

THE FACTS: BRICK VS. EIFS

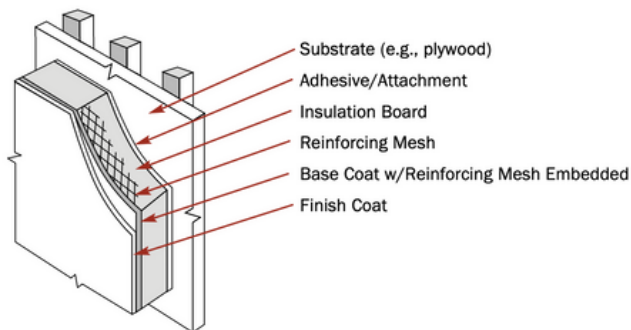


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THE FAKE STUCCO ALTERNATIVE: EIFS

Never heard of EIFS? **It's synthetic stucco**, short for Exterior Insulation and Finish System. Think of it as a layered cake: drywall, studs, sheathing, insulation, base coat with mesh, and finish coat. The base coat uses polymers and cement, with plastic or glass mesh for reinforcement. The finish coat typically contains acrylic and sand.

But there's a catch: **EIFS can be a barrier or drainage system**. The older barrier system is prone to moisture problems, leading to cracking and mold. This has led to bans in some areas. Newer drainage systems add an air gap and moisture barrier to improve performance, but deficiencies still exist.



DEBUNKING POPULAR MYTHS

Brick's versatility extends beyond its natural color. Achieve a smooth, monolithic look with matching mortar or unleash your creativity with contrasting accents and special shapes. Brick's inherent drainage design and thermal mass offer superior performance compared to EIFS, making it a sound investment for both aesthetics and comfort.



“Brick walls can leak just like EIFS walls.”

“EIFS is cheaper than brick.”

“EIFS provides better, continuous insulation.”



EIFS WEAKNESSES

Water Intrusion and Rot:

- EIFS can't prevent water infiltration, trapping it inside the walls and rotting the wood framing.
- Drainage systems are new and unproven, and construction precision is critical, making EIFS susceptible to water damage.

Fire Hazard:

- EIFS is considered combustible and can ignite easily, spreading fire rapidly.
- This risk has led some cities to ban or restrict its use.

Easily Damaged and Vulnerable:

- EIFS walls are easily damaged by physical impact and readily attract termites and other pests.
- Repairs are noticeable, impacting the property's aesthetic.

Cracking and Insurance Challenges:

- The acrylic coat can crack due to temperature changes, allowing further water intrusion.
- EIFS homes may face higher insurance premiums or be uninsurable altogether.



Here's what the National Association of Home Builders said:

“In NAHB’s opinion, barrier EIFS systems have proven to be incompatible with the existing wood frame construction methods typically used in residential construction in the United States.”

Build Smarter, Build Stronger, Build with Brick

