

# CAE 463/524

## Building Enclosure Design

Fall 2013

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**Lecture 7: October 9, 2013**

Air movements in enclosures

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Research

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# Campus project

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- Alumni Hall
  - Akram, Honnie, and Ying
- Crown Hall
  - Juneyoung, Sunyoung, Camila
- Engineering 1
  - Firaz, Gilberto, Jay
- Stuart
  - Alex, Ausrine, Liz, and Dan
- Check out equipment from my lab in Alumni 217
  - IR camera, IR temp gun, HOBO T/RH data logger, T/RH pen, moisture meter
  - Sign out sheet – keep no more than 2-3 days
    - Also email me when you sign out and return

# Final project topics: Select by today

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presentation date</b>
Camila		
Liz	Electrochromic windows	
Honnie		
Dan	Insulated concrete forms	
Akram		
Sunyoung		Nov 20
Gilberto		
June Young		
Firas	Double skin facades	
Ausrine		
Jay		
Alex		
Ying		

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# Scheduling

Week	Date	Lecture Topics	Reading	Assignment Due
1	Aug 21	Introduction to building enclosure design	Straube Ch. 2-3	
2	Aug 28	Building science review		
3	Sep 4	Heat transfer in building enclosures 1. Energy balances and solar radiation	Straube Ch. 4-5	
4	Sep 11	Heat transfer in building enclosures (cont.) 2. Complex conduction	Lstiburek 2012	HW1
5	Sep 18	Finish complex conduction		
6	Sep 25	Moisture flows in building enclosures	Straube Ch. 6; Kazmierczak 2010; Karagiozis et al. 2010; Straube Ch. 9-10 Lstiburek 2004	HW2
7	Oct 2	No class - Away at conference (AAAR) <b>Use this time for campus building assessments</b>		
8	Oct 9	Air movements in enclosures Air leakage performance testing	Straube Ch. 7; Younes et al. 2012	HW3
9	Oct 16	No class - Away at conference (ASHRAE IAQ) Refer to posted lecture notes on a variety of applications		Take-home exam released
10	Oct 23	Moisture management and control	Selkowitz 2011; Straube 2008	Take-home exam due
11	Oct 30	Energy simulation and enclosure design 1. Introduction to energy modeling software	Asadi et al., 2012; Asan 2006; Medina 2000; TenWolde 1997	
12	Nov 6	Codes and standards		HW4
13	Nov 13	Impacts of enclosures on IAQ Enclosure research	Liu and Nazaroff 2001; Stephens and Siegel 2012	Campus projects due
14	Nov 20	Final project presentations part 1 Course wrap-up		
15	Nov 27	<i>No class - Thanksgiving break</i>		
Final	Dec 4	Final project presentations part 2		Final report

Take-home exam released next week

HW4 postponed 1 week

Campus projects postponed 1 week

# Last time

- Moisture flows in building enclosures

- Water vapor diffusion**

- Permeability and permeance

- Bulk convection of moist air**

$$\dot{M}_{v,conv} = \rho_{air} \dot{V}_{air} W$$

$$\dot{M}_v = \frac{\mu}{L} A (p_{w,1} - p_{w,2}) = MA (p_{w,1} - p_{w,2}) = \frac{1}{R_v} A (p_{w,1} - p_{w,2})$$

$$M = \frac{\mu}{L} \quad \text{and} \quad R_v = \frac{1}{M}$$

$M$  = vapor permeance [ng/(s m<sup>2</sup> Pa)]

$R_v$  = vapor resistance [(s m<sup>2</sup> Pa)/ng]

$\dot{M}_v$  = rate of water vapor mass flow [ng/s]

$A$  = area perpendicular to flow [m<sup>2</sup>]

$\mu$  = average vapor permeability [ng/(m Pa s)]

$L$  = length of material [m]

$p_{w,i}$  = vapor pressure on either side of material [Pa]

- Vapor pressure through assembly**

- Condensation potential**

$$\Delta p_{w,j} = \frac{p_{w,interior} - p_{w,exterior}}{\sum_{j=0}^n R_{v,j}} R_{v,j}$$

**Units for M:**

1 perm = 1 grain/(hr ft<sup>2</sup> inHg)

1 perm = 57.2 ng/(s m<sup>2</sup> Pa)

# Last time

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- General rules for vapor permeance are as follows:

Type	Perms (IP units) [grains/(hr ft <sup>2</sup> inHg)]	SI units [ng/(s m <sup>2</sup> Pa)]	Example
Class I vapor retarder Vapor barrier Vapor impermeable	0.1 or less	5.7	Foil Polyethylene
Class II vapor retarder Vapor semi-impermeable	0.1-1	5.7-57	Brick XPS
Class III vapor retarder Vapor semi-permeable	1-10	57-570	Poly-iso EPS
Vapor permeable NOT a vapor retarder	10+	570+	Gypsum board

# This time

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- Airflows in enclosures
  - Fundamentals
  - Governing equations
  - Measurement techniques
  - Energy implications
  - Control strategies and applications

*...Was going to cover moisture management and control in enclosures, but will delay for a future lecture*

# Heat, air, and moisture: HAM

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- Thus far in class, we've spent a lot of time on:
  - **Heat** transfer and **moisture** transport
- We've only briefly touched on:
  - **Air** transport
- Air movement is crucial to both heat and moisture
- Air transport accounts for large portion of energy use
- Air transport also a major source of water vapor that can lead to condensation
  - Indoor-to-outdoor flows in cold climates
  - Outdoor-to-indoor flows in warm, humid climates

# Airflows in building enclosures

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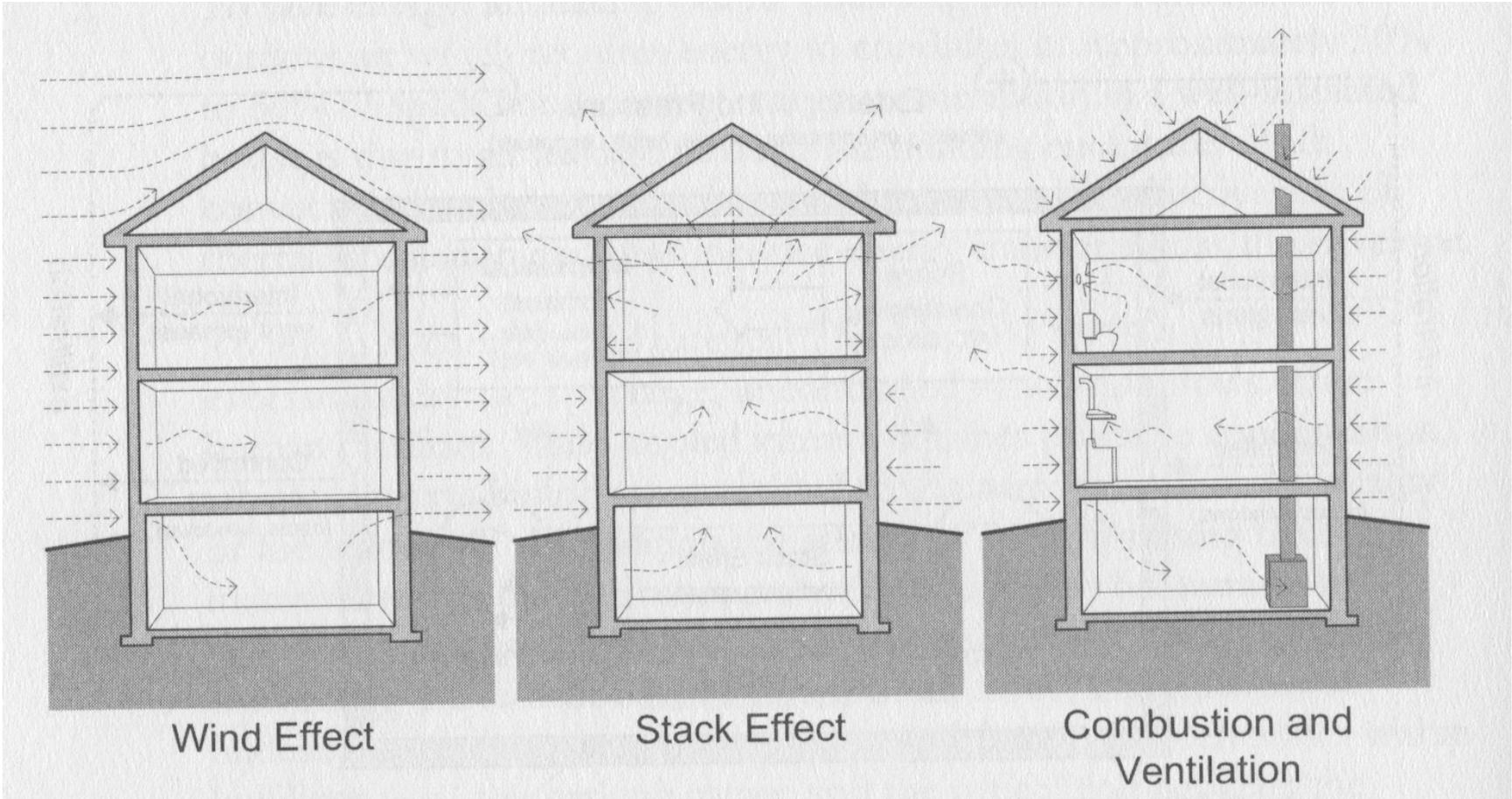
- Outdoor air flowing into a building
  - Can be used to dilute indoor contaminants
  - Can lead to excess energy use
  - Can lead to moisture transport
  
- Two primary categories
  - **Ventilation**
    - Usually intentional
  - **Infiltration/exfiltration**
    - Usually unintentional

# Airflow in enclosures

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- For airflow to occur:
  - There must be a flow **path** (opening)
  - There must be an air **pressure difference** (driving force)
- Three primary mechanisms generate pressure differences (driving forces)
  - Wind
  - Stack effect (natural buoyancy)
  - Mechanical air handling equipment

# Driving forces



Wind Effect

Stack Effect

Combustion and Ventilation

Infiltration/exfiltration

Ventilation

# Infiltration and exfiltration

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- **Infiltration** is the flow of outdoor air **into** a building through leaks, cracks, and other unintentional paths
  - Typically unintentional
- **Exfiltration** is the flow of indoor air **out of** the building through those same paths
- Both mechanisms transport air and moisture
  - Affect heating and cooling loads of a building
  - Also affect indoor air quality

# Infiltration

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- Outside airflow into a building is driven chiefly by pressure differences caused by:
  - Winds
  - Temperature differences
    - Stack effect
- In smaller (< 3 story) residences
  - Pressure gradient on the façade resulting from gusting wind is often the dominant driving force for infiltration
- In larger buildings (e.g., high rises)
  - Driving force is typically stack effect
  - Differences in temperature + height → large buoyancy differences

# Basic fluid mechanics

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- Consider mass of air flow into an enclosure element
  - Must equal the mass of air flow out
    - Although water vapor and heat energy can be gained or lost
  - Treat air as incompressible ideal gas
    - Bernoulli's equation
    - Relates velocity, pressure, and location

$$p_1 + \frac{1}{2} \rho_1 v_1^2 + \rho_1 g h_1 = p_2 + \frac{1}{2} \rho_2 v_2^2 + \rho_2 g h_2$$

Static  
pressure

Velocity  
pressure  
(kinetic)

Pressure  
head  
(potential)

# Basic fluid mechanics: flow through a crack

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- Given a crack, orifice, or opening in enclosure (channel flow)
  - Assume no height difference ( $h_1 = h_2$ ), constant density ( $\rho_1 = \rho_2$ ), and that  $v_1$  is negligible (very far from the crack)

$$p_1 + \frac{1}{2} \rho_1 v_1^2 + \rho_1 g h_1 = p_2 + \frac{1}{2} \rho_2 v_2^2 + \rho_2 g h_2$$

- Becomes:

$$p_1 = p_2 + \frac{1}{2} \rho_2 v_2^2$$

- Rearranging:

$$\frac{2(p_1 - p_2)}{\rho} = v^2$$

# Basic fluid mechanics: flow through a crack

---

- Given a crack, orifice, or opening in enclosure (channel flow)
  - Assume no height difference ( $h_1 = h_2$ ), constant density ( $\rho_1 = \rho_2$ ), and that  $v_1$  is negligible (very far from the crack)
  - Velocity through crack can be expressed as:

$$v = \sqrt{\frac{2\Delta P}{\rho}}$$

where  $\Delta P$  is the pressure difference across the opening

# Basic fluid mechanics: flow through a crack

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- Given an area,  $A$ , of the opening/crack/orifice, the airflow rate,  $Q$ , will be:

$$Q = vA = A \sqrt{\frac{2\Delta P}{\rho}}$$

- But only under ideal conditions
- Measurements would deviate from this calculation
  - Ignores losses due to friction and turbulence
  - Enter: the discharge coefficient,  $C_d$ 
    - Accounts for fluid contraction and friction
    - Typical  $C_d$  for sharp-edge orifice is 0.61

$$Q = C_d A \sqrt{\frac{2\Delta P}{\rho}}$$

# Basic fluid mechanics: laminar flow through porous media

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- Laminar flow through a crack or porous medium can be described by Darcy's equation
  - Airflow related linearly to driving air pressure difference

$$Q = KA\Delta P$$

- K is a proportionality constant (m/Pa-s)
  - Also referred to as air permeance
  - Used much in the same way as vapor permeance
- 
- Remember that channel flow is related to square root of  $\Delta P$

# Air permeance of materials

- Our book lists materials and their air permeance
  - Data can be difficult to find
  - Note that the values in this table should be multiplied by  $10^{-6}$  to get actual value
  - Example:
    - K for 200 mm of concrete brick is not 150 m/(Pa-s)
    - K is actually  $150 \times 10^{-6}$  m/(Pa-s)
  - Also: values of n near 1.0 show the approximately linear relationship between flow and pressure (will explore later)

Table 7.1: Air permeance of common building materials ( $Q = k \Delta P^n$ ) [Bumbaru *et al* 1988]

Material	K ( $\times 10^6$ )	n
200 mm concrete block	150	0.990
12.7 mm drywall, unfinished	0.266	0.995
12.7 mm interior moisture-resistant drywall	0.120	1.000
12.7 mm sheathing grade gypsum & taped joints	0.200	1.000
11 mm asphalt-impregnated fibreboard	11.27	0.995
11 mm fibreboard	11.47	0.990
8 mm plywood sheathing	0.11	0.944
16 mm waferboard	0.101	0.979
12.7 mm particle board	0.210	0.996
15 x 127 m tongue & groove boards (8 joints / m)	1670	0.564
30 lb roofing felt	2.535	0.996
15 lb unperforated asphalt building paper	3.607	1.000
15 lb. perforated asphalt sheathing paper	6.629	0.947
Tyvek on 25 mm fibreglass (Glasclad™)	6.877	0.987
Tyvek™ on 11 mm fibreboard	6.5	1.000
38 Sprayed in-place cellulose	1320	0.970
75 mm loose-fill vermiculite	1030	0.979
152 mm fibreglass batt insulation	610	0.949
25.4 mm Type I expanded polystyrene	250	0.900
25.4 mm Type II expanded polystyrene	1.63	0.993

**Notes:**

1. Some materials with no measurable leakage, i.e.  $K < 8 \times 10^{-8}$  m/(Pa-s), 38 mm Type IV extruded polystyrene, 9.5 mm plywood sheathing, foil-faced foam insulations, foil-backed drywall, taped and finished gypsum drywall w/ 2 coats of latex paint and, of course, roofing membranes, steel sheeting, etc.
2. Materials with a permeance of more than about  $1.5 \times 10^{-6}$  m/(Pa-s) are generally inadequate for use as part of an air barrier system. However, materials with a permeance of less than about  $25 \times 10^{-6}$  m/(Pa-s) can be used as secondary layers of airflow resistance to control convective heat and moisture flows, wind washing, etc.

