


Air Barriers: What Contractors need to know in order to decrease their risk



The Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA) consists of various stakeholders in the building enclosure industry.

Our focus is to promote the use and benefits of air barrier systems, and to lead our industry into the future in a progressive and professional manner.

Be part of those leading the industry.

Why not lead your competition instead of following? Several states have already added air barriers in their building code, such as Georgia, New York, Massachusetts and many more States are following. These developments, along with the recent addition of air barriers into standards such as ASHRAE 90.1, IECC and IRC will undoubtedly result in a significant increase in air barrier assemblies being installed in our buildings. In addition, the current version of LEED references ASHRAE 90.1-2010 as the baseline standard for LEED buildings. This means that all LEED buildings will require air barriers as a mandatory component.

air barrier
abaa
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What the ABAA Quality Assurance Program does for your Project.

The damages resulting from an improperly installed air barrier can be enormous, including but not limited to exterior wall deconstruction and restoration, possible mold remediation, and damages due to the loss of building use. For the General Contractor and/or Construction Manager, participation in the ABAA Quality Assurance Program (QAP) is a prudent risk management strategy that can reduce liability and exposure for costs resulting from building envelope failure.

All aspects of ABAA's QAP, including installer training and certification, contractor accreditation, audits, conflict resolution and paperwork review are handled through an independent and impartial professional organization. The QAP consists of many assurance components in sequence, all working together to provide a high level of confidence that the air barrier will be installed correctly and to the applicable industry standards.

ABAA contractors must undergo training, and demonstrate a high quality of workmanship and professionalism in order to be associated with the program.

ABAA licensed auditors are assigned to inspect each project to ensure that the installed air barrier meets or exceeds standards set by the designers, manufacturers, and ABAA specifications. Upon completion of each audit, an audit report is provided to the Air Barrier Contractor, General Contractor/Construction Manager, and the Design Professional to verify the installation and document the Auditor's observations, testing results, and identify any corrective actions that may be required. Identifying potential problems during the inspection stage reduces, if not eliminates future, more costly repairs.

Specifying ABAA is a win-win for all parties involved, including building owners, design professionals, contractors and end users.

Benefits of the ABAA program to your project include:

- Experienced subcontractors
- Enhanced schedule
- Risk management
- Field inspection, testing and auditing
- Documentation of delivery of contractual requirements

Now what really matters: The Cost

The costs are \$0.085 per square foot of installed material for an Industry Development Fund Fee, and \$2,000 per audit. These associated ABAA costs are included in the ABAA contractor's bid.

Required site audits can be calculated as follows:

Square Footage of Project	Number of Audits Required
Up to 10,000	1
10,001 to 35,000	2
35,001 to 75,000	3
75,001 to 125,000	4
25,001 to 200,000	5
200,001 and over	6

What you can expect from your ABAA Contractor.

- Daily work reports indicating location of work, test results, environmental conditions, etc
- Daily quality control measures including visual inspection, adhesion/cohesion testing, thickness and/or density testing
- Highly trained and credentialed installer(s) on site overseeing all aspects of the installation
- Knowledge to work out air barrier construction details and sequence scope of work

Tips for a successful Air Barrier Installation

1. Conduct pre-construction meetings
2. Ensure proper scheduling and sequencing of wall assembly
3. Coordination of all pertinent trades
4. Construct mock ups of building wall sections
5. Oversee testing and inspection
6. Protect assemblies and materials during construction

Need project specific assistance? ABAA provides free Technical Support!

Call: 1-866-956-5888