Informal Interpretation Report
Number 7201

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Section M1411.5

Question:

Is it the intent of the residential code to require pipe insulation meet R-4 value, but the Energy Code 403.3 to only require R-3. So is it true the most restrictive shall be enforced?

Answer

The answer is yes. the section in question specifically addresses residential "vapor" lines while the referenced section in the energy code addresses "fluids" above 105F or below 55F. The reference in the residential code is applied to all residential vapor piping.

M1411.5 Insulation of refrigerant piping.
Piping and fittings for refrigerant vapor (suction) lines shall be insulated with insulation having a thermal resistivity of at least R-4 and having external surface permeance not exceeding 0.05 perm [2.87 ng/(s × m2 × Pa)] when tested in accordance with ASTM E 96.

FBC EC 403.3 Mechanical system piping insulation (Mandatory). Mechanical system piping capable of carrying fluids above 105°F (41°C) or below 55°F (13°C) shall be insulated to a minimum of R-3.

Commentary:

None.

Notice:
The Building Officials Association of Florida, in cooperation with the Florida Building Commission, the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation, ICC, and industry and professional experts offer this interpretation of the Florida Building Code in the interest of consistency in their application statewide. This

interpretation is informal, non-binding and subject to acceptance and approval by the local building official.