# Basic fluid mechanics: flow through **real cracks**

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- Two primary flow regimes:
  - Channel flow (mostly turbulent)
    - Fluid flow behavior is dominated by fluid inertia
      - More chaotic behavior
    - Airflow through larger openings and with higher  $\Delta P$
  - Porous media flow (laminar)
    - Fluid flow is dominated by viscosity of the fluid
      - Streamline flow; no disruption between layers
    - Airflow through smaller cracks and pores
      - Under smaller pressure differences
- What do actual flows look like?

# Fluid mechanics: Actual flows in enclosures

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- In reality, air flows in building enclosures may include a mixture of laminar, turbulent, and transitional flows
  - Instead of flow through:
    - Single cracks/openings/orifices (turbulent)
    - Single materials with some air permeance (laminar)
- Actual flows include a number of series or parallel cracks, orifices, and permeable materials
  - Very difficult (impossible, really) to accurately determine the number, size, and location of cracks/orifices/leaks in a building envelope
    - Impossible to specifically design for this as well
- Often rely on a general power law relationship between airflow and pressure difference

# Fluid mechanics: Actual flows in enclosures

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- Power law relationship for any tested assembly
  - Valid for single objects and/or entire enclosures

$$Q = C\Delta P^n$$

- $C$  is a flow coefficient
  - An empirical measure that accounts for opening area, the flow path, the flow regime, and frictional effects
  - Strange dimensions for  $C$ :  $\text{m}^3/(\text{s}\cdot\text{Pa}^n)$
- $n$  is a flow exponent
  - Bounded by 0.5 (channel flow) and 1.0 (porous flow)
  - Often equals  $\sim 0.65$  in practice
- This relationship is not fully grounded in theory
  - Tends to just work!

# Fluid mechanics: Actual flows in enclosures

---

- Power law relationship for any tested assembly
  - Valid for single objects and/or entire enclosures

$$Q = C\Delta P^n$$

- Will come back to this relationship later in the lecture
- For now, we will learn about the major driving force:
  - $\Delta P$  (pressure difference)
  - Questions:
    - What drives  $\Delta P$ ?
    - How do we estimate  $\Delta P$ ?
      - » What are typical magnitudes?

# Infiltration driving forces

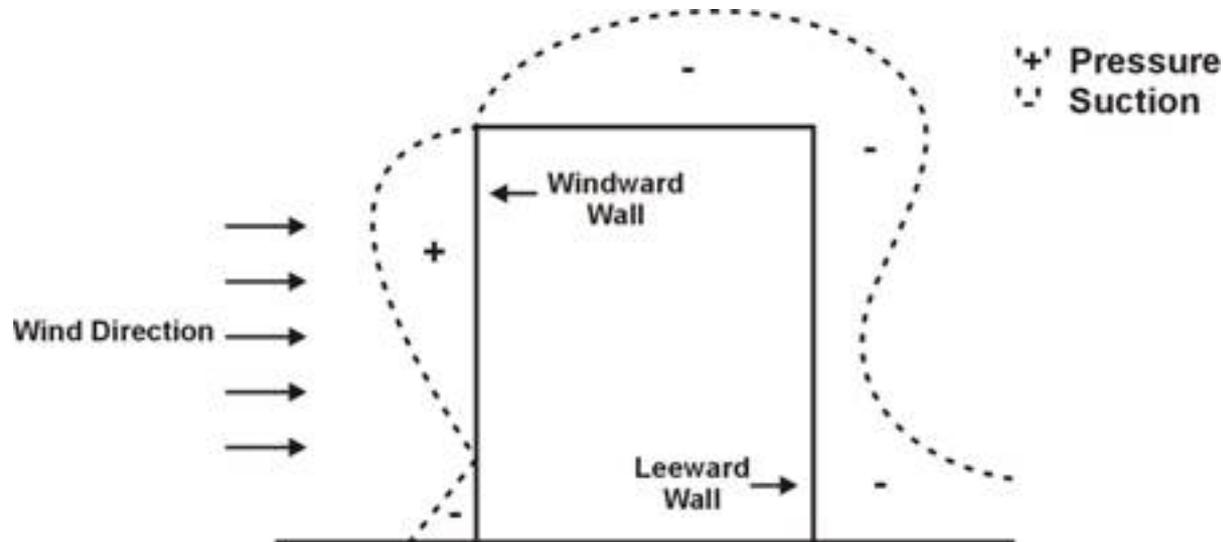
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- Pressure gradient across envelope
  - Driven by **wind pressure**
    - Wind velocity
    - Wind direction
    - Local terrain
    - Building shape
  - Driven by **stack pressure/stack effect**
    - Building height
    - Indoor and outdoor temperatures

# Wind pressure

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- Wind induces a pressure on a building's exterior surface
  - Depends on wind direction, wind speed, air density, surface orientation, and surrounding conditions
  - Generally positive pressure on the windward side
  - Generally negative or positive on the leeward sides
    - Depending on wind angle and building shape



# Wind pressure

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- From velocity component of Bernoulli Equation:

$$P_{velocity} = \frac{1}{2} \rho_{air} U_h^2$$

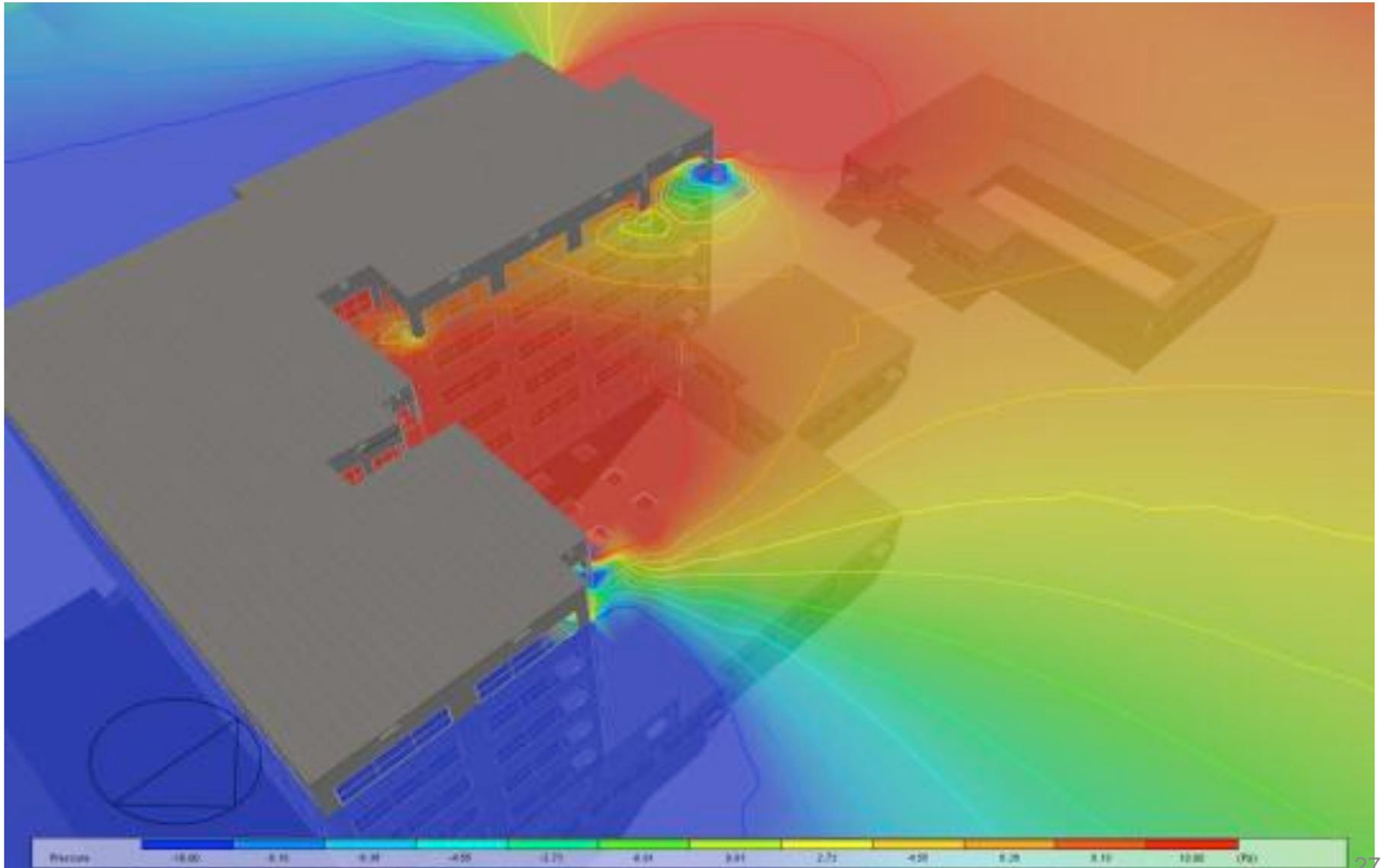
$P_{velocity}$  = wind velocity pressure;  $U_h$  = air velocity at building height,  $h$ ;  $\rho_{air}$  = air density

- To convert velocity pressure to the difference between surface pressure and local atmospheric pressure:
  - Multiply by local wind pressure coefficient,  $C_p$

$$P_{surface} = \Delta P = C_p P_{velocity} = \frac{1}{2} C_p \rho U_h^2$$

- Get  $C_p$  from measurements or from *ASHRAE Fundamentals* Chapter 16 (2005 HOF)

# Wind pressure coefficients ( $C_p$ )



# Wind pressure coefficients ( $C_p$ )

- Difference between pressure on a building surface and the local outdoor atmospheric pressure at the same height,  $P_s$ :

$$P_s = C_p P_{velocity}$$

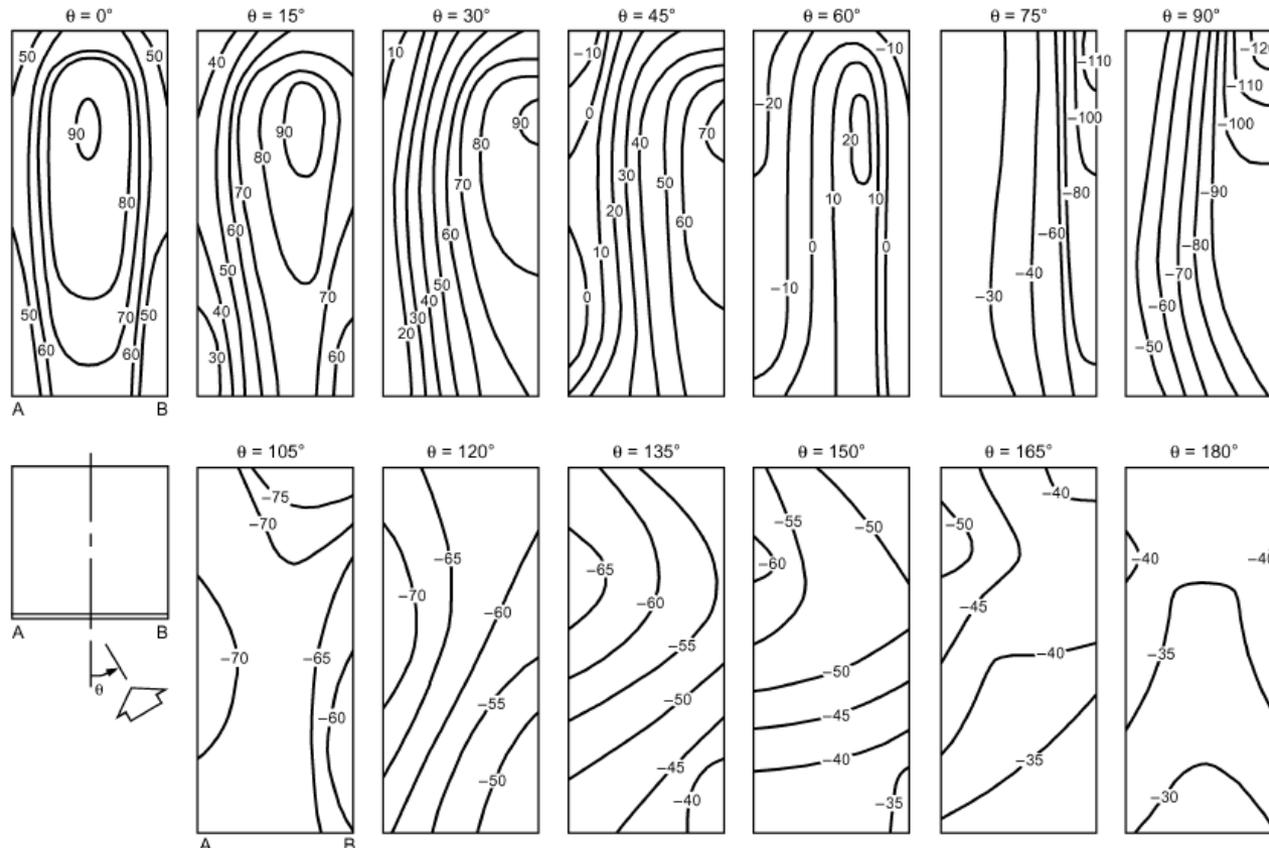
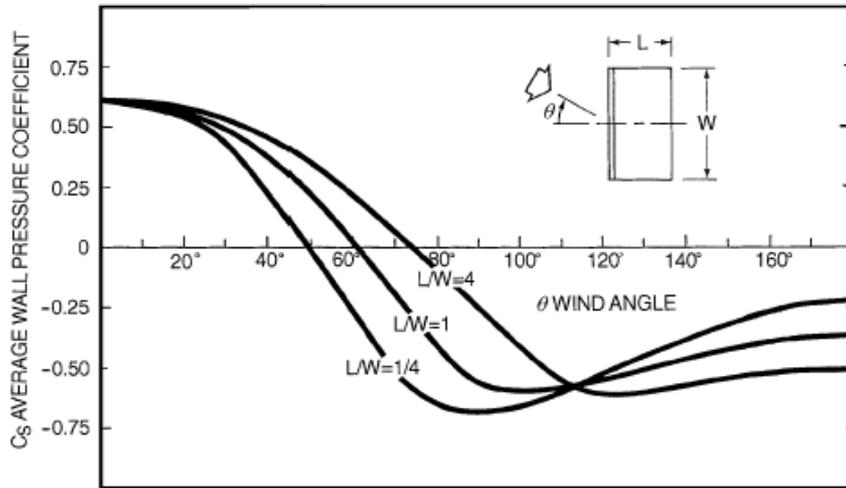
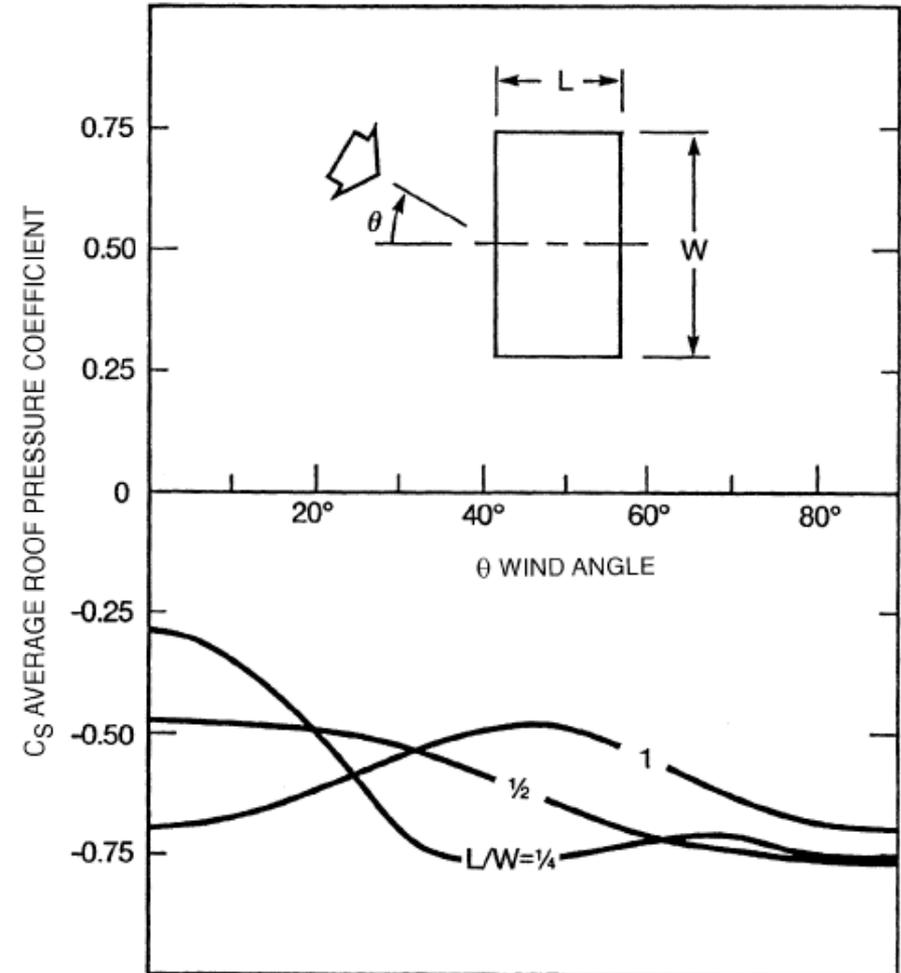


