

# QUALITY ASSURANCE

## WALLTITE® Insulating Air Barrier System



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The Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA) promotes contractors who use certified and approved applicators to install the WALLTITE® insulating air barrier system from BASF. Only these highly trained, experienced and qualified applicators are approved to install the BASF Engineered Building Envelope System.

The US Department of Energy (DOE) has concluded that 40 percent of the energy cost of heating and cooling a building is wasted by uncontrolled air leakage through the building envelope. Controlling this waste is seen by the DOE as an essential step towards its long-term goal of zero-net-energy-use buildings.

An effective air barrier system can substantially reduce both air leakage and the passage of moisture through the building envelope. This reduction results in:

- Lower energy demand
- Lower energy consumption
- Lower energy costs
- Fewer moisture-related corrosion failures
- Fewer mold- and fungi-related indoor air quality problems
- Improved occupant comfort

A groundbreaking report, *Investigation of the Impact of Commercial Building Envelope Airtightness on HVAC Energy Use*, issued in June 2005 by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), confirmed that air barrier systems can reduce air leakage by up to 83 percent and energy consumption by up to 40 percent. As a result of this report, continuous air barrier systems will be required by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) under *Addendum z to Standard 90.1-2004, Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings*.



It provides a broad range of services to construction specifiers and building owners. These include:

- Downloadable model air barrier specifications
- Listings of air barrier materials, manufacturers, installers, consultants and inspectors
- Downloadable architectural details illustrating different air barrier systems
- Licensing program for contractors
- Training and certification programs for installers, subcontractors, distributors and manufacturers
- Quality assurance program for the installation of air barrier systems

BASF offers specifiers and owners a complete engineered building envelope system based on the unique properties of closed-cell, spray-applied polyurethane foam and a variety of other insulating and air barrier components.

Many states are also adopting the air barrier concept into energy Codes. Massachusetts was the first state to incorporate a mandatory air barrier system into its Commercial Energy Code, followed by Michigan and Wisconsin. These and many other states are looking for ways to comply with the DOE program targets of reducing building energy consumption by 25 percent by 2010 and by 50 percent by 2020. Several other states are considering adopting similar code requirements or are expected to adopt the proposed updates to the ASHRAE 90.1 standard.

ABAA's mission is to promote best practice design and installation of air barrier systems throughout the US. Architects, building consultants, testing engineers, building materials manufacturers and contractors formed the association as a non-profit corporation.

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