

CHAPTER 3 BUILDING PLANNING

SECTION R318.1
IRC Interpretation No. 01-05
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(Staff Note added 06-06-05)

R318.1 Moisture control. In all framed walls, floors and roof/ceilings comprising elements of the building thermal envelope, a vapor retarder shall be installed on the warm-in winter side of the insulation.

Exceptions:

1. In construction where moisture or freezing will not damage the materials.
2. Where the framed cavity or space is ventilated to allow moisture to escape.
3. In counties identified with footnote a in Table N1101.2.



Q: The requirements in Section R318.1 stipulates that a vapor retarder must be installed on the warm-in-winter side of the thermal insulation. Is the installation of the vapor retarder required continuously across the face of the wall studs?

A: No. The word continuous is not used in the referenced code section. Therefore, a vapor retarder is not required to be installed in a manner that will provide a continuous barrier on the warm-in-winter side of the exterior wall. The performance criteria of a vapor retarder establishes that material must have a permeance rating not exceeding 1 perm in order to limit the amount of moisture vapor that passes through a material.

Staff Note: Also see *International Energy Conservation Code*, Committee Interpretation 02-05, Section 502.1.1 Moisture Control.
