

Ask Jon Eakes

ARE BROWN PAPER-BACKED FIBERGLASS BATTES GOOD VAPOUR BARRIERS?

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No, but don't worry about it; they are no longer available in Canada anyway. It was impossible to seal the joints, which let through more moisture than the paper ever stopped. They were actually eliminated in Canada because their fire ratings required them to be covered with special materials. It was finally figured out that gluing paper to the battes was a waste of time and money and with the advent of "friction fit" battes, the paper was no longer needed to hold the insulation in place. When you have paper covered fiberglass in your wall, treat your wall as if you had no vapour barrier at all. Make a good air barrier with caulking, and if you're really worried, add two coats of oil paint or one of latex vapour barrier paint to the wall and ceiling.

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