Building Code Requirements.

Building codes are established to provide structural, fire, and life safety requirement for all buildings. Building codes have specific requirements for materials, insulation, structural, and fire performance.

The International Building Code (IBC) has detailed requirements for all materials used in building construction, including Foam-Control EPS which is classified as a “foam plastic”.

Foam plastics must meet the requirements of Chapter 26 of the IBC. The basic requirements contained in Sections 2603.2 through 2603.4 are:

• Labeling and identification by an approved agency
• Surface-burning characteristics in accordance with ASTM E84
• Separation from the interior of the building by 1/2 inch gypsum board

The IBC has additional requirements for the materials used on buildings classified as Type I, II, III, or IV.

Exterior walls of Type I, II, III, and IV buildings are required to be constructed with noncombustible materials. However, the IBC provides for the use of foam plastic insulation in exterior walls when the requirements of Chapter 26 are met. In addition to the three requirements listed above, combustible materials in exterior wall assemblies are required to be tested in accordance with and comply with the acceptance criteria of NFPA 285. There is an exception to the NFPA 285 testing requirement for one-story Type I, II, III, or IV buildings.


A key aspect of NFPA 285 is the evaluation of a complete wall assembly and not individual materials. The purpose of NFPA 285 is to evaluate the ability of a wall assembly to resist flame propagation. The NFPA 285 test is conducted on a complete two story wall assembly that incorporates a window on the first floor.

NFPA 285 Assemblies.

Foam-Control worked in partnership with Tremco, a leading supplier of weather-resistant barriers, on NFPA 285 compliant assemblies that incorporate Foam-Control EPS and Tremco’s ExoAir® 230 Synthetic Fluid-Applied Vapor-Permeable Air Barrier Membrane.

ExoAir® 230 is a monolithic, synthetic membrane designed to seal exterior above grade walls from air infiltration/exfiltration, while serving as a weather-resistant barrier to keep water out yet remaining permeable to the passage of water vapor.

UL NFPA 285 assemblies incorporating an exterior brick cladding with Foam-Control EPS cavity insulation and ExoAir® 230 weather-resistant barrier are available. The assemblies are UL Systems No. EWS0001, EWS0002, and EWS0003.

Please consult the UL Certification Directory for complete assembly information.

EIFS Assemblies.

Foam-Control EPS is commonly used as a component of proprietary exterior insulation and finish system (EIFS). Please contact the EIFS manufacturer for information regarding their NFPA 285 compliance assemblies.
NFPA 285 Basics.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is a non-profit association with a mission to reduce the burden of fire and other hazards on life. The mission includes advocating for consensus fire test methods. One such consensus standard is NFPA 285, “Standard Fire Test Method for Evaluation of Fire Propagation Characteristics of Exterior Non-Load-Bearing Wall Assemblies Containing Combustible Components”.

The purpose of NFPA 285 is to evaluate the ability of the wall assembly to resist:

• flame propagation over the exterior face of the wall assembly
• vertical flame propagation within the combustible components from one story to the next
• vertical flame propagation over the interior surface of the wall assembly from one story to the next
• lateral flame propagation from the compartment of fire origin to adjacent compartments or spaces

The NFPA 285 test is conducted on a complete wall assembly and not on individual component materials. The results are specific to the assembly tested and the substitution of an alternate material must be evaluated by an additional test or appropriate analysis by a fire protection engineer.

Proven to meet, or exceed, building codes.

Foam-Control EPS is manufactured to Quality Control Program standards monitored by UL LLC and recognized by national building codes. Foam-Control EPS manufacturers offer product warranties that ensure termite resistance, physical properties, and thermal performance. Foam-Control EPS can stand up to all industry tests—and has. No other EPS can say that.

Ready to take control? Start here.

If you’re starting to wonder how Foam-Control EPS can contribute to your next project, here’s how to find out: Just contact your nearest Foam-Control EPS manufacturer. They’ll be happy to give you a design consultation, information about Foam-Control EPS products, pricing, and the answers to all your questions. Contact a sales rep, and download Foam-Control EPS documentation, through our web site at www.foam-control.com.