Fig. 4 Local Pressure Coefficients ( $C_p \times 100$ ) for Tall Building with Varying Wind Direction (Davenport and Hui 1982)

# Surface-averaged wind pressure coefficients ( $C_s$ )

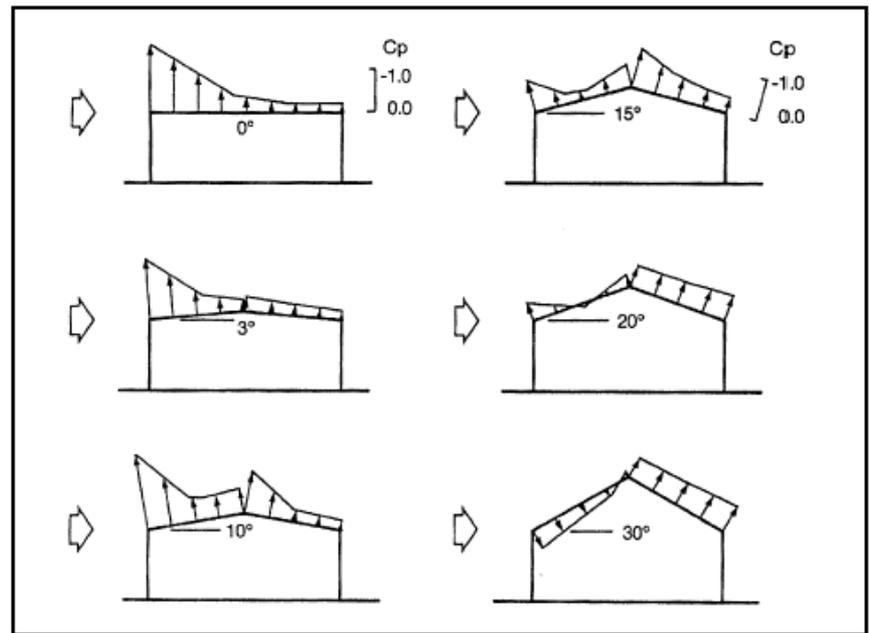
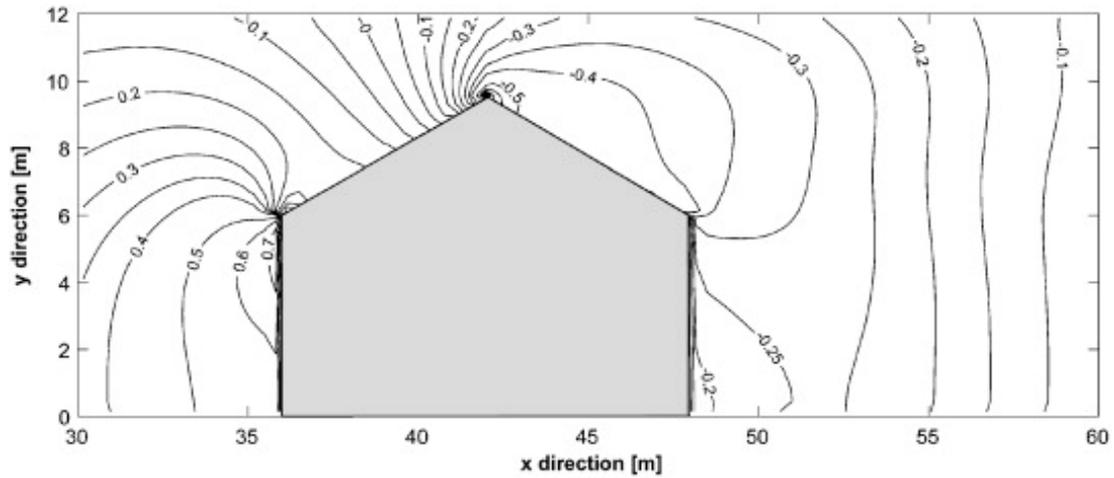
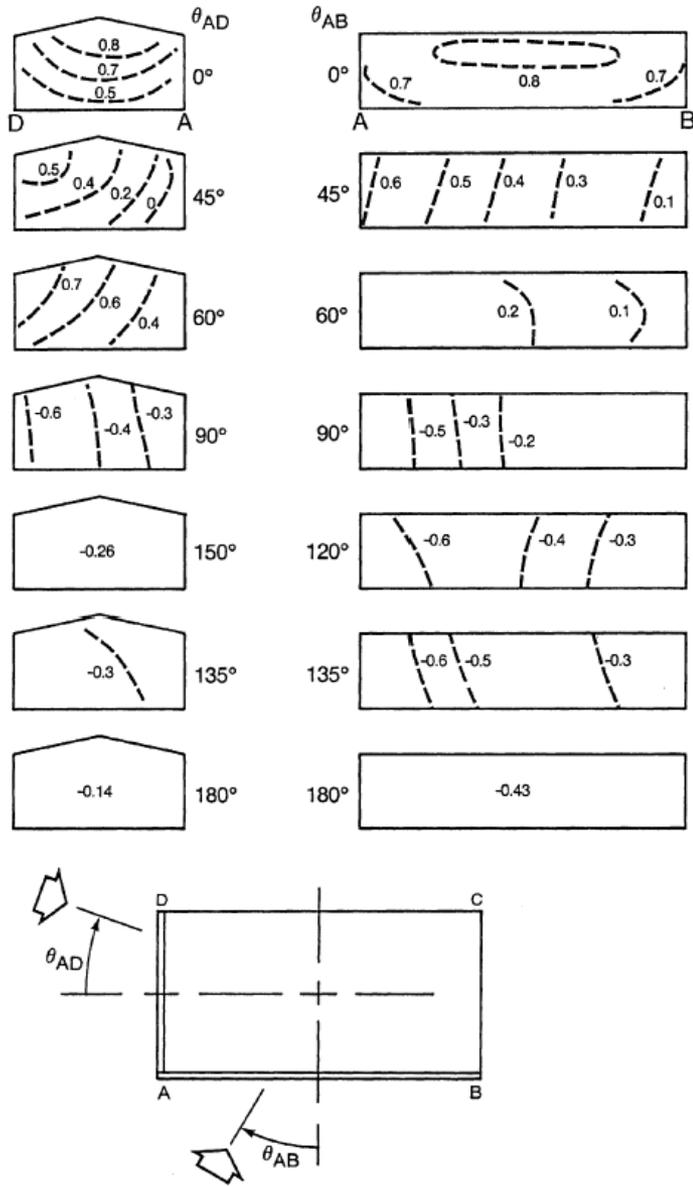


**Fig. 7 Surface Averaged Wall Pressure Coefficients for Tall Buildings**  
(Akins et al. 1979)



**Fig. 9 Surface Averaged Roof Pressure Coefficients for Tall Buildings**  
(Akins et al. 1979)

$$P_{surface} = \Delta P = C_p P_{velocity} = \frac{1}{2} C_p \rho U_h^2$$



**Fig. 5 Local Pressure Coefficients for Walls of Low-Rise Building with Varying Wind Direction**  
(Holmes 1986)

**Fig. 8 Local Roof Pressure Coefficients for Roof of Low-Rise Buildings**  
(Holmes 1986)

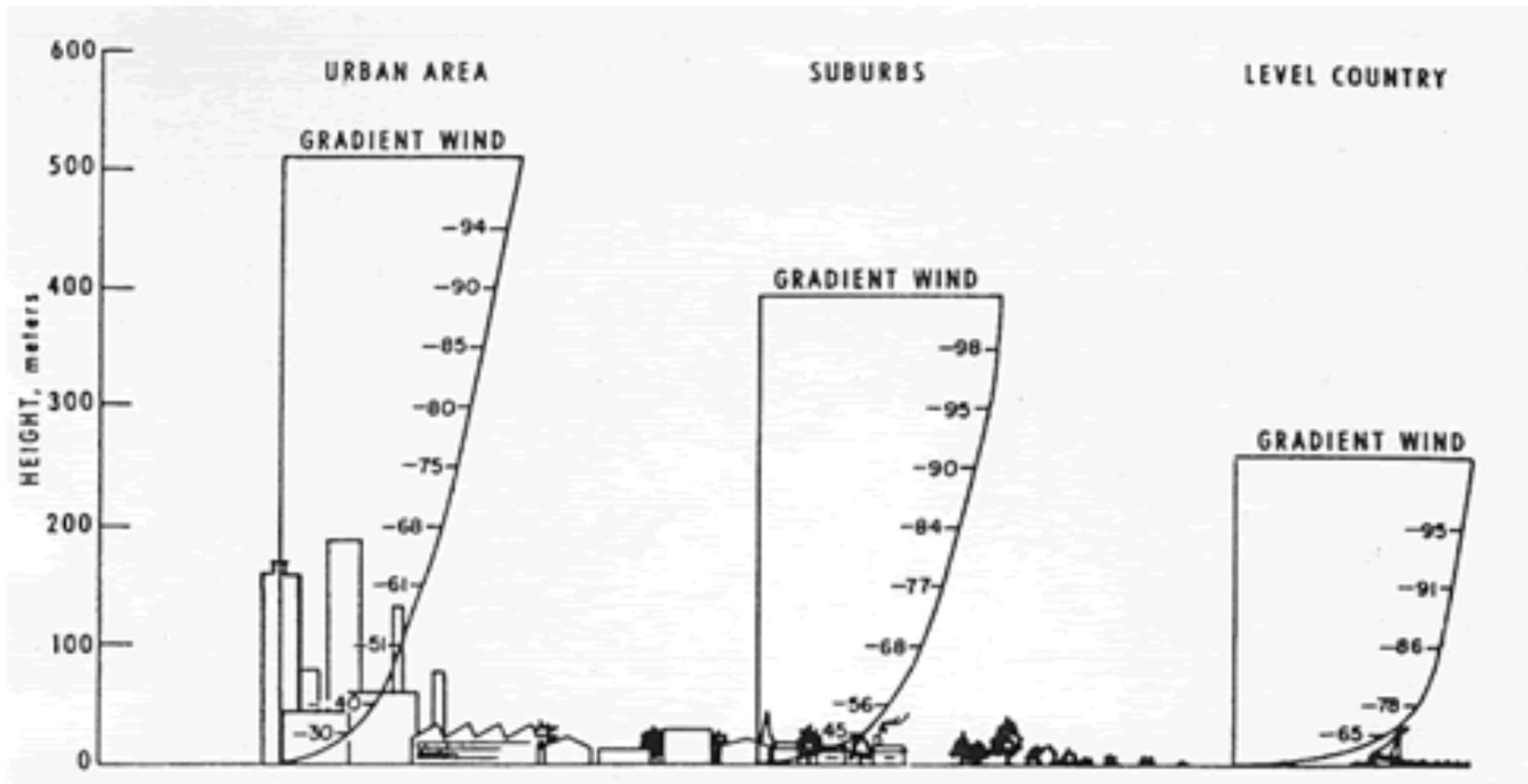
# Wind speed

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- Wind pressure is obviously driven not just by wind direction and how that relates to the building
  - But also wind speed
  - Particularly **local** wind speed
    - Local to the building location
    - Local to specific location on the building
- Wind speed varies drastically in space and time
  - Vertically
  - Horizontally

# Vertical wind speed gradients

- Mean velocity of the wind (and thus the wind pressure) varies with height and terrain



# Vertical wind speed gradients

- Local wind speed at height H can be estimated by applying height and terrain corrections

