PLAN SUBMITTAL NOTIFICATION

In an effort to provide consistency and clarity in the application of the ever evolving wall bracing requirements contained in the International Residential Code (IRC), Spokane County will begin an emphasis program focusing on IRC Section R602.10 and the wall bracing details for plans submitted on or after November 3, 2014. This will apply to all single family, duplex, townhouses, additions and accessory structures that are designed using the prescriptive methods of the IRC.

In discussions with the building industry and other Spokane area building departments, the objectives focus on creating consistency in enforcement and the development of readily understandable construction drawings benefiting builders and inspection staff alike. While the identification of bracing details on the plan documents is not new to the I-codes, the emphasis program seeks to re-emphasize best practices when submitting plans for permit issuance. This additionally preserves valuable time during initial plan review as well as in the field during construction/inspection phase when delayed schedules become costly.

Plans received on or after November 3rd must include a clearly laid out braced wall plan, either on a separate page or incorporated into a current floor layout, identifying the bracing method(s) employed as identified in Table R602.10.4 (e.g.; LIB, WSP, CS-WSP). The amounts of bracing for a given braced wall line will need to be calculated by the contractor/designer based upon section R602.10 as required, including the use of appropriate modifiers or the Simplified Method identified in Section R602.12. Wall lines that do not meet the IRC prescriptive bracing requirements may be subject to bracing designed by an engineer.

The following represent the minimum wall bracing criteria to be identified on the plan submittal documents:

- The plan set will clearly note the bracing method used for each braced wall line (BLW) for each story whether intermittent braced wall panels (BWP), continuously sheathed, or other as applicable.
- Intermittent braced wall panel (BWP) locations will be clearly identified on each braced wall line (BLW) inclusive of dimensions detailing; distance from building corners, spacing between BWP’s, minimum width of the BWP, and percentage (total length) of BWP’s necessary for a given BLW.
- Continuous sheathing methods will clearly identify BWP locations on each braced wall line (BLW) inclusive of dimensions detailing; end wall (corner) conditions or returns used, including any required hold downs, BWP widths adjacent to window/door openings based on the rough opening height, and the percentage (total length) of BWP’s has been met for the given BLW.
- Note on the plans, including the foundation plan; the location, type, and size of any hold downs required.
- Note on the plans the correct portal frame design to be used where required, noting the width of each side panel for the design complete with any hold downs specific to that design.
- Each plan set will also contain notes specific to the type of braced wall panels for the minimum panel thickness, nailing size and spacing and any required blocking. As part of the plan set, please include the specific design for a prescriptive portal frame if used.

Please note:
Exterior sheathing used in braced wall panels (BWP) and continuous sheathing methods are subject to the fastening requirements of Table R602.3(3) indicating the use of 6d or 8d nails, and may not employ the use of alternative fastening (staples) found in Table R602.3(2).

For questions call the Spokane County Department of Building and Planning at (509) 477-3675.