegated Responsibility



- Total disconnect

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## ex·pe·ri·ence

/ ɪkˈspɪəriəns / ⓘ

noun

1. practical contact with and observation of facts or events  
 "he had already learned his lesson by painful experience"  
 synonyms: involvement in, participation in, contact with, acquaintance with, exposure to, observation of, awareness of, insight into  
 "his first experience of business"

verb

1. encounter or undergo (an event or occurrence)  
 "the company is experiencing difficulties"  
 synonyms: undergo, encounter, meet, come into contact with, come across, come up against, face, be faced with  
 "some policemen experience harassment"

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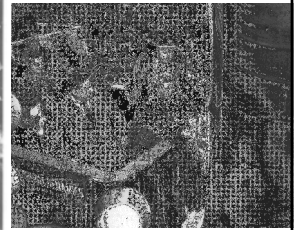


## Cause & Effect

- Slack building codes
- Low energy costs
- Budget constraints
- Performance demands
- Sustainability goals
- Knowledge, education or training
- Errors and omissions
- Reduce responsibility to reduce liability
- The rise of the **specialist and programs** to mitigate failure

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## Commissioning (Cx)



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## Cx History

### US Navy

- The systems and equipment required to transform the new hull into an **operating and habitable warship are installed and tested.**
- The commanding officer and crew report for **training** of new ship.

### Manufacturing

- A good manufacturing practice (GMP) is a **production and testing practice that helps to ensure a quality product.**
- GMP guidelines are **not prescriptive instructions.**
- It is the company's responsibility to determine the most **effective and efficient quality process.**

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### MEP System Cx

- Quality oriented process for **achieving and verifying performance**

Project Committee, 2008

Joe Dieringer, Committee Chair  
Don Ackler  
Fiona Abboud  
David Altenhofen, Design Chair  
Wagdy Aris, Pre-Design Chair  
Dave Bailey  
Bill Brodt  
Paul Brownstein  
Brad Carpenter  
Tim Corbett, Occupancy/Operations Chair  
David Eakin  
H. Jay Enck  
Walter Grondzik  
K. Quinn Hart  
Earle Kennell  
Marc LaFrance  
Dan Lemieux  
William R. Nash, Construction Chair  
Andrew Perally  
Nik Vigener  
Paul Totten  
Paul Tseng  
Thomas Smith  
Richard Walker  
Mohammed Eltoumy, Liaison  
Charles E. Dorgan, Liaison  
Jim Graft, Liaison

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BECx

## 2005 - 2011

- ASHRAE Guideline 0 – 2005: The Commissioning Process
  - The purpose of this guideline is to describe the Commissioning Process capable of verifying that the facility and its systems meet the Owner's Project Requirements.
- NIBS Guideline 3 – 2006 Exterior Enclosure Technical Requirements for the Commissioning Process
- CSA Z320-11 Building Commissioning

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## 2012 - 2018

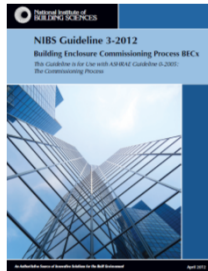
- NIBS Guideline 3 – 2012 Building Enclosure Commissioning Process
- ASTM E2813-12e1 (2012) Standard Practice for Building Enclosure Commissioning
- ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 202-2013 Published Standard: Commissioning Process for Buildings and Systems
- ASTM E2947-2016a Standard Guide for BECx
- WORKING DRAFT - ISO 21105 Building enclosure thermal performance verification and commissioning

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## NIBS Guideline 3 2012 - BECx

*"... the process by which the design and constructed performance of building enclosure materials, components, assemblies and systems are validated to meet defined objectives and requirements of the project, as established by the Owner."*

The Guideline 3-2012 Building Enclosure Commissioning Process available at:  
[https://www.nibsa.org/cch/nibs/nibs\\_g3.pdf](https://www.nibsa.org/cch/nibs/nibs_g3.pdf)



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## BECx – what it is ... and is not

- Not a party responsible for design or construction
- Not a guarantee
- Not expensive relatively speaking (Approx. 0.1% of project cost!)
- The Owner's advocate
- Is independent (not part of the design or construction team)
- Is an advisor
- Is engaged directly to Owner or through Cx Provider

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## BECx Process

- ... **focus is on defining project expectations**
  - BECx Pre-Design Phase
- ... **focus is on quality assurance**
  - BECx Design Phase
- ... **focus switch to quality control & verification**
  - BECx Pre-Construction Phase
  - BECx Construction Phase
- ... **focus switch to Owner training & maintenance**
  - BECx Occupancy and Operation Phase

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## Owner Project Requirements (OPR)

The OPR produces a list **documenting the requirements** against which the Pre-Design, Design and Construction phases are executed.



