



**COUNTY OF PLACER**  
**Community Development Resource Agency**

**BUILDING**

Administrative Policy  
CODE CLARIFICATION  
Tub and Shower  
Gypsum Tile Backer

To: Building Division Staff  
From: Jeff Thomas, Supervising Building Inspector  
Approved: Tim Wegner, Chief Building Official  
Effective Date: November 21, 2014

**ISSUE:**

To clarify the use of water resistant gypsum wall board as a base or backer board for tile or wall panels.

**POLICY:**

Water resistant gypsum board shall not be used in the following locations:

- In areas where there will be direct exposure to water or continuous high humidity; such as shower or tub compartments.
- Over a vapor retarder in shower or bath tub areas.
- On ceilings where the framing members are spaced more than 12 inches on center for ½ inch thick water resistant gypsum panels or 16 inches on center for 5/8 inch thick water resistant gypsum panels.

In tub and shower compartments, the following types of bases or backers must be used:

- Fiber cement board (per ASTM C 1288);
- Fiber-mat reinforced cementitious backer units (per ASTM C 1325);
- Glass mat gypsum backer (per ASTM C 1178); or
- Fiber-reinforced gypsum backers (per ASTM C 1278).

This policy is to provide uniformity in the field during inspection of bathrooms, showers and tub enclosures.