Table 1 Atmospheric Boundary Layer Parameters

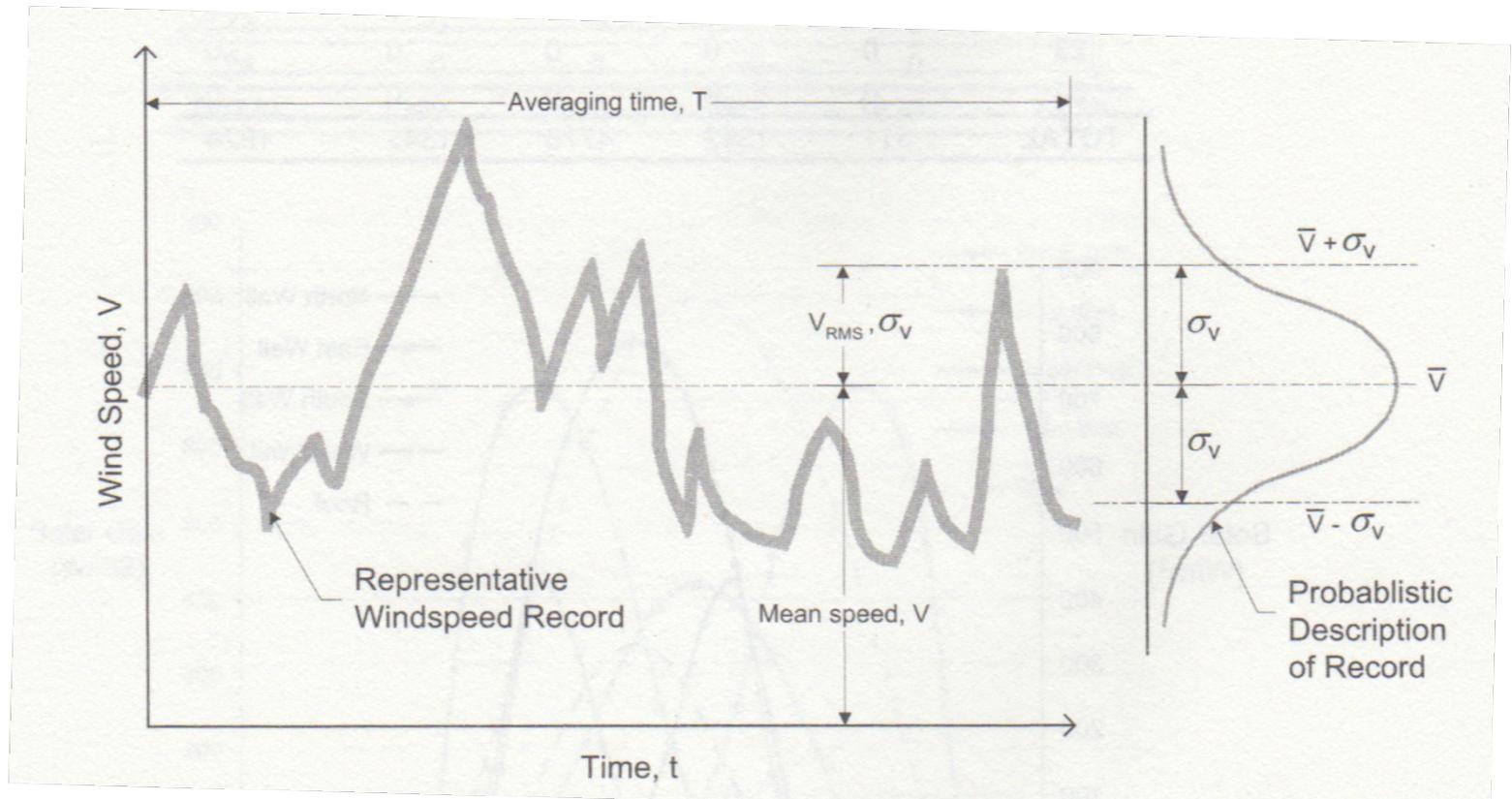
Terrain Category	Description	Exponent $a$	Layer Thickness $\delta$ , m
1	Large city centers, in which at least 50% of buildings are higher than 21.3 m, over a distance of at least 0.8 km or 10 times the height of the structure upwind, whichever is greater	0.33	460
2	Urban and suburban areas, wooded areas, or other terrain with numerous closely spaced obstructions having the size of single-family dwellings or larger, over a distance of at least 460 m or 10 times the height of the structure upwind, whichever is greater	0.22	370
3	Open terrain with scattered obstructions having heights generally less than 9.1 m, including flat open country typical of meteorological station surroundings	0.14	270
4	Flat, unobstructed areas exposed to wind flowing over water for at least 1.6 km, over a distance of 460 m or 10 times the height of the structure inland, whichever is greater	0.10	210

$$U_H = U_{met} \left( \frac{\delta_{met}}{H_{met}} \right)^{a_{met}} \left( \frac{H}{\delta} \right)^a$$

“Met” refers to local meteorological station

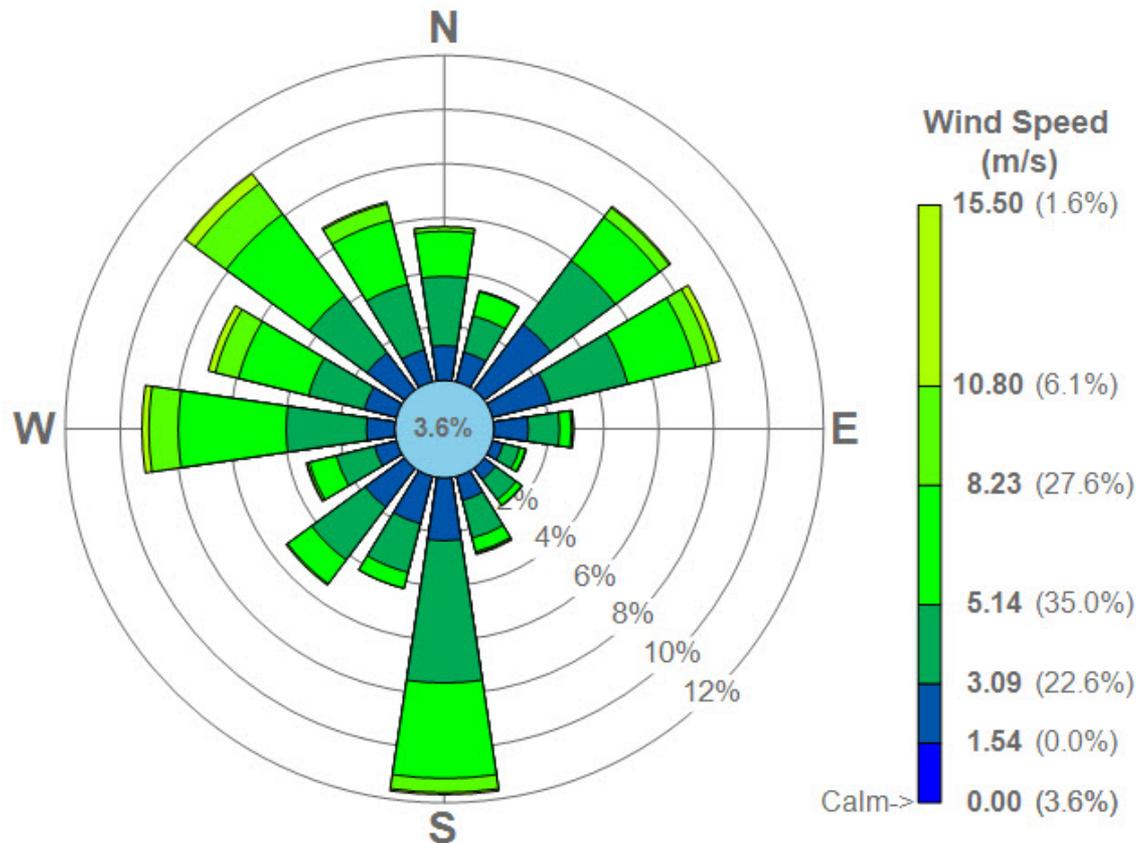
# Temporal wind speed variations

- Wind speed and direction changes often and quickly
  - Sub-one-second velocities are required for detailed analysis
  - Very difficult to do accurately in design phase
    - Requires extensive modeling and/or wind tunnel studies
  - Approximate design can be done with means and distributions

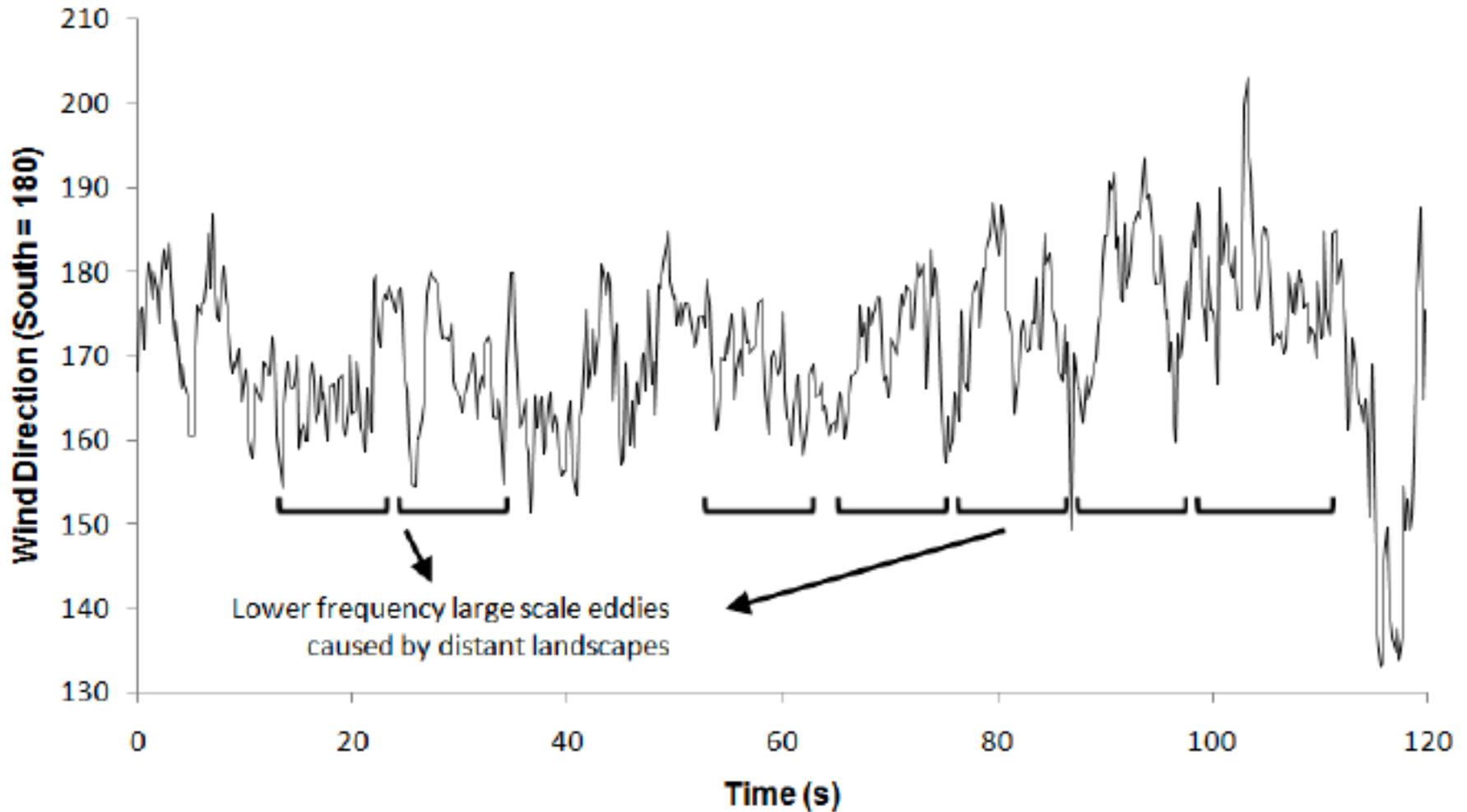


# Wind speed and direction data

- Can get hourly values from NOAA's National Climatic Data Center
  - Just like TMY weather data for heat transfer simulations



