

Excessive Gaps in Wood Decking

Technical Bulletin FH 2023-07

Last Update:

November 15, 2024

First Release:

April 17, 2013

Applicable Standards:

FORTIFIED Home™—Hurricane
FORTIFIED Home™—High Wind

Applicable Designation Level:



FORTIFIED Home Requirements for Homes with Excessive Gaps Between Wood Decking Boards

Introduction

There are increasing requests for guidance from evaluators and contractors about existing wood board roof decking which has gaps that exceed 1/8 inch. This technical bulletin provides guidance for asphalt shingle roofs that should be followed when these conditions are present to comply with the [2025 FORTIFIED Home™ Standard](#).

Installation Requirements

FORTIFIED standards, asphalt shingle manufacturers, and many municipalities require shingles to be installed over a *solidly sheathed* roof deck. The interpretation of “solidly sheathed” is not clearly defined in the code or consistently identified by shingle manufacturers.

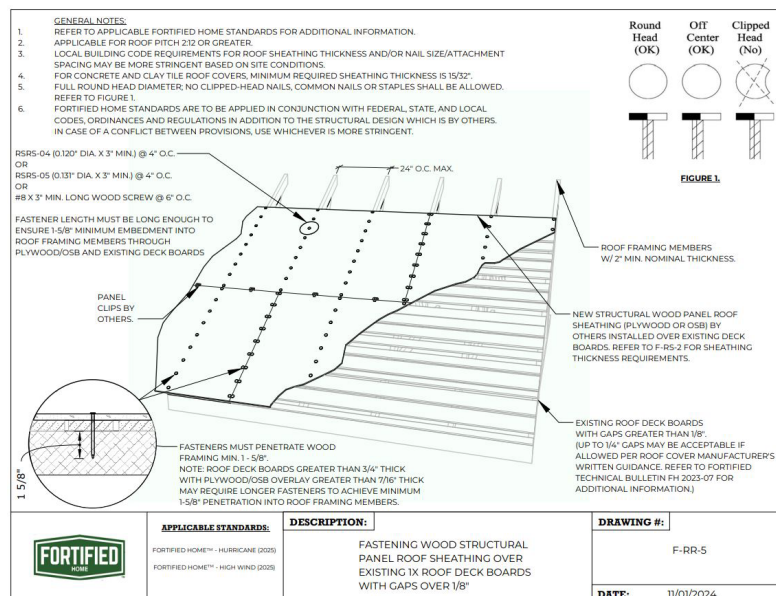


Figure 1: Standard Detail [F-RR-5](#)





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FORTIFIED requires wood structural panel overlay to be installed over existing roof deck boards with gaps greater than 1/8 inch, or if the roof cover manufacturer has specific guidance that allows for gaps greater than 1/8 inch, then up to 1/4 inch maximum gaps between boards are allowed in compliance with manufacturer guidance. However, in any case where gaps between boards exceed 1/4 inch, wood structural panel overlay must be installed.

For installation of wood structural panel overlay, prescriptive [FORTIFIED Standard Detail F-RR-5](#) may be followed, or overlay may be installed in compliance with a site-specific professional engineering design.

Compliance Verification Requirements

- Provide 4 photos from different areas from the topside of the bare roof deck, with tape measure, showing gap width.
- Refer to the Documentation Requirements checklist and provide all required photos listed for roof deck attachment.
- If the roof cover manufacturer's guidance allows for gaps greater than 1/8 in., include their published guidance with the evaluation, along with the roof deck attachment photos.
 - **Board decking with spaces greater than 1/4 inch are not eligible for a FORTIFIED Designation**

Additional References

- [2025 FORTIFIED Home Standard](#)
- [Standard Detail F-RR-5](#)
- [FORTIFIED Home Documentation Requirements](#)
- [FORTIFIED Legal Disclaimer](#)

