

443 Lafayette Road N.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155
www.dli.mn.gov



(651) 284-5005
1-800-DIAL-DLI
TTY: (651) 297-4198

ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENT FORM
FOR PROPOSED CODE CHANGES
(This form must be submitted electronically)

Author/requestor: Rick Davidson
Email address: rdavidson@ci.maple-grove.mn.us
Telephone number: 763-494-6061
Firm/Association affiliation, if any: AMBO

Proposed Code Change - Language

Foundation walls. Penetrations of all foundation wall types shall be caulked or sealed. Hollow block masonry foundation walls shall be constructed with ~~one of the following to prevent passage of air from the interior core of the wall into the living space~~ either:

- 1) a continuous course of solid masonry at or above exterior ground surface; or
- 2) one course of masonry grouted solid at or above exterior ground surface; or
- 3) a solid concrete beam at or above the finished exterior ground surface, ~~to prevent passage of air from the interior of the wall into the living space.~~

When a brick veneer or other masonry ledge is installed, the course immediately below that ledge shall be solid or filled. Joints, cracks, or other openings around all penetrations of both exterior and interior surfaces of masonry block or wood foundation walls below the exterior ground surface shall be filled with ~~polyurethane~~ an approved caulking or ~~equivalent~~ sealant.

Proposed Code Change – Need and Reason

Confusing language can lead to misapplication of the code and a lack of uniformity. That is the situation with the current draft language on foundation walls. The intent of the section, based on EPA and other documents, is to provide a “cap” at the top of hollow block masonry foundation walls to prevent radon that might seep into the voids of the block from escaping through holes in the top course of block.

But the way that the draft language is written gives the use of the rule different direction. First, the current rule states that foundations must be constructed in one of three ways and then it lists the three ways. If one uses either option #1 or #2, the rule requires a continuous course of solid masonry or a course of grouted masonry. It doesn’t state where that course must be. Presumably it could be the first course in the foundation. #3 states that a concrete beam may be used and it should be placed “at or above the finished exterior ground surface”.

This is a matter of sentence construction. The phrase “at or above the finished exterior ground surface” should apply to all three methods but that is not the way it is written. This will result in varying methods applied in the field and varying levels of acceptance from code enforcement. It is necessary to correct that flaw.

It is necessary to correct this deficiency in the draft rule. This proposal accomplishes that.

This proposal is reasonable because it provides an understandable and enforceable section on which to regulate movement of air in foundation walls.

Proposed Code Change – Cost/Benefit Analysis

This proposal will have no impact on the cost of construction.

Other Factors to Consider Related to Proposed Code Change

1. Is this proposed code change meant to:

change language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).

change language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).
Radon rules

delete language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).

delete language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).

neither; this language will be new language, not found in the code book or in Minnesota Rule.

2. Is this proposed code change required by a Minnesota Statute or new legislation? If so, please provide the citation to the Statute or legislation.

No

3. Will this proposed code change impact other sections of a published code book or of an amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, please list the affected sections or rule parts.

No

4. Will this proposed code change impact other parts of the Minnesota State Building Code? If so, please list the affected parts of the Minnesota State Building Code.

No

5. Who are the parties affected or segments of industry affected by this proposed code change?

Code officials, building designers, contractors, building owners

6. Can you think of other means or methods to achieve the purpose of the proposed code change? If so, please explain what they are and why your proposed change is the preferred method or means to achieve the desired result.

No

7. Are you aware of any federal requirement or regulation related to this proposed code change? If so, please list the regulation or requirement.

No