# Real measured wind data: instantaneous direction changes

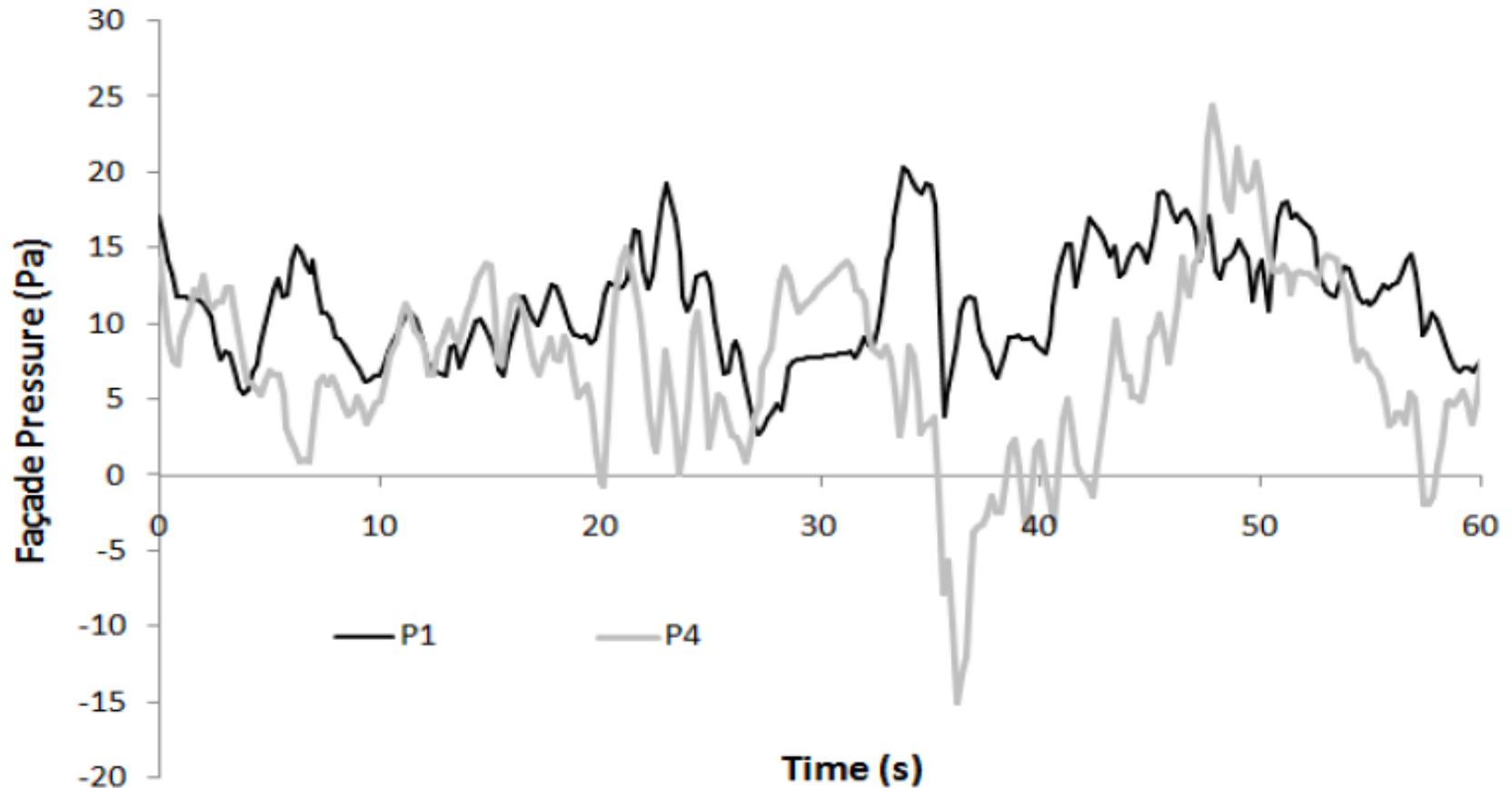


Lower frequency large scale eddies  
caused by distant landscapes

# Real measured wind data: instantaneous façade pressures

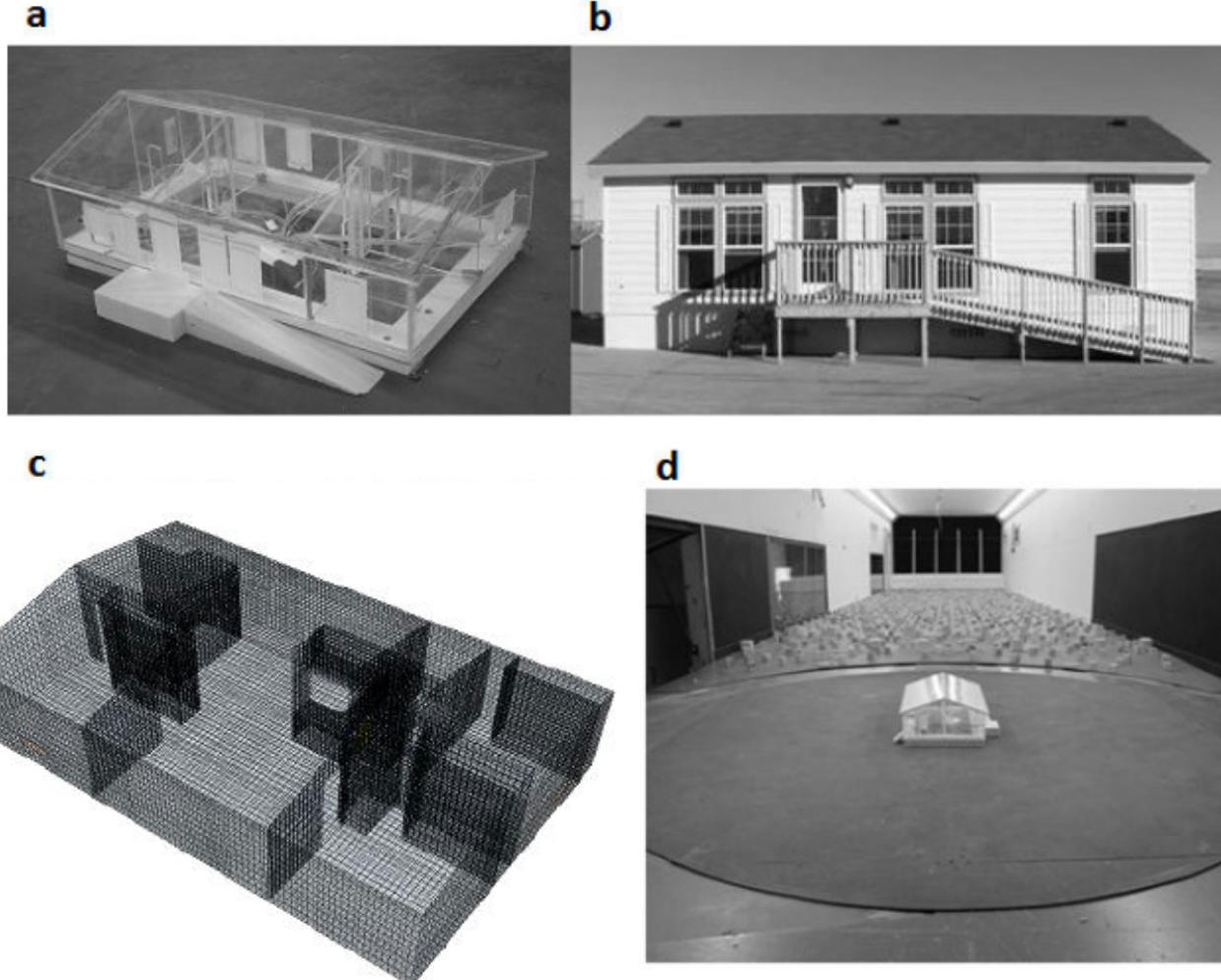
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- Surface pressures measured on two different facades



# Detailed wind analysis in design phase

- Designing for natural ventilation can be costly and time-consuming to do accurately!



# Stack effect

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- Next up: stack effect
  - Driven by temperature differences across envelope
  - Remember the ideal gas law?
  - Air temperature difference yields air density difference

$$\rho = \frac{P}{RT}$$

- Density difference drives buoyancy
- Stack pressure:

$$P = \rho gh$$

# Stack effect

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- In wintertime
  - Air within a building acts like a bubble of **hot** air in a sea of **cold** air
  - **Rises** to the top
  - Draws **outdoor air in from** cracks/gaps/openings in the **bottom**
  - Indoor air out through top
- In summertime
  - Air within a building acts like a bubble of **cold** air in a sea of **hot** air
  - **Falls** to the bottom
  - Drives **indoor air out through** cracks/gaps/openings in **bottom**
  - Outdoor air in through top
    - Temperature differences usually lower in the summer time so amount of flow is smaller

# Stack effect: winter vs. summer

## howitworks

BY BOB THORP

### The stack effect

In winter, the big heat of outdoor air and your combustion furnaces and your stove all aggregate. This is the stack effect, keeping the heat at bay until the cooling starts. The more efficient the furnace or the stove, the more efficient the stack effect and the more heat it carries.

There are three ways that heat can be lost through a house: (1) by conduction, (2) by radiation, and (3) by convection. The stack effect is the most efficient way to lose heat, and it's the most difficult to control. It's the most efficient way to lose heat because it's the most direct path from the heat source to the outside.

The stack effect is a natural phenomenon that occurs in any house with a chimney or a vent. It's caused by the fact that warm air rises and cold air falls. In winter, the heat from the furnace and the stove rises and escapes through the chimney. In summer, the heat from the sun and the air conditioning system rises and escapes through the chimney.

**The heating season**  
The stack effect is a natural phenomenon that occurs in any house with a chimney or a vent. It's caused by the fact that warm air rises and cold air falls. In winter, the heat from the furnace and the stove rises and escapes through the chimney. In summer, the heat from the sun and the air conditioning system rises and escapes through the chimney.

### Cooling

The stack effect is a natural phenomenon that occurs in any house with a chimney or a vent. It's caused by the fact that warm air rises and cold air falls. In summer, the heat from the sun and the air conditioning system rises and escapes through the chimney. In winter, the heat from the furnace and the stove rises and escapes through the chimney.

**The cooling season**  
The stack effect is a natural phenomenon that occurs in any house with a chimney or a vent. It's caused by the fact that warm air rises and cold air falls. In summer, the heat from the sun and the air conditioning system rises and escapes through the chimney. In winter, the heat from the furnace and the stove rises and escapes through the chimney.

#### SOLUTIONS

To control the stack effect, the most effective way is to seal the house. This means sealing the gaps around the windows, doors, and the chimney. It also means sealing the gaps around the furnace and the stove. Another way to control the stack effect is to use a chimney cap. This cap will prevent the wind from blowing the fire out of the chimney. It will also prevent the cold air from entering the house through the chimney.

Heating

# Stack effect

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- The greater the height of the building
  - The greater the potential difference in stack pressure
- Stack pressure difference:

$$\Delta P_{stack} = (\rho_{out} - \rho_{in}) g (H_{NPL} - H)$$

$$\Delta P_{stack} = \rho_{out} \left( \frac{T_{out} - T_{in}}{T_{in}} \right) g (H_{NPL} - H)$$

- Where  $H_{NPL}$  is the height of neutral pressure level above a reference plane without any other driving forces
  - Sign convention:  $P_{stack}$  positive  $\rightarrow$  flow driven outward

# Stack effect

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- Neutral pressure level (NPL)
  - Vertical location where there is no pressure difference
    - Influenced by leakage distribution over the exterior and by interior compartmentalization
  - Not necessarily located at the mid-height of a building
    - If there are more openings at the top of a building (e.g., big roof penetrations) than on the bottom, the NPL will be moved closer to the larger top openings
    - Moving target (can be difficult to predict accurately)

# Neutral pressure level (NPL or NPP)

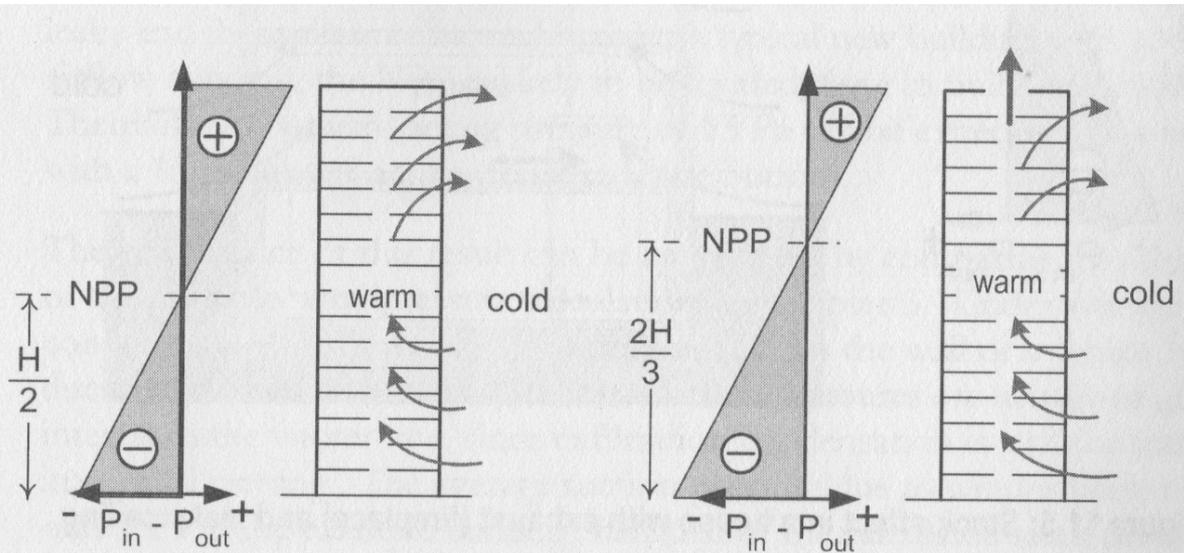


Figure 11.4: Stack-effect driven airflow through typical multi-story building

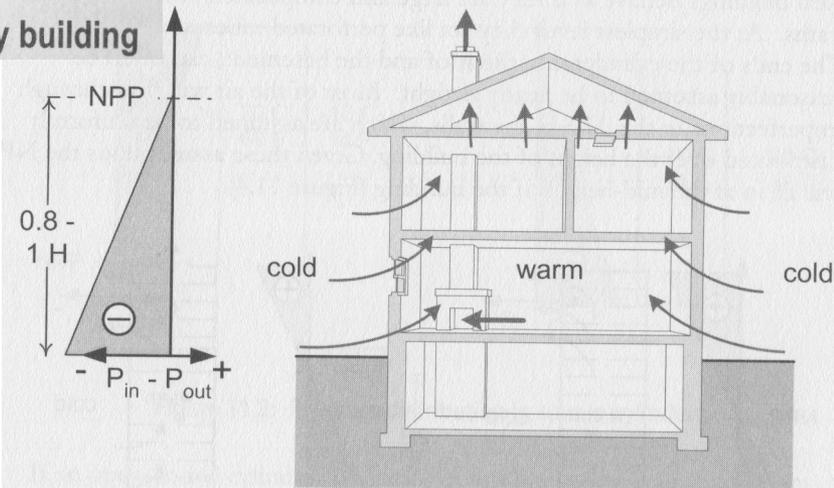
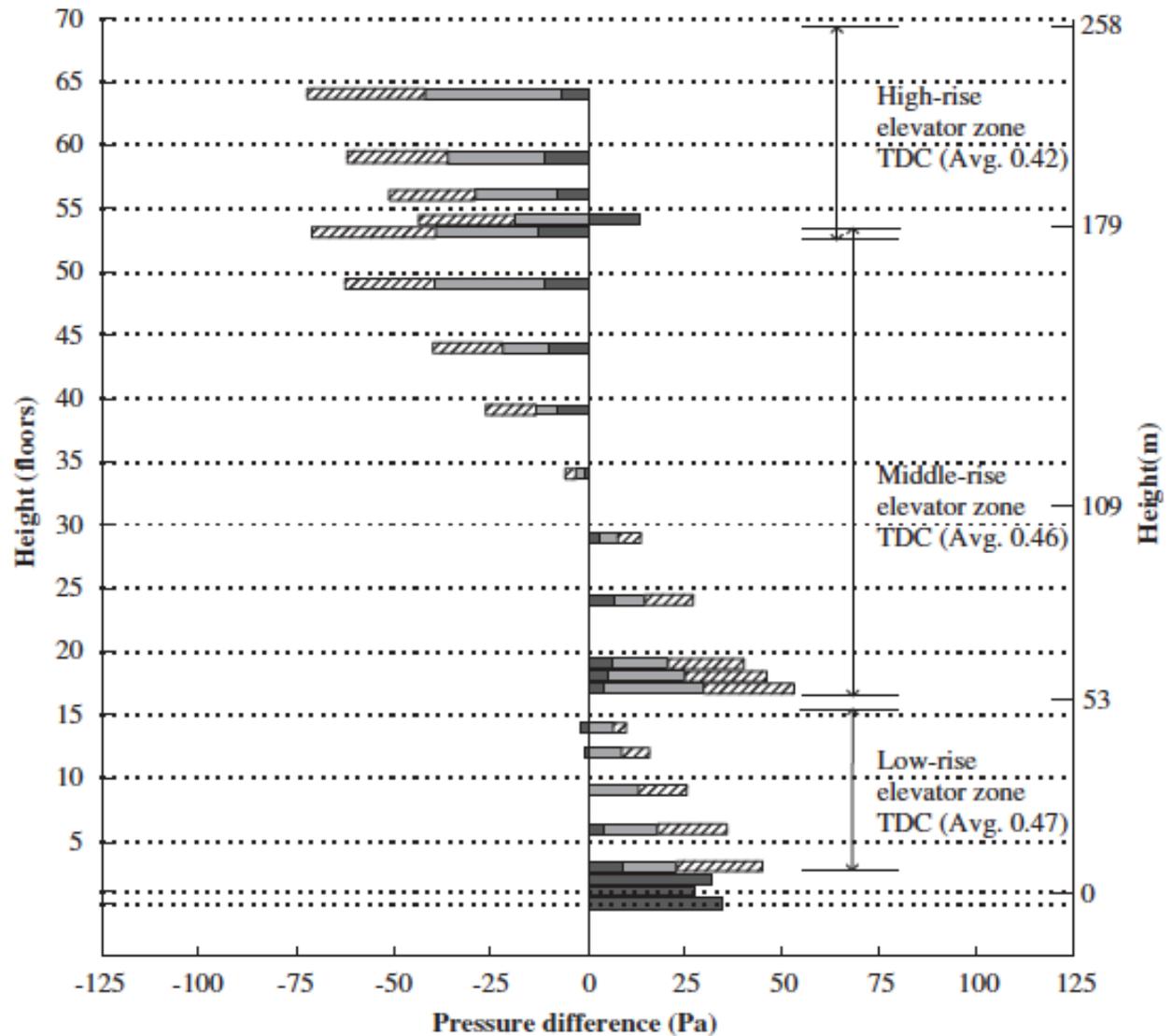
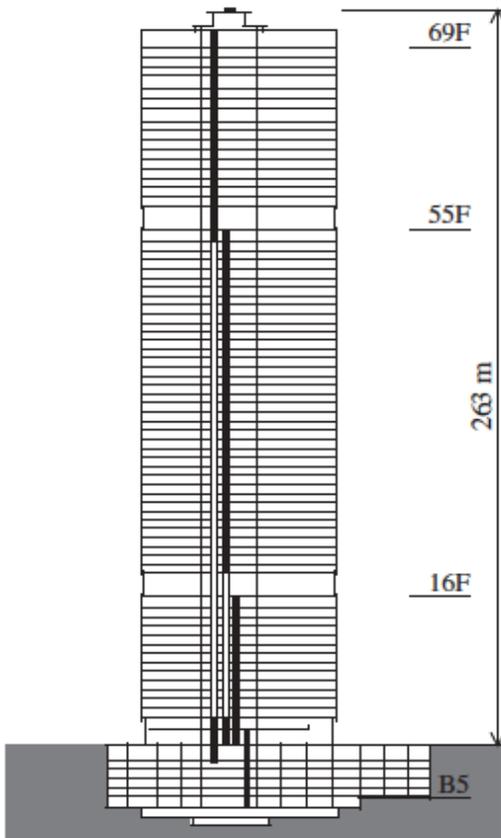


