

Brick Home Tests Show Fire Prevention Starts Outside

[Brief Video: Firefighters Talk Fire Resistance](#)

RESTON, Va., October 7, 2019 – As homeowners change their smoke alarm batteries this month and keep fire extinguishers handy, brick home studies show fire safety starts on the outside.

Firefighters report that it takes about an hour and half for a fire to breach a brick home—as compared to fiber cement in under an hour and vinyl siding in just minutes.

Choosing brick exteriors to protect their own firehouses, they say brick also helps slow the spread gaining an extra few minutes to help save lives and property.

In a one-hour severe fire test conducted independently for the Brick Industry Association (BIA) brick passed easily. The study tested hollow brick alongside vinyl siding and fiber cement in typically constructed exterior wall sections.

Vinyl siding burned after only 18 minutes, and fiber cement – which outperforms wood and vinyl siding – failed in under an hour. Failure occurs when flames penetrate the wall that are hot enough to ignite cotton waste on the other side, or when the temperature rises to over 250 F or greater on the unexposed side of the wall, or when structural collapse of the wall occurs under the applied design load.

"Fired-clay brick is an essential element of strong, safe and sustainable homes that can also help reduce property damage," said BIA COO Stephen Sears.

Brick cladding can provide fire protection without other elements in the wall system to do the job. Fired-clay brick has tested to provide a minimum one-hour fire resistance rating *alone*—regardless of backing material—unlike other exteriors that need to incorporate fire-resistant materials in their wall systems, as recognized by ASTM E119, *Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials* and the International Building Code (IBC).

Made from abundant natural materials, fired clay brick is an authentic, earth-friendly and noncombustible material free of volatile compounds that will not burn, melt or combust. Its innate fire resistance is why brick chimneys and steps are frequently the only things left standing after fire events.

Brick also scores highest in moisture resistance, wind/storm protection, earthquake and tornado resistance and protection from wind-blown debris.

To learn more, go to Fire Prevention at www.gobrick.com.

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BIA is the nationally recognized authority on clay brick construction representing the nation's distributors and manufacturers of clay brick and suppliers of related products. Contact: www.gobrick.com. 703-620-0010.