### Basis of Design (BOD)

A narrative and analytical document prepared by the design A-E along with design submissions to explain **how** the Owner's Project Requirements (OPR) are met by the proposed design.

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## BECx Plan

The Commissioning Plan helps the owner understand the requirements and risks associated with each enclosure system in delivering the anticipated level of performance and the cost and schedule impact of the Commissioning activities.

-NIBS Guideline 03-2012



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## Design Review

- Technical review, refine details
- Review interactions between systems
- Review specifications
- Finalize project commissioning plan
- Draft / Finalize BECx specification
- Document
- Back check



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## Occupancy Phase

- Review of Close-out report
- Training of the facility maintenance personnel.
- Educate the Owner to properly maintain the building enclosure.
- Review prior to 12 month end of warranty period.
- Lifetime persistence plan
- Review Current Facility Requirements (CFR)



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## BECx success

- Reduced Risk
- Proved the system works at install
- Gained validity for energy efficiency claims
- Improved Durability

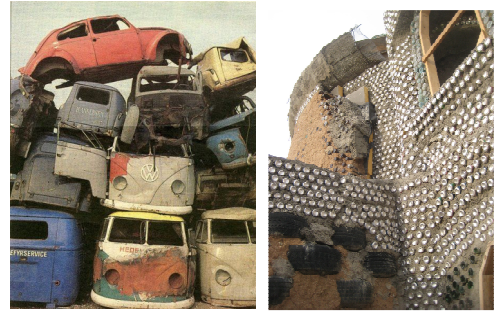
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## BECx dilemma

- Why isn't every BE commissioned?
  - Perception
  - Cost prohibitive
- When do owner's embrace the Cx process?
  - When they have experienced failure
  - Proactive / experience
  - Required by LEED or government body
- Challenges BECx faces moving forward

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Every building enclosure is unique

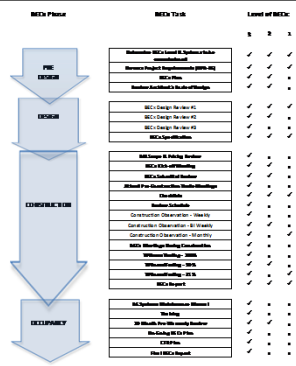


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## BECx process

Be adaptable to each design & situation

Levels of BECx appropriate and determined by **Owner**



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Risk

- Building Type
- Exposure
- Design Complexity

Budget

- Team Expertise
- Certification Program
- Code / Authority Having Jurisdiction

- Owner risk tolerance
- Cost of loss per square meter of area repaired
- Building use or function
- Area of building envelope
- Building envelope design complexity

- Environment
- Level of innovation and/or performance, and/or building sustainability goals

- Owner's number of prior projects and bidding requirements
- Level of owner's representatives commitment to the project throughout all phases
- Schedule
- Project delivery method
- Experience and knowledge of contractor

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## Standards

- ASHRAE/ANSI/IES Standard 202-2013 -- Commissioning Process for Buildings and Systems
  - ICC Committee 1000, Guideline – soon to be published, will aid AHJ to understand Cx requirements
- Standard 202 (rev in June '18) anticipated to be basis for new ISO Cx document



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## IgCC & 189.1 (to merge in 2018)

ANSI/ASHRAE/USGBC/IES  
Standard 189.1-2011

- Cx for all buildings over 5,000sf
- Systems include: HVAC, **Building Envelope Thermal, Moisture & Pressurization**, Lighting, Irrigation, Plumbing, Renewable Energy, Water & Energy Management

IGCC – 2012

- Chapter 9: Commissioning, Operation & Maintenance
- Definition of Cx: A process that verifies and documents that the selected building and the site systems have been designed, installed and function in accordance with the owner's project Requirements, construction documents and minimum code requirements.
- Section 903.1: The Registered Design Professional in responsible charge or approved agency shall perform commissioning during construction and after occupancy.
- 903.1 – Construction or system requiring verification:
  - Vegetative Roofs**
  - SubSoil Drainage**
  - Foundation damp proofing**
  - Flashings**
  - Exterior Wall coverings**