Figure 11.5: Stack effect in a house with exhaust (fireplace) and leaky ceiling

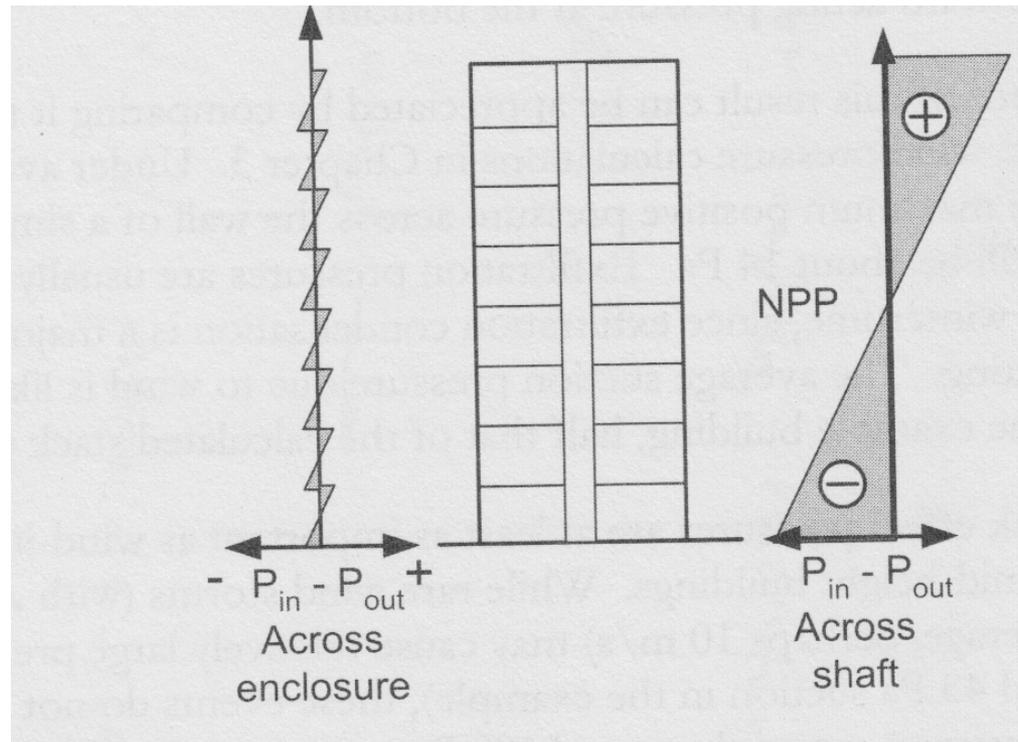
# Real field measurements of stack effect

~70 story building in Korea



# Designing for stack effect

- One way to design for stack effect is to provide an air barrier between floors
  - Break the path of airflow
    - Works well for occupied floors
    - Vertical shafts (stair wells and elevator shafts) can't be sealed vertically
      - But can be sealed from each floor with a foyer



# Designing for stack effect

---

- Another strategy to limit flows due to the stack effect:
  - Revolving doors (and other airlock strategies)
- <http://www.dougking.co.uk/videos/>



# Combining driving forces

---

- We've covered stack pressures and wind pressures
- We've also discussed an empirical relationship between flow and pressure difference:

$$Q = C \Delta P^n$$

- To get total  $\Delta P$  across a leak, simply add stack- and wind-induced  $\Delta P$  (as well as any  $\Delta P$  due to mechanical systems)

$$\Delta P_{total} = \Delta P_{stack} + \Delta P_{wind} + \Delta P_{HVAC}$$

$$\Delta P_{total} = \rho_{out} \left( \frac{T_{out} - T_{in}}{T_{in}} \right) g (H_{NPL} - H) + \frac{1}{2} C_P \rho U_h^2 + \Delta P_{HVAC}$$

# Air leakage coefficient

---

- We have spent a lot of time trying to find  $\Delta P$ 
  - Now we will try to find the leakage coefficient,  $C$ , in order to establish flow,  $Q$ , across a leak

$$Q = C\Delta P^n$$

- Once the flow is known:
  - Energy and indoor air quality impacts can be estimated
- One of the best ways to do this is with fan pressurization techniques
  - i.e. **blower door** tests

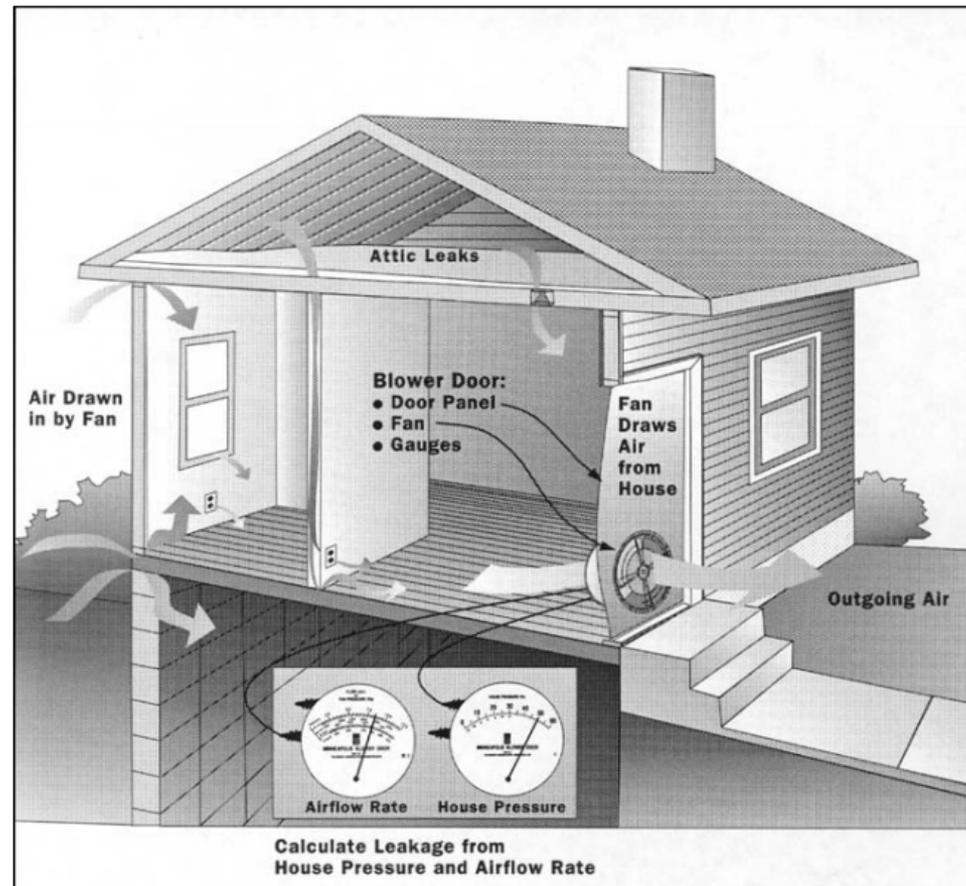
# Procedure for modern **blower door** test

---

1. Install calibrated fan (i.e., “blower door”)
2. Use fan to create artificial pressure difference between inside and outside
3. Measure flow at several inside-outside pressure differences
4. Find  $n$  and  $C$ , which help determine relationship between flow ( $Q$ ) and pressure ( $\Delta P$ )

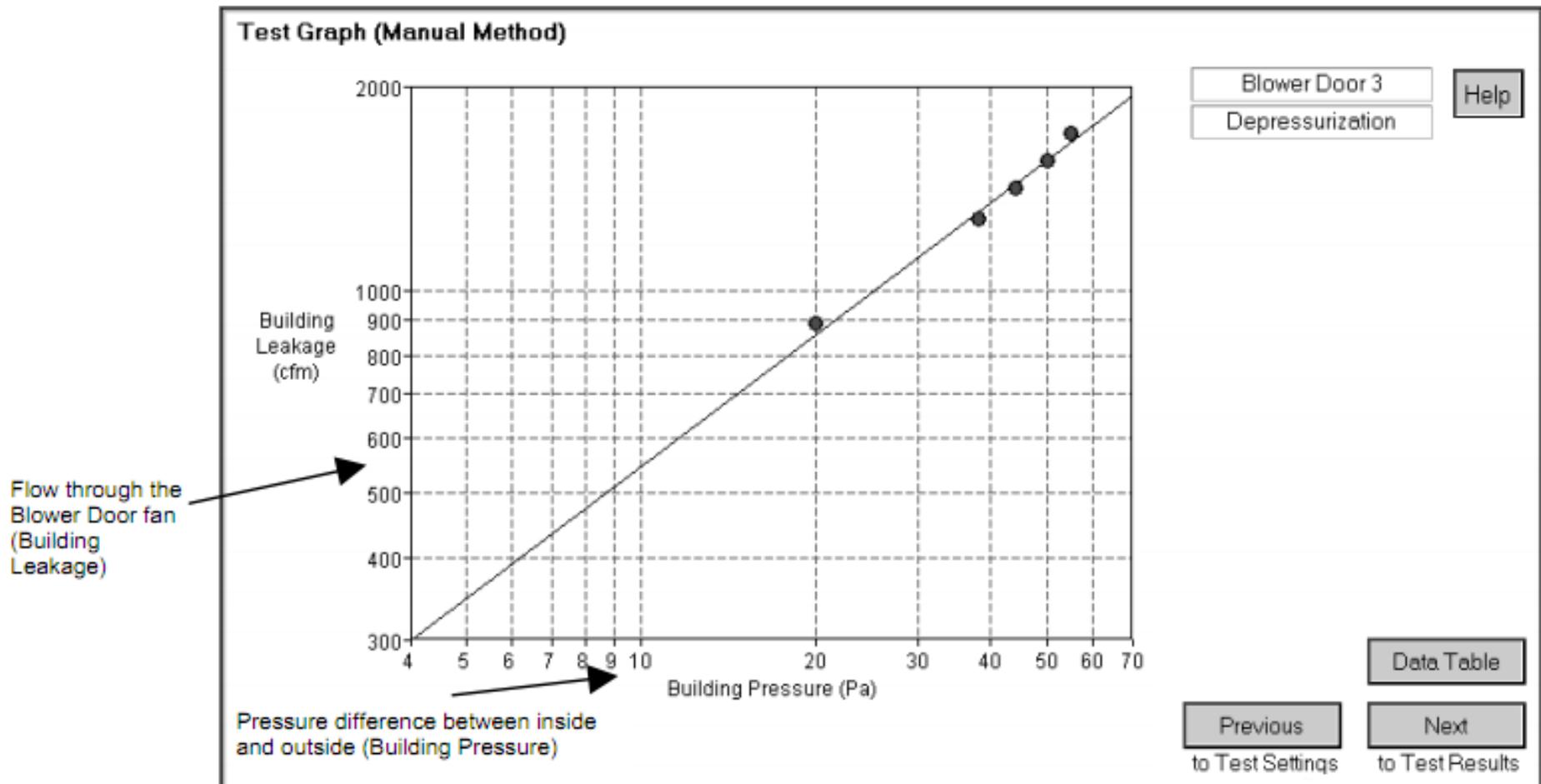
# Blower doors: theory of operation

- Used to measure air-tightness in buildings worldwide



# Blower doors: theory of operation

- Record flow through blower door (and thus through leaks) at each measured I/O pressure difference



# Blower doors: theory of operation

---

- Perform test across a range of pressures and flows
- Develop relationship:

$$Q = C\Delta P^n$$

- To solve for C & n from measurements of Q and  $\Delta P$ ,
  - Log transform equation:

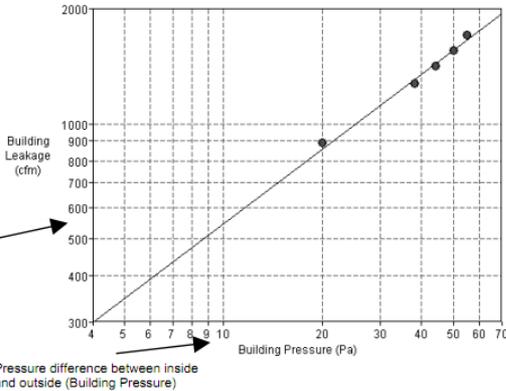
$$\ln Q = \ln C + n \ln \Delta P$$

$$Y = b + mx$$

Slope = n

Intercept =  $\ln C$ , therefore  $C = \exp^{\text{intercept}}$

# Blower door tests: resulting parameters



$$Q = C \Delta P^n$$

Airflow ( $\text{m}^3 \text{s}^{-1}$ )      Leakage Coefficient ( $\text{m}^3 \text{s}^{-1} \text{Pa}^{-n}$ )      I/O Pressure Difference (Pa)      Leakage Exponent (dimensionless)

$$ELA = C \Delta P_{ref}^{n-0.5} \sqrt{\frac{\rho}{2}}$$

Estimated Leakage Area ( $\text{cm}^2$ )

$$NL = 1000 \frac{ELA}{A_f} \left( \frac{H}{2.5m} \right)^{0.3}$$

Normalized Leakage, NL (dimensionless)

$$ACH_{50} = \frac{Q_{50 Pa}}{V}$$

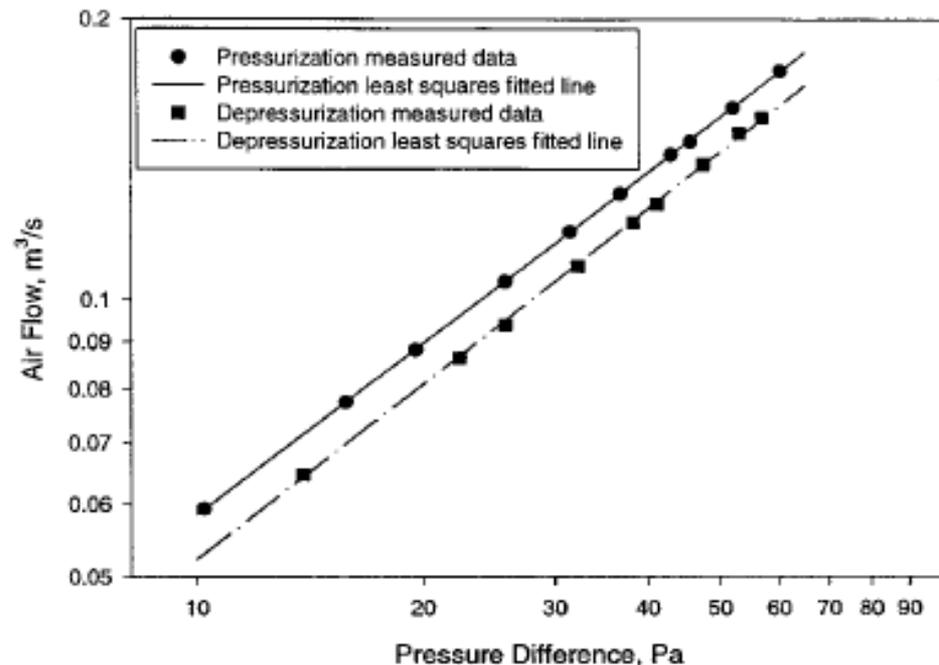
Air Changes per Hour @ 50 Pa ( $\text{hr}^{-1}$ )

