

D.1 TERMITES & TREATMENT

Before you get started building, you need to consider your local conditions with respect to termites. Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) has no food value to attract termites, however, the building industry now recognizes that the termites can burrow through untreated EPS to reach wood products. As a result, the International Residential Building Code (IRC), under Section 324.4, currently prohibits the use of exterior foam plastic insulation below grade where termite infestation is very heavy (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Texas). You should consult with your PolySteel Dealer to determine the applicability of these restrictions in your area. You should also know that PolySteel with Perform Guard® is exempt from this restriction as discussed below.

D.1.1. POLYSTEEL HAS RECEIVED APPROVAL.

AFM Corporation has developed a product and application process called Perform Guard®, which is a safe and long-lasting borate solution added to the EPS foam during manufacturing. Perform Guard is the only code-recognized method that currently allows for foam insulation to be used below grade in the heavily-infested termite areas of the country. PolySteel is the first and only manufactured ICF that incorporates Perform Guard in its forms (exclusively in our manufacturing facility in Jefferson, Georgia), which allows you to install PolySteel from the basement footing all the way to the roof line in these areas. More specifically, PolySteel with Perform Guard meets the exception criteria identified under Section R324.4 of the IRC, which states:

“When, in addition to the requirements of R324.1, an approved method of protecting the foam plastic and structure from subterranean termite damage is provided.”

PolySteel with Perform Guard is recognized in our ICC Evaluation report as meeting this protection criteria. Your PolySteel representative can tell you how to purchase these forms for your project and the warranty provided.

D.1.2 BEST DEFENSE - ELIMINATE WOOD.

Obviously, the best defense against termites and wood-eating insects is to minimize the use of wood products in the structure. Build all exterior walls out of Polysteel Forms and concrete. All interior walls can be built using steel framing studs. All floor truss and roof truss systems can be constructed with steel framing members or concrete. Get the wood out and there is nothing left to eat, and **the code restriction for use below grade does not apply.**

D.1.3 BEST PRACTICES IN PROBLEM AREAS

Because wood continues to be used extensively for interior partition walls, floor and roof structures in the heavily infested areas noted above, we recommend that you take the following measures, some of which are standard building practices in all areas, to minimize your risk, in addition to using PolySteel with Perform Guard:

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D.1.3 BEST PRACTICES IN PROBLEM AREAS (continued).

- ✓ Treat soil with approved methods under the floor and around the foundation before starting construction.
- ✓ Remove all stumps, wood debris, and other construction debris from the building site (especially before backfilling around the completed foundation or basement).
- ✓ Install a proper foundation drainage system around the foundation or basement.
- ✓ Seal all cracks, joints, and utility penetrations in the concrete floor, walls, etc., with roofing grade coal-tar pitch that is compatible with EPS.
- ✓ Use only pressure-treated lumber, or V-Buck in areas close to the ground and in all locations where lumber is in direct contact with concrete.
- ✓ Cover and seal the entire exterior below grade surfaces of the Forms with an asphalt-type or rubberized below grade waterproofing system. See Section B.7 for the products and systems we recommend. Be sure that the moisture barrier is not damaged or punctured during backfilling.
- ✓ Properly slope the finish grade from the house and install rain gutters and down spouts to divert all water away from the home to minimize the wet soil conditions (which attract termites.)
- ✓ Leave a minimum of 6 inches of clearance between the soil and any untreated wood framing.
- ✓ Continue to treat the soil around the house for termites according to your pest control company's recommended schedule.
- ✓ For more specific recommendations and installation details contact your local PolySteel Representative.