



Building Department Newsletter

December 2008

Special points of interest:

- Fire Blocking vs. Fire Stopping
- Fire Blocking: When, Where and With What
- Sidewalk Section at Driveway Crossings

Fire Blocking vs. Fire Stopping

What's the difference between fire blocking and fire stopping? Aren't they the same thing? Well, not exactly.

Fire Blocking is required in all combustible construction. The purpose of Fire Blocking is to cut off all concealed draft openings (both vertical and horizontal) and to form an effective fire barrier between stories and between a top story and the attic space.

Fire Stopping is required in Fire Rated construction (fire rated due to use, occupancy classification and/or construction type). The purpose of Fire Stopping is to maintain the integrity of fire rated construction when said fire rated construction elements are penetrated by plumbing, electrical and mechanical pipes, ducts, conduits, cables etc...

Fire Blocking: When, Where and With What

Fire Blocking shall be provided to cut off all concealed draft openings (both horizontal and vertical) and to form an effective fire barrier between stories and between a top story and the attic space. Fire Blocking shall be provided in the following locations:

1. In concealed spaces of stud walls and partitions, including furred spaces and parallel rows of studs and staggered studs as follows;
 - 1.1 Vertically at ceiling and floor levels not exceeding ten feet.
 - 1.2 Horizontally at intervals not exceeding ten feet.
2. At all interconnections between concealed vertical and horizontal spaces such as occurs at soffits, drop ceilings and cove ceilings.
3. In concealed space between stair stringers at the top and bottom of the run.
4. At openings around vents, pipes, ducts, cables and wires at ceiling and floor level with an approved material to resist the free passage of flame and products of combustion.
5. At Chimneys, all spaces between chimneys and floors, and ceilings through which chimneys pass, shall be fire blocked with non combustible material securely fastened in place. The Fire Blocking of spaces between chimneys and wood joists, beams or headers shall be self-supporting or be placed on strips of metal or metal lath laid across the spaces between combustible material and the chimney.
6. Fire blocking of cornices of a two-family dwelling is required at the line of dwelling unit separation.

Gas Fitter Card Renewal Time

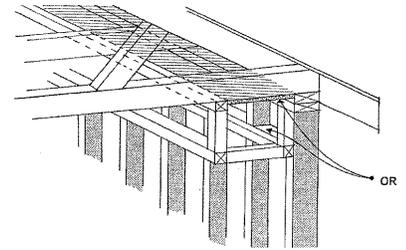
Last year's Gas Fitter's License cards expire January 15 and January 16 is the last day to renew gas fitter cards for \$7.50; cards renewed after that date are considered "new" and cost \$15.00.

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Fire Blocking (continued from front)

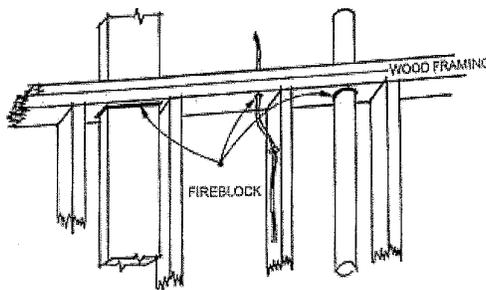
Fire Blocking materials, except as provided in item 4 from previous page, shall consist of any one of the following:

- 2 inch nominal lumber with broken lap joints
- two thicknesses of 1 inch nominal lumber with broken lap joints
- one thickness of 23/32 inch wood structural panels
- one thickness of 3/4 inch particle board with joints backed by 3/4 inch particle board
- 1/2 inch gypsum board
- 1/4 inch cement based millboard
- Batts or blankets of mineral wool or glass fiber or other approved materials, installed in such a manner as to be securely retained in place, shall be permitted as an acceptable fire block.
- Batts or blankets of mineral or glass fiber or other approved non-rigid materials shall be permitted with 10 foot horizontal fire blocking in walls constructed using parallel rows of studs or staggered studs.



Loose fill insulation material shall not be used as a fire block unless specifically tested in the form and manner intended for use to demonstrate its ability to remain in place and to retard the spread of fire and hot gasses.

Un-faced fiberglass batt insulation used as fire blocking shall fill the entire cross section of the wall cavity to a minimum height of 16 inches measured vertically. When piping, conduit or similar obstructions are encountered the insulation shall be packed tightly around the obstruction. The integrity of all fire blocks shall be maintained.



SIDEWALK SECTION OF DRIVEWAY CROSSINGS

A reminder that the curb and sidewalk layout that was adopted on January 23, 2007 can be found in the City of Pullman 2008 edition of the Standard Construction Specifications, in the office or online at www.pullman-wa.gov.

You can reference the concrete section for residential curb and sidewalks on pages 3,8, and 9 along with reference to sidewalk driveway crossing sections on pages 8-A, 8-B, 8-C, and 8-D. The Standard Drawings give several variations that you can follow. The driveways shall be constructed to provide a 3-foot minimum walkway with 2% maximum cross-slope through the driveway. The maximum slope for driveway ramps from the curb to the walkway is 10%. Longitudinal sidewalk grade transition shall be 5% maximum slope as measured relative to existing grade.

It has come to our attention that the sidewalk section of the driveway crossings have been somewhat neglected in the past. Please review the Standard Drawings and begin installation of sidewalks as per Standard Construction Drawings on your up and coming projects.