# Blower door test standard: ASTM E 779

- In ASTM E 779, the leakage rate,  $Q$ , is measured at several pressures from ~10 Pa to ~60 Pa in increments of 5-10 Pa
  - Test is performed once during pressurization mode
    - Air blowing into the building
  - Then performed again in depressurization mode
    - Air blowing out of the building
  - Can do these during and after construction to verify design

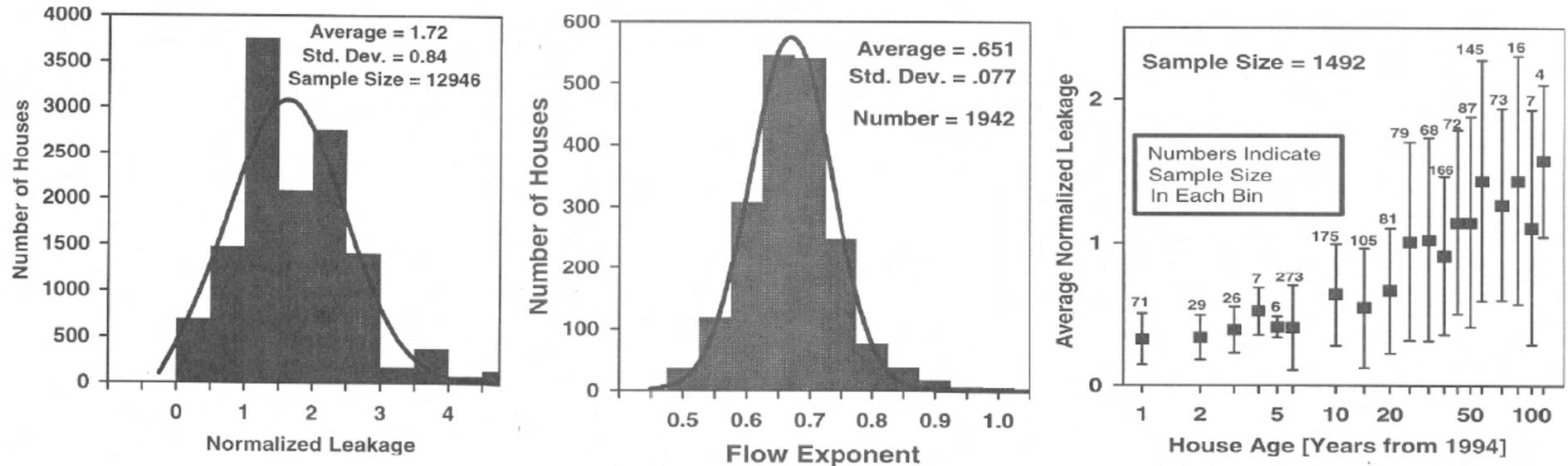
## Question:

Why would pressurization and depressurization tests yield different results in a single building?



# Blower door results: US homes

- From a big database of blower door tests



	Mean	Std Dev.	Number of Houses
Year Built	1965	24.2	1492
Floor Area [m <sup>2</sup> ]	156.4	66.7	12946
Normalized Leakage	1.72	0.84	12946
ACH <sub>50</sub>	29.7	14.5	12902
Exponent	0.649	0.084	2224

# Residential blower door data

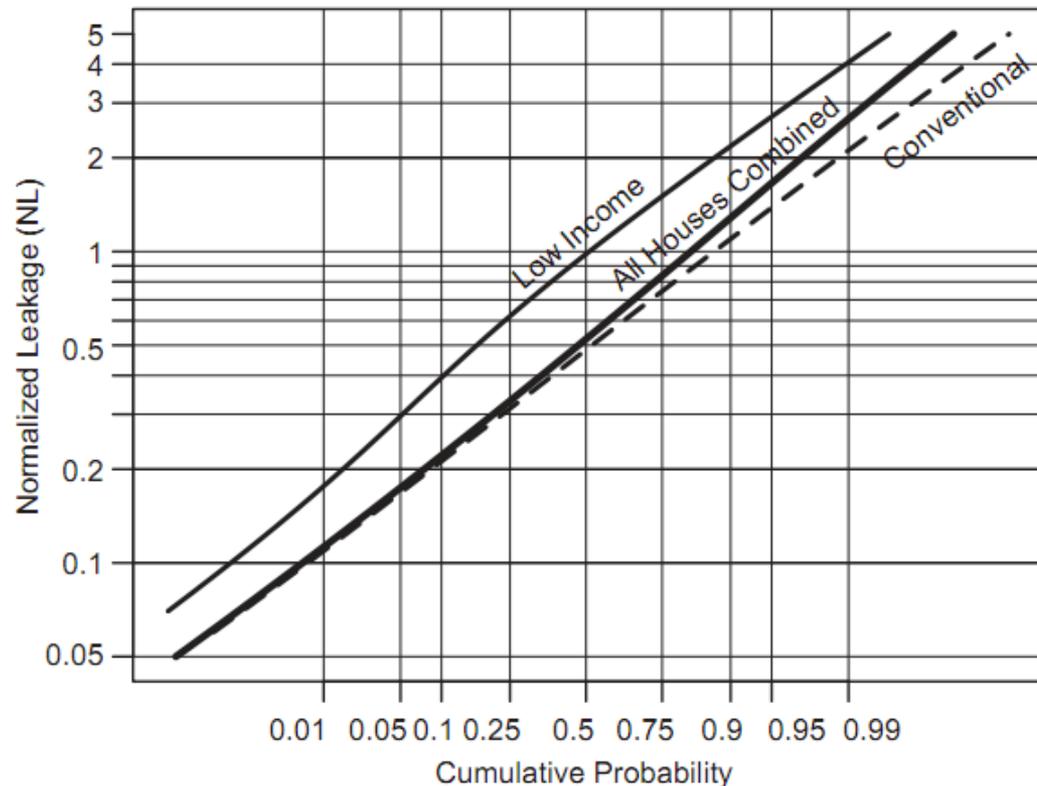
- LBNL continues to maintain a database of blower door data
  - <http://resdb.lbl.gov/>
  - Almost 150000 homes characterized as of 2012

$$Q = C\Delta P^n$$

$$ELA = C\Delta P_{ref}^{n-0.5} \sqrt{\frac{\rho}{2}}$$

$$NL = 1000 \frac{ELA}{A_f} \left( \frac{H}{2.5m} \right)^{0.3}$$

$$ACH_{50} = \frac{Q_{50 Pa}}{V}$$

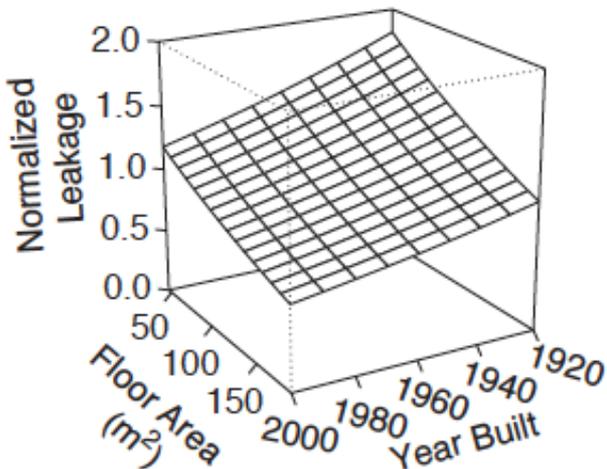


**Source: Chan et al., 2005 Atmos Environ**  
**>70000 air leakage measurements in U.S.**

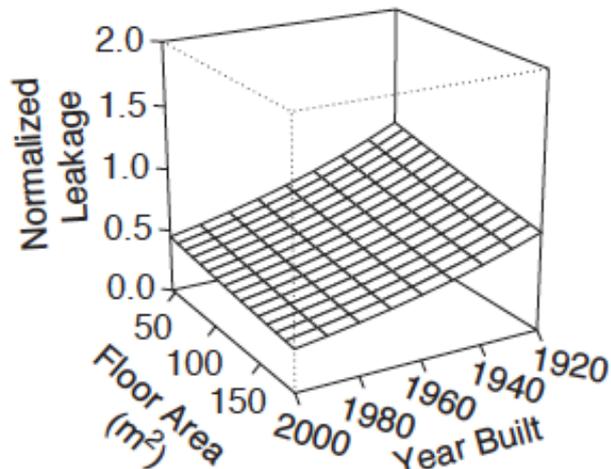
# Residential blower door data

- Residential air leakage is a function of:
  - Building age
  - Building size (floor area)
  - Status/existence of efficiency retrofits
  - Socioeconomic status of occupants

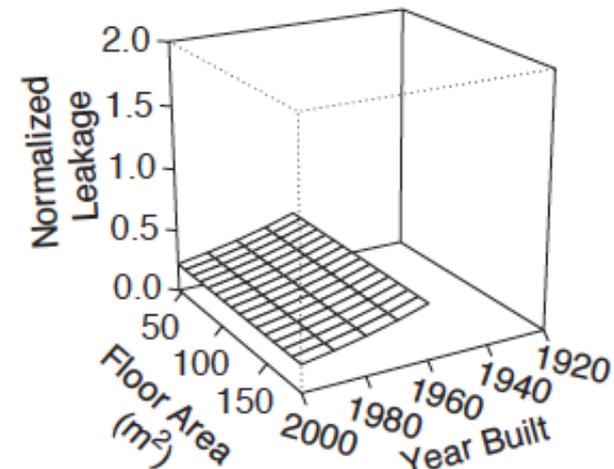
Low Income



Conventional



Energy Efficient

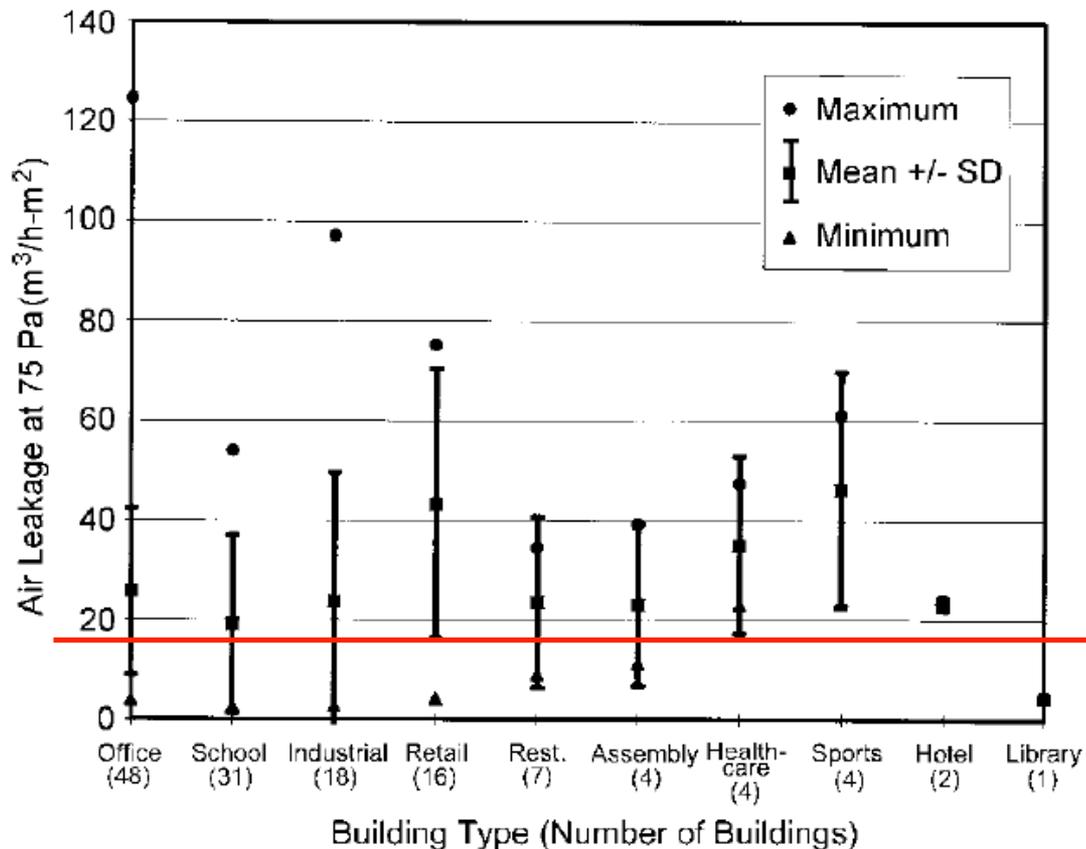


$$NL = 1000 \frac{ELA}{A_f} \left( \frac{H}{2.5m} \right)^{0.3}$$

Source: Chan et al., 2005 *Atmos Environ*  
>70000 air leakage measurements in U.S.

