CHAPTER 6
WALL CONSTRUCTION

SECTION R602.2
2018 Edition
IRC Interpretation 34-21
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R602.2 Grade. Studs shall be a minimum No. 3, standard or stud grade lumber.

Exception: Bearing studs not supporting floors and nonbearing studs shall be permitted to be utility grade lumber, provided that the studs are spaced in accordance with Table R602.3(5).

REFERENCED SECTIONS:

R602.1.1 Sawn lumber. Sawn lumber shall be identified by a grade mark of an accredited lumber grading or inspection agency and have design values certified by an accreditation body that complies with DOC PS 20. In lieu of a grade mark, a certification of inspection issued by a lumber grading or inspection agency meeting the requirements of this section shall be accepted.

R602.3.1 Stud size, height and spacing. The size, height and spacing of studs shall be in accordance with Table R602.3(5).

Exceptions #1, #2 and #3 not included for brevity.

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Q: Section R602.2 requires studs in conventional wood-framed construction to be a minimum grade of No.3, standard or stud grade lumber. Is it the intent of Section R602.2 to require a specific lumber species requirement for studs?

A: No. Section R602.1.1 requires lumber to be identified by a grade mark of an accredited lumber grading or inspection agency which has design values complying with DOC PS 20. Section R602.2 specifies minimum grade requirements while Section R602.3.1 specifies requirements for studs based on size, height and spacing under various loading conditions. Neither of these sections nor referenced Table R602.3(5) include a reference to a specific lumber species requirement for studs.

While the IRC wood construction girder and header span tables are based on four recognized lumber species; Douglas fir-larch, hem-fir, Southern pine and spruce-pine-fir, Section R602.1.1 does not include a wood species requirement for studs. Therefore, other lumber species for wood studs could be used depending on their grade stamp and the design values that the lumber species were based upon.