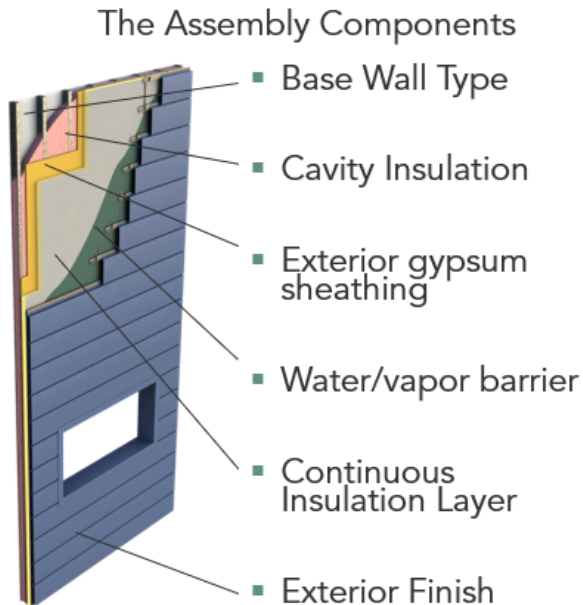


DOES MY WALL ASSEMBLY NEED TO COMPLY WITH NFPA 285 AND UL 263?

It might! IBC Chapter 26 refers to testing for fire resistance AND vertical and lateral flame propagation. Fire resistance requires UL 263 (or ASTM E119) testing. Vertical and lateral flame propagation requires NFPA 285 testing. Although these are both wall assembly fire tests, they are testing different aspects of fire performance and the testing cannot be used interchangeably. Depending on a variety of factors, either or both could be required for a particular wall assembly.



IBC Chapter 26 governs the use of polyiso insulation (and other materials) in all aspects of construction, including exterior wall assemblies. Section 2603.5 states that exterior walls of buildings in construction types I - IV must comply with a series of provisions, including sections 2603.5.1 (fire resistance) and 2603.5.5 (vertical and lateral fire propagation). Section 2603.5.5 is relatively straightforward. With a few exceptions, exterior wall assemblies of type I-IV construction that contains polyiso must comply with the acceptance criteria of NFPA 285. Section 2603.5.1 states that tested assembly data per UL 263 or ASTM E119 must be provided *if* the wall is required to have a fire-resistance rating.

But how do we know when a fire-resistance rating is required? For that we have to go to IBC Chapter 6. This chapter defines construction types I - IV in section 602 and provides two tables regarding fire-resistance rating requirements. Table 601 is organized by construction type and dictates the hourly rating requirements based on the fire coming from the interior of the building. Table 602 dictates the hourly rating requirements based on a fire coming from outside the building and the building's proximity to another building or lot line. The construction type and occupancy group will impact the required hourly rating. It is important to note that even if a fire-resistance rating is not required in Table 601, it might still be required in Table 602 based on the proximity to another building or lot line. For example, a Type IIB building that is less than 5 feet from another building or lot line does not require a fire-resistance rating for an interior fire, but would require a 1-, 2-, or 3-hour rating for an exterior fire depending on the occupancy group.

For a given wall assembly you may need to comply with NFPA 285 **AND** provide a time-rated UL 263 assembly. Complying with one does not negate the need to comply with the other.