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## IgCC - 2015

- 605.1.2.1 Air Barriers – A continuous air barrier shall be provided for buildings in climate zones 1 through 8.
- 605.1.2.2 Testing Requirement. Test in accordance with ASTM E779. Air leakage rate of total area of building thermal envelope shall not exceed 0.25cfm/sf under pressure differential of 0.3-inch water column (1.57psf/sf)
- Section 903.1: The **Registered Design Professional** in responsible charge or **approved agency** shall perform commissioning during construction and after occupancy.
- Experience or training** shall be considered relevant where the documented experience or training is related to the complexity of the Cx activities

903.1 – Commissioning Plan

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## LEED v4 (adopted October 2016) Energy & Atmosphere Credit



*When:*

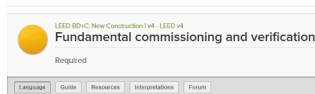
- By the **end of the design development phase**, engage a commissioning authority with the following qualifications:

*Who:*

- The CxA must have documented commissioning process **experience** on at least two building projects with a similar scope of work. The experience must extend from early design phase through at least 10 months of occupancy;
- The CxA may be a qualified employee of the owner, an independent consultant, or a disinterested subcontractor of the design team.
  - For projects smaller than 20,000 square feet (1,860 square meters), the CxA may be a qualified member of the design or construction team. In all cases, the CxA must report his or her findings directly to the owner.

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## LEED v4 Fundamental Cx - Energy & Atmosphere Credit



*Who: Qualified Member of Design or Construction Team, not associated with project*

- Same as NC2009, **ADDS one Design Review of Building Enclosure**
- Building Enclosure included in **QPR and BOD**
- References Cx to be performed per ASHRAE Guidelines 0, 1.1 and **Guideline 3, 2012**

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## LEED v4 Enhanced Cx - Energy & Atmosphere Credit



*Who: Independent CxA (may be a qualified employee of owner, or disinterested subcontractor of the design team)*

- BECx 2 points, MBCx 1 point**
- References BECx to be performed per ASHRAE Guidelines 0, 1.1 and **Guideline 3, 2012**
  - CxA prepares a CFR & O&M Plan (including training in CDs)
  - CxA develops on-going Cx Plan
  - CxA documents Operator and Occupant training delivery & effectiveness

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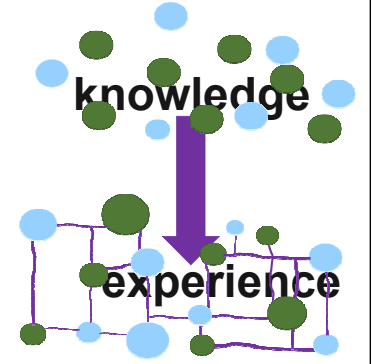
## Challenges of BECx as viewed by LEED

- Poorly defined BECx scope in LEED V4
- Lack of understanding from Owner as to what is difference between Fundamental & Enhanced Cx, or how LEED status is achieved
- RFP's purchasing Cx services don't outline scope of work for BECx
- Heavy reliance upon industry to honestly implement G'line 3
- BECx Providers "under scoping" BECx tasks to win jobs
- No auditing by LEED to verify BECx met G'line 3
- Most Cx Providers don't know that Fundamental now includes BE – simply ignore this component or attempt to self-perform



## Value of BECx

- OPR
- Design review
- Construction observation
- Performance testing
- Submittal review



## Specific air barrier experience

It's not necessarily a vapor barrier  
...the terms are not interchangeable!

Air barrier will control the passage of air from/between spaces  
...more than one?

### standard

ASTM E2178 (CAN/ULC-S741)  
ASTM E2357 (CAN/ULC-S742)



## Air infiltration & exfiltration

- major cause of rain penetration
- uncontrolled, untreated infiltrating air
- waste energy, increased condensation & envelope deterioration
- limits transfer of noise, odor, fire and smoke
- disrupts ability to control indoor humidity
- disrupts interior HVAC design pressures (comfort, infection control and IAQ problems)



Straube, High Performance Buildings

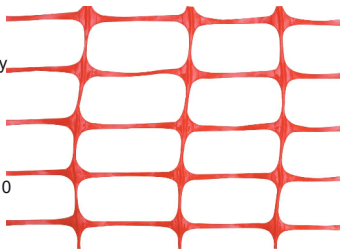


## Exterior air barrier assembly

The air barrier can be located anywhere in the enclosure assembly

On the warm side, it can be a combination air and vapor barrier

If it is located on the cold side, it should have a permeance at least 10 times the permeance of the vapor barrier



