

Weep Holes in Brick Veneer

Q. Are weep holes in a typical wood-frame brick-veneer home required anywhere other than at the bottom? What about over and under windows? Also, is it required that a brick window sill be pitched? Are weep holes required in faux-stone installations?

A. JLC editor Don Jackson responds: Yes to all questions: It's important to bring any water that might be running down the surface of the wood-framed wall back out on the surface of the brick anywhere it might enter the framing. The 2003 IRC requires minimum 3/16-inch-diameter weep holes every 33 inches, just above the flashing (R703.7.6). Flashing, in turn, is required under the first course of masonry at ground level, above windows and doors, below window sills, and at any lintels and shelf angles (R703.7.5, R703.8). Many of these details are included in Figure R703.7.

The Brick Industry Association (www.bia.org) is an excellent source of information on proper brick-veneer construction; the drawing at right is based primarily on BIA recommendations, which frequently go beyond code minimums.

Oddly, the IRC doesn't require building paper over the plywood or OSB sheathing as long as there's a 1-inch air space. However, both the BIA and the APA recommend paper, and it shouldn't be left out.

Flashing Brick Exteriors

