



May 8, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

The 2015 IBC has added exceptions to Section 1403.5 to exclude the NFPA 285 testing requirement if the weather-resistive barrier (WRB) is the only combustible material in the exterior wall assembly and certain conditions are met. Weather-resistive barriers that meet the new exceptions, as shown below, will be able to be installed in Type I through IV construction without the 2012 height limitations. Until the 2015 IBC is adopted, the design professional can request code approval of WRB's meeting the 2015 exceptions through the alternative material and method section in 104.11 of the 2012 IBC.

1403.5 Vertical and lateral flame propagation. Exterior walls on buildings of Type I, II, III or IV construction that are greater than 40 feet (12 192mm) in height above grade plane and contain a combustible *water-resistive barrier* shall be tested in accordance with and comply with the acceptance criteria of NFPA 285. For the purposes of this section, fenestration products and flashing of fenestration products shall not be considered part of the *water-resistive barrier*.

Exceptions:

1. Walls in which the *water-resistive barrier* is the only combustible component and the *exterior wall* has a wall covering of brick, concrete, stone, terra cotta, stucco or steel with minimum thicknesses in accordance with Table 1405.2.
2. Walls in which the *water-resistive barrier* is the only combustible component and the *water-resistive barrier* has a peak heat release rate of less than 150 kW/m², a total heat release of less than 20 MJ/m² and an effective heat of combustion of less than 18 MJ/kg as determined in accordance with ASTM E 1354 and has a flame spread index of 25 or less and a smoke-developed index of 450 or less as determined in accordance with ASTM E 84 or UL 723. The ASTM E 1354 test shall be conducted on specimens at the thickness intended for use, in the horizontal orientation and at an incident radiant heat flux of 50 kW/m².

Where the wall construction matches the conditions in Exception 1 above, any of Fortifiber's weather-resistive barriers will be allowed to be included in the wall assembly. This includes the building wrap materials such as the WeatherSmart family of products, as well as the Jumbo Tex family of Grade D building papers.

For wall assemblies that do not meet the requirements of Exception 1 above, WeatherSmart Commercial has been tested in accordance with ASTM E1354 and ASTM E 84 and meets all of the requirements in Exception 2 of the 2015 IBC, Section 1403.5. This allows WeatherSmart Commercial to be used in all Type I-IV construction where the WRB is the only combustible material without the need for NFPA 285 testing.

The WeatherSmart Commercial testing results are summarized below:

<u>WeatherSmart Commercial</u>	<u>Tested Results</u>	<u>Allowable</u>
ASTM E84 Flame Spread	<25	<25
ASTM E84 Smoke Developed	<450	<450
ASTM E1354 Peak Heat Release	112 kW/m ²	<150 kW/m ²
ASTM E1354 Total Heat Release	3.5 MJ/m ²	<20 MJ/m ²
ASTM E 1354 Eff. Heat of Combustion	7.5 MJ/kg	<18 MJ/kg

Fortifiber can help to work with the local building officials to help them understand the code change and assist them in approving Fortifiber's weather-resistive barriers for projects under the 2012 IBC using the 2015 exception.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the information in this letter.

Sincerely,

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