Building Science Corp.  
Lafayette



## Air barrier commissioning (Cx)

Achieving the owner's air barrier expectations

- ASHRAE
  - 0.1cfm/sf at 1.57psf – "tight"
  - 0.25cfm/sf at 1.57psf – "average"
  - 0.6cfm/sf at 75Pa – "leaky"
- USACE - 0.25cfm/sf at 1.57psf
- GSA – 0.4cfm/sf at 1.57psf
- IECC 2015 - 0.4cfm/sf at 1.57psf
- IgCC 2015 - 0.25cfm/sf at 1.57psf
- DOE Building America – 0.25cfm/sf at 50Pa



## Pre-Design Phase - air barrier Cx

### Owners Project Requirements (OPR) BECx Plan Basis of Design



"Air/Moisture Barrier. Provide connections to prevent air leakage, moisture infiltration (and vapor migration as applicable) at the following locations:

- o Foundation and walls, including penetrations, ties and anchors.
- o Walls, windows, curtain walls, storefronts, louvers or doors.
- o Different wall assemblies and fixed openings within those assemblies.
- o Wall and roof connections and penetrations.
- o Floors over unconditioned space.
- o Walls, floor and roof across construction, control and expansion joints.
- o Walls, floors and roof to utility, pipe and duct penetrations.
- o Seismic and expansion joints.
- o All other leakage pathways in the building enclosure."

Coordinate air barrier criteria with mechanical system design

## Design Phase - air barrier Cx

### Design Review

#### BECx specification

- Incorporate project specific air barrier into Cx process - adapt as necessary
- Determine extent to which each task will be performed
- Testing matrix



"Assembly shall perform as a liquid drainage plane flashed to discharge condensation or water penetration to the exterior. Assembly shall accommodate movements of building materials by providing expansion and control joints as required, with accessory air and vapor seal materials at such locations, changes in substrate and perimeter conditions. The assembly shall:

- be capable of withstanding combined positive and negative design wind, fan and stack pressures on the enclosure without damage or displacement, and shall transfer the load to the structure.
- not displace adjacent materials under full load.
- be joined in an airtight and flexible manner to the air barrier material of adjacent assemblies, allowing for the relative movement of assemblies due to thermal and moisture variations and creep, and anticipated seismic movement."

## Define

**material:** air leakage of the air barrier may not exceed 0.02 l/m<sup>2</sup>·s @75 Pa (0.004 cfm of air per ft<sup>2</sup> at a pressure difference of 0.3 inches of water 1.57 psf) per ASTM E2178  
....which equates to the air permeance of ½ inch thick drywall

**assembly:** air leakage of the air barrier assembly may not exceed 0.2L/(s·m<sup>2</sup>) @ 75Pa. (0.04 cfm/ft<sup>2</sup> @ 1.57 psf)  
test combines the primary air barrier material with supporting air barrier accessories such as transition membranes and sealants to form a complete air barrier assembly per ASTM E2357



## Specify

- one air barrier section in division 1
- mock-up – perform testing
- transitions to windows responsibility of window sub
- transitions to roof and waterproofing responsibility of air barrier sub
- air barrier association of america (abaa) specifications, guidelines & test protocols
- abaa quality assurance program (qap)
- site observations
- commissioning & verification
- testing



## Verify

Every building is unique, however field quality control usually approach the building enclosure in the same manner.

Test!



3.6	FIELD QUALITY CONTROL
A.	Make notification when schedule of reports is complete to allow review prior to covering air barrier systems.
B.	FIELD QUALITY CONTROL
1.	Obtain a copy of the project's design documents (including all revisions) from the design team.
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## Contract documents

- provide air barrier details
- air barrier division 1 section
- include certified and experienced installers
- coordinate air barrier with building enclosure and interior air barrier sections
- include ABAA quality assurance program
- specify mock-ups and testing of mock-up prior to cladding
- field testing (additional tests if failure occurs, who pays)
- provide for alternates (as applicable)
- GC to include dedicated building enclosure superintendent
- air barrier testing and commissioning





## Pre-Construction Phase - air barrier Cx

Scope of Work Package review  
 Bid review  
 Mock-Up and testing



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## Mock-Up test of Opaque Wall Air Tightness

0.04 cfm / ft<sup>2</sup> at 1.57psf when tested in accordance with **ASTM E283** Standard Test Method for Determining Rate of Air Leakage Through Exterior Windows, Curtain Walls, and Doors Under Specified Pressure Differences Across the Specimen.

