

Market Advisory

March 2010

Canadian Building Code Requirements for Structural Plywood Panels

Product Certification

Building codes applicable in Canadian jurisdictions specify the use of products manufactured to specific standards. Wood-based panels (plywood and OSB) used for subfloors, roof and wall sheathing in Housing and Small Buildings (Part 9 construction) must conform to CSA standards. Non-conformance can result in rejection by building code inspectors.

Panel Thickness

CSA plywood standards specify requirements for marking of "non-standard" thicknesses, which is important for code compliance verification. For products manufactured to prescriptive Canadian plywood standards (CSA O121 Douglas Fir Plywood, CSA O151 Canadian Softwood Plywood, or CSA O153 Poplar Plywood), the applicable building code specifies a minimum required thickness for floor, roof and wall sheathing applications. There is no allowance for the substitution of thinner ("scant" thickness) panels within prescriptive CSA standards; ie:

- **11/32" / 8.7 mm plywood can not** be substituted for applications specifying **9.5 mm** (e.g. use as roof sheathing with supported edges @ 24" o.c.)
- **15/32" / 11.9 mm can not** be substituted for applications specifying **12.5 mm** (e.g. use as roof sheathing with unsupported edges @ 24" o.c.)
- **19/32" / 15.1 mm can not** be substituted for applications specifying **15.5 mm** (e.g. use as subflooring @ 16" o.c.)

Canadian Sheathing Grades

Regular sheathing grades specified in CSA standards are not identical to CSA-permissible Custom Grades, or typical grades in other standards such as US PS1-07. Such products would not be regularly acceptable for Canadian code applications.

	Sheathing (per CSA Canadian plywood manufacturing standard)	
	Veneer Grade	Max knot size
Face ply	C	2"
Inner plies	C	2"
Back ply	C	2"
Bond Durability	Exterior "The bond shall be sufficient to resist exposure to extreme conditions of moisture and temperature" (CSA standard)"	

Plywood certified with the CANPLY mark provides third party assurance that products are manufactured to conform to all applicable codes and standards.



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