

THE IMPORTANCE OF VENTILATION

The balance between wetting, drying, and safe storage is critical to the long-term performance of building enclosures.

Where wetting cannot be controlled to acceptable levels, safe storage and drying become critical. Many common building materials have little safe storage capacity—that is, they cannot be exposed to high levels of moisture for long periods of time.

The sheathing is one building component often made of moisture sensitive materials placed directly behind the cladding and separated by only a thin membrane and air gap. For some periods of time, the sheathing can be expected to be exposed to rainwater wetting from the exterior or condensation wetting (air leakage or vapor diffusion) from the interior.

Protecting the sheathing from moisture is seen as important and has been the goal of many product manufacturers, builders, and practitioners over several decades.

However, experience has shown that accidental leaks can still occur; therefore, the role of drying is very important to the moisture balance .

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