**ASTM E1186** Standard Practices for Air leakage site detection in Building Envelopes and Air Barrier Systems



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## Construction Phase - air barrier Cx

Submittal Reviews  
 Checklists  
 Construction Observation  
 Observation Schedule  
 Testing Schedule  
 Field Verification System tests: Level 1  
 Field Verification System tests: Level 2  
 Field Verification System tests: Level 3  
 BE System Maintenance Manual  
 BECx Report

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## Construction observation

- informs the design & review process
- experience



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## material



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## substrate

- moisture content



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## substrate

- moisture content



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## substrate

- primers
- terminations



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## substrate

- termination



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## substrate

- preparation



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## substrate

- damage



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## substrate

- compatibility



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## substrate

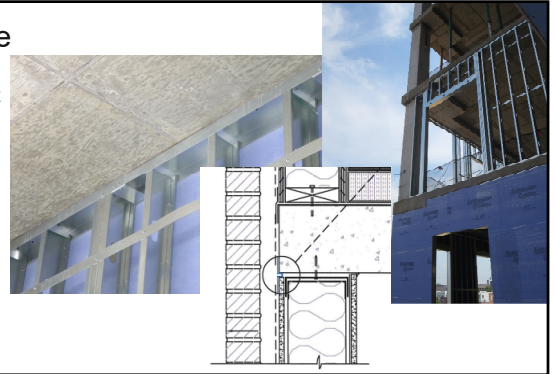
- porosity



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## substrate

- movement



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## substrate

- movement



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## application

- adhesion



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## application

- adhesion



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## transition

- interruption



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## transition

- interruption

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## penetrations

- cladding attachment
- cladding support

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## penetrations

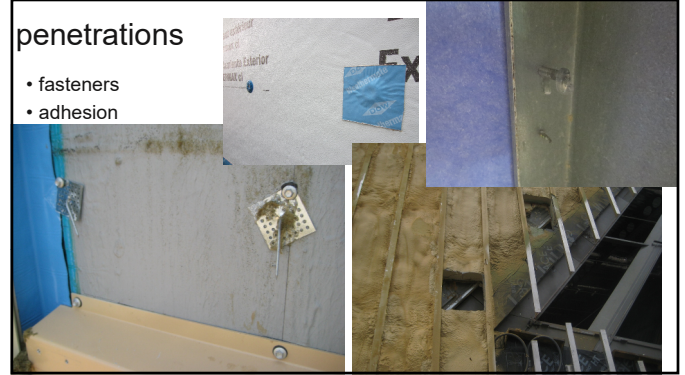
- permeability

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## penetrations

- fasteners
- adhesion



## penetrations

- attachment

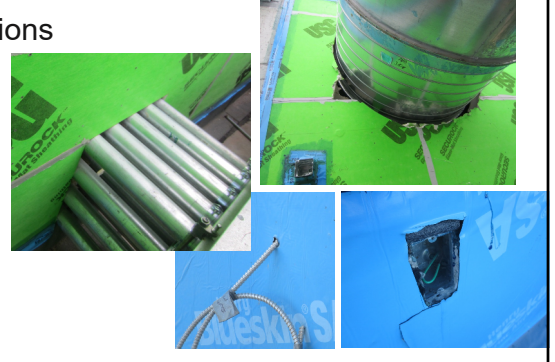
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## penetrations

- construct-ability

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## interface

- adjacent substrates



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## interface

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## interface

- compatibility



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## interface

- redundancy



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## interface

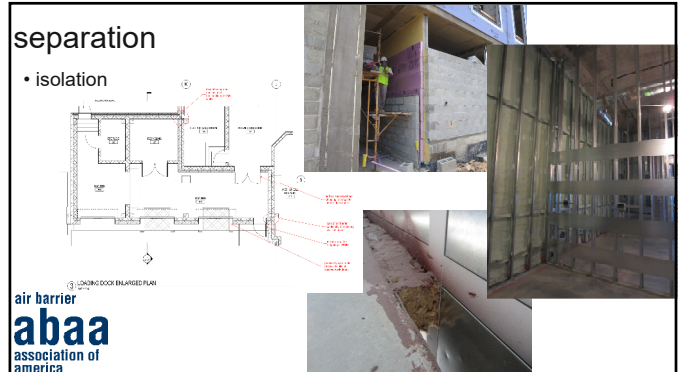
- isolation



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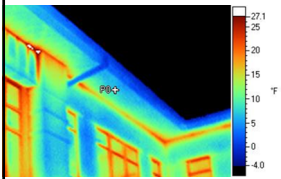
## separation

- isolation



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## field air barrier tests



ASTM E1186-17 Standard Practices for Air leakage site detection in Building Envelopes and Air Barrier Systems (7 practices for detecting air leakage)

ASTM E779-10 Standard Test Method for Determining Air Leakage Rate by Fan Pressurization

ASTM E1105-15 Standard Test Method for Field Determination of Water Penetration of Installed Exterior Windows, Skylights, Doors, and Curtain Walls, by Uniform or Cyclic Static Air Pressure Difference

AAMA 501.2 Quality Assurance and Diagnostic Water Leakage Field Check of Installed Storefronts, Curtain Walls, and Sloped Glazing Systems

ASTM C1060-11a(2015) Standard Practice for Thermographic Inspection of Insulation Installations in Envelope Cavities of Frame Buildings

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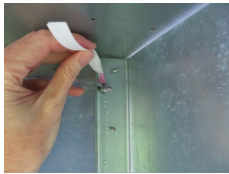
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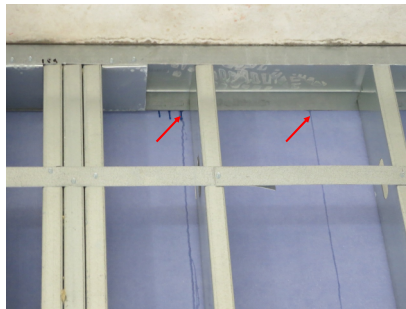
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## e1105



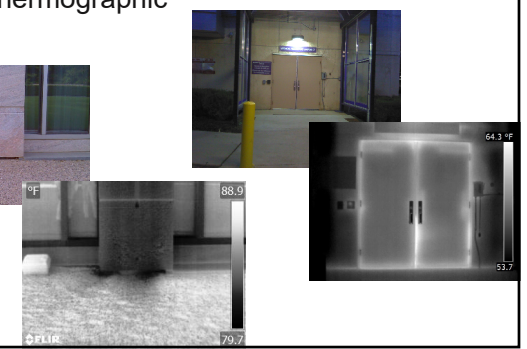
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## e1186 - 1 Thermographic Survey



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## e1186 - 2 Smoke tracer



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## e1186 - 2 Theatrical fog

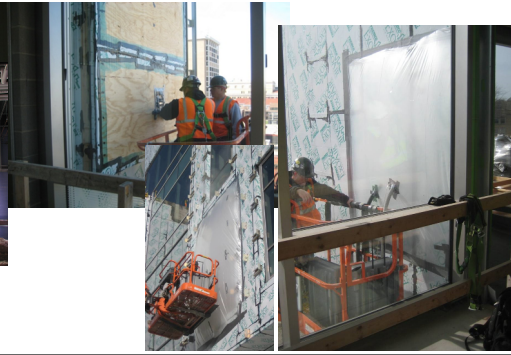




e1186 - 6



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e1186 - 7



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E1186 - 7

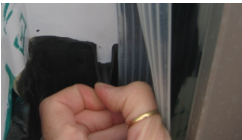


d4541



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c1521



Typical 16psi  
for air barrier  
materials –  
each  
manufacturer  
may be  
different

e1827 / e779

**ASTM E1827** Standard Test Methods  
for Determining Airtightness of  
Buildings Using an Orifice Blower  
Door


**ASTM E779** Determining Airtightness  
of Buildings Air Leakage Rate by  
Single Zone Air Pressurization



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<p>Experience is the teacher of all things. <small>Julius Caesar</small></p> <p><b>Fiona Aldous</b></p> <p>Principal  <a href="mailto:faldous@wje.com">faldous@wje.com</a>          Phone: +1 703 297 1909  <a href="http://www.wje.com">www.wje.com</a></p> 	<p>air barrier  <b>abaa</b>          association of          america  <b>CONFERENCE          &amp; TRADE SHOW</b></p> <p>MAY 8-9  <b>2018</b>          SALT LAKE  <b>CITY</b></p> <p><small>AIR BARRIER EDUCATION TRACKS FOR          THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY</small></p>
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