# Commercial building air leakage

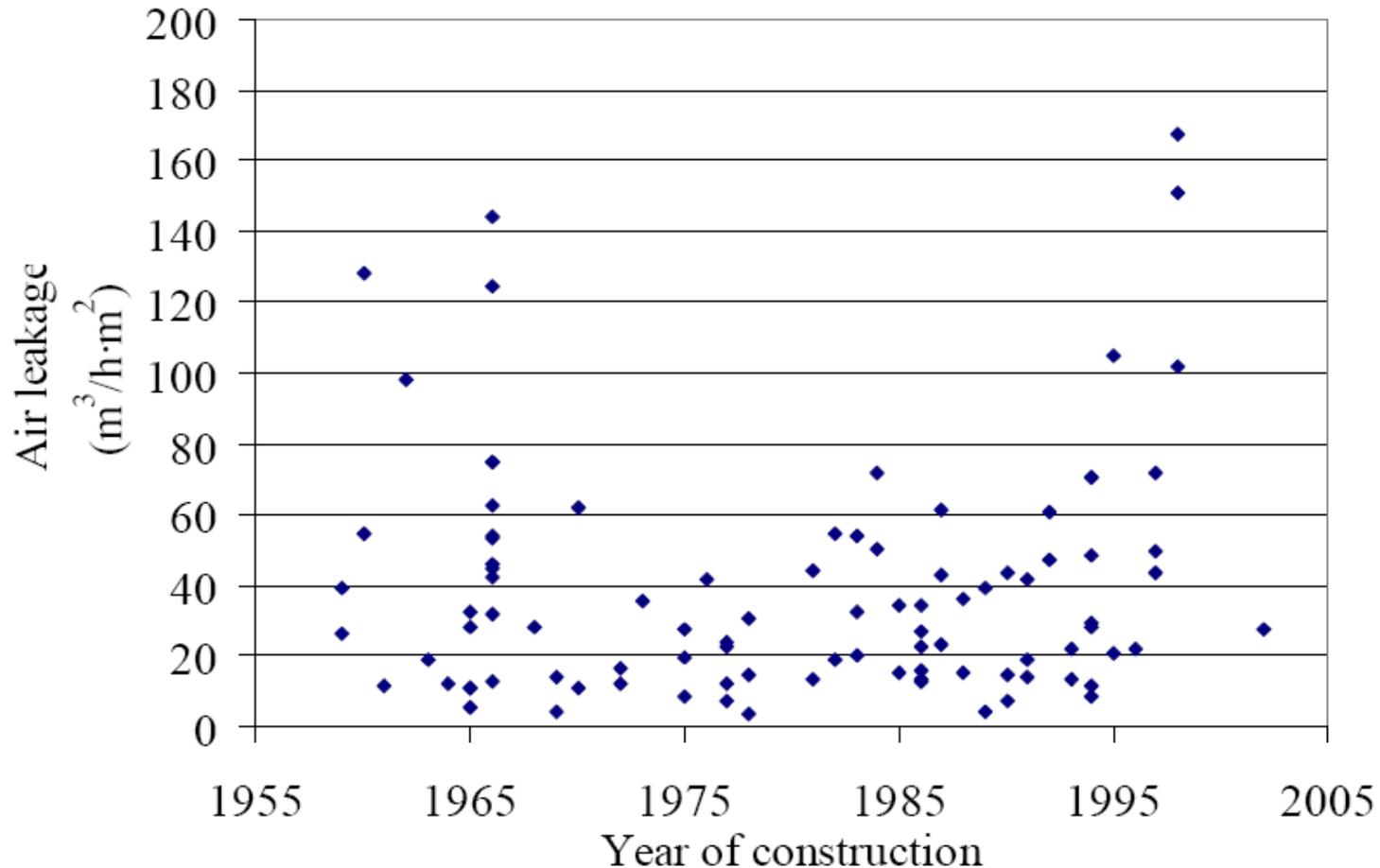
- Traditionally assumed that commercial and institutional buildings were built to be airtight
  - Turns out that's not always the case



Roughly  
"typical"  
airtightness

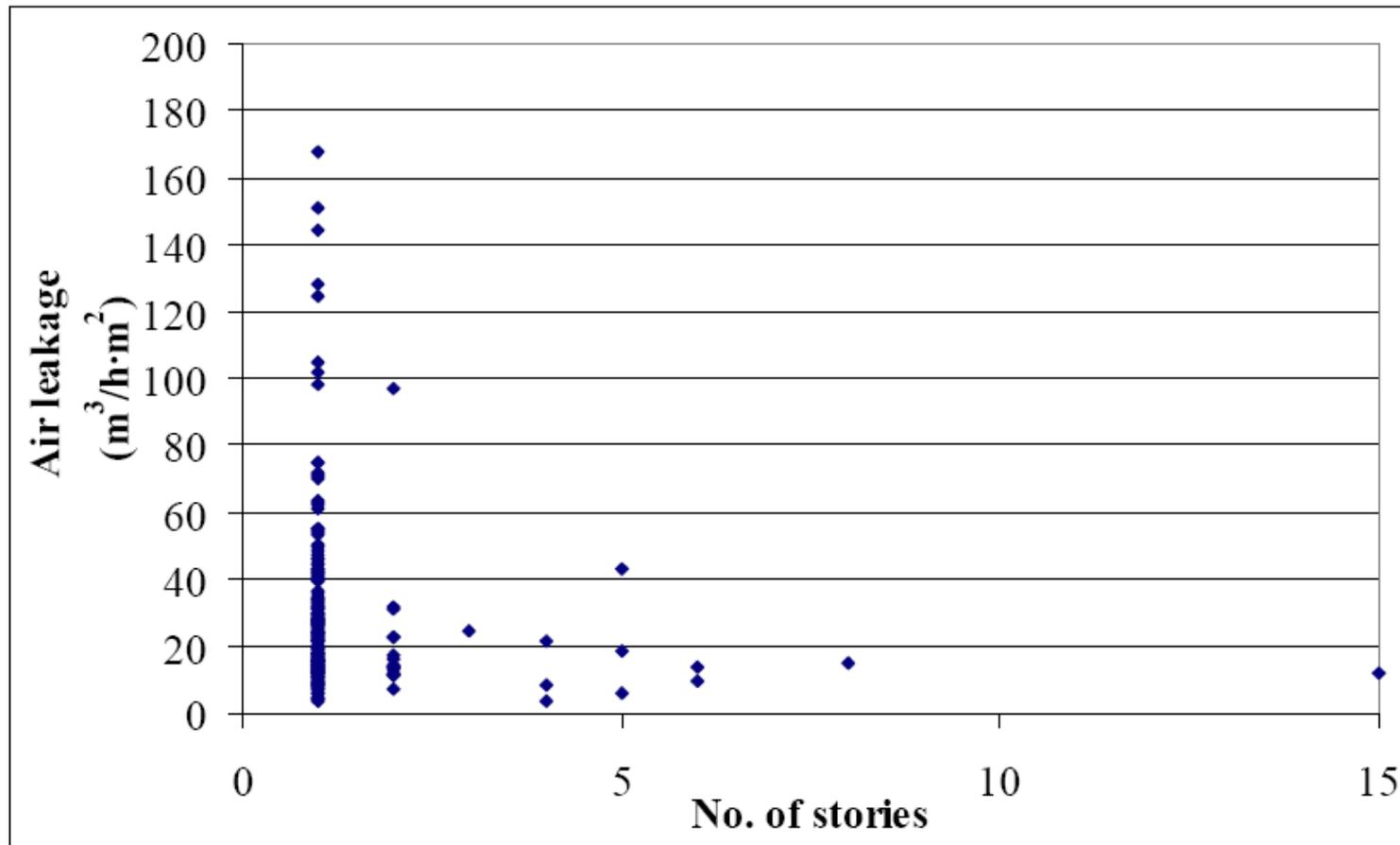
# Commercial building air leakage vs. age

- Less correlation with age than other factors
  - Note small range of age



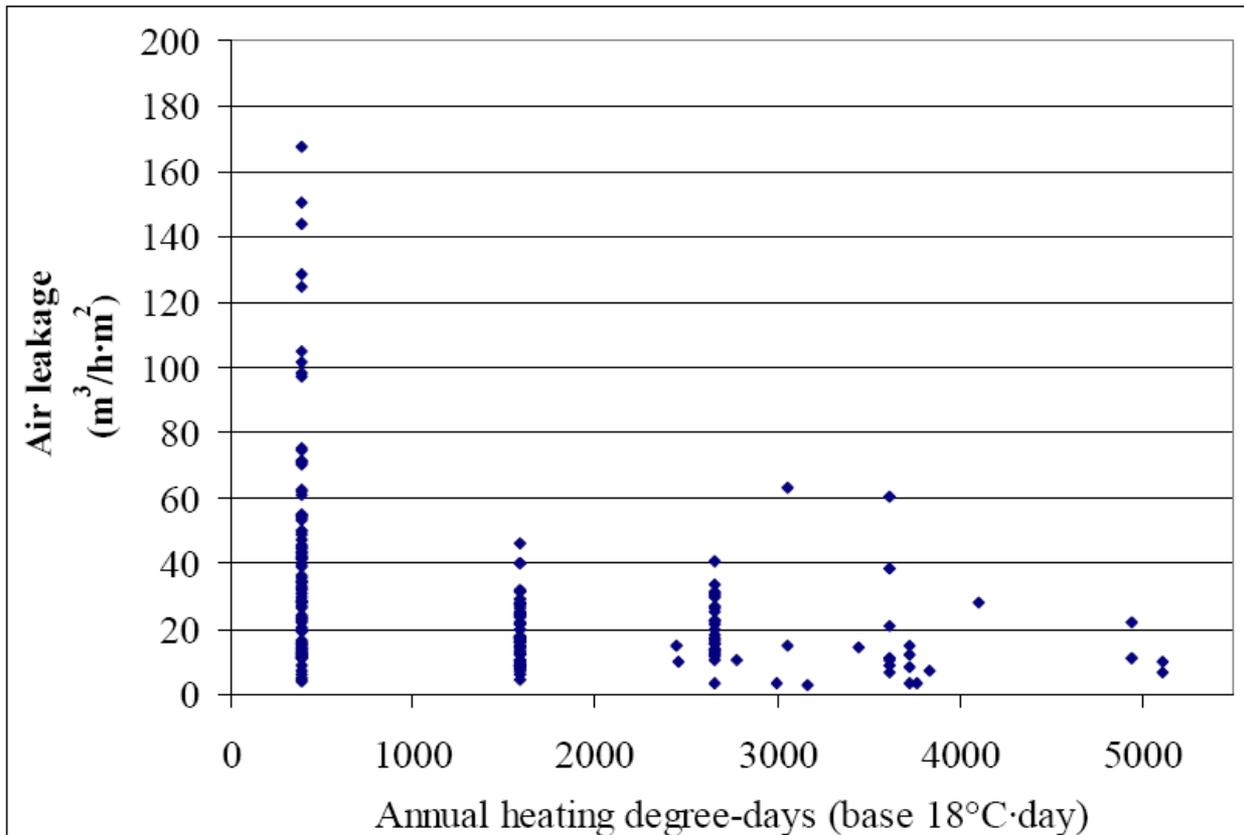
# Commercial building air leakage vs. height

- Taller buildings were tighter
  - Construction standards?



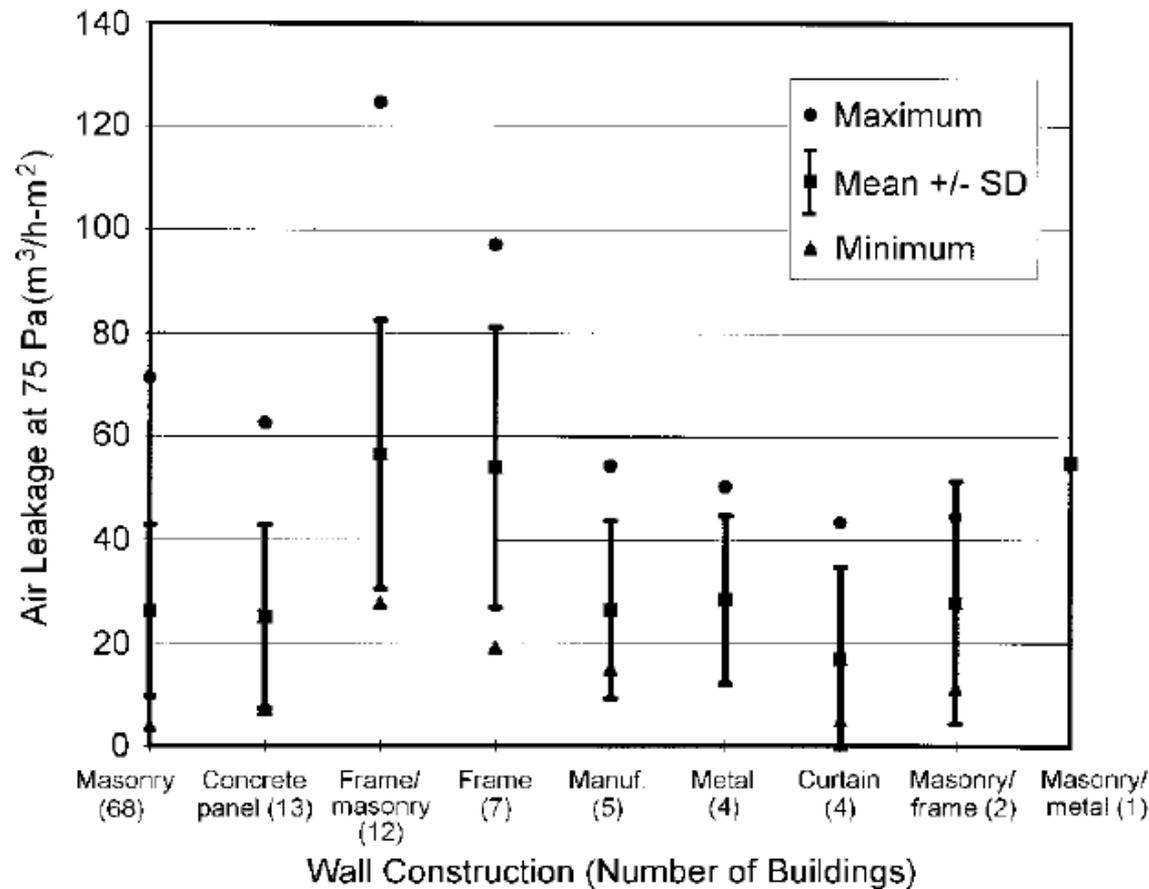
# Commercial building air leakage vs. climate zone

- Buildings were tighter in colder climates
  - Necessity?
  - Stricter building codes?



# Commercial building air leakage vs. wall type

- Leakage varied by wall construction type
  - Frame construction leakier than masonry, metal or curtain walls



# Residential component leakage

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<b>Component</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Average</b>
Walls	18-50%	35%
Ceilings	3-30%	13%
Windows/Doors	6-22%	15%
Fireplaces	0-30%	12%
HVAC	3-28%	18%
Other Vents	2-12%	5%

- Surprisingly little information on this topic

# Some recommended whole-envelope leakage rates

---

<b>Air Leakage Index (m<sup>3</sup>/hr/ m<sup>2</sup> @ 50Pa)</b>		
<b>Building Type</b>	<b>Best Practice</b>	<b>Normal</b>
Offices (naturally ventilated)	3.0	7.0
Offices (mixed mode)	2.5	5.0
Offices (air conditioned/low energy)	2.0	5.0
Factories/Warehouses	2.0	6.0
Superstores	1.0	5.0
Schools	3.0	9.0
Hospitals	5.0	9.0
Museums and Archival Stores	1.0	1.5
Cold Stores	0.2	0.35
Dwellings (naturally ventilated)	3.0	9.0
Dwellings (mechanically ventilated)	3.0	5.0

From UK CIBSE-T23 Building Standard

# Limitations to blower door tests

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- Sufficient flow rates are difficult to obtain in large and/or leaky buildings
  - Can use multiple fans
- Not good for complex leakage paths
  - Multizone buildings
- **Does not give you actual air exchange rate (AER)**
  - AER is the rate of replacement of indoor air with outdoor air (units of inverse time, e.g., 1/hour)
  - AER is dependent on wind,  $\Delta T$ , time
    - Blower door tests are not
- Most useful for comparing building to building

# Measuring actual air exchange rates

---

- Two general strategies to get air exchange rate
  - AER, ACH, and  $\lambda$  all used interchangeably for AER
- Direct measurement
  - Tracer gas (constant injection or decay)
    - Apply well-mixed reactor model
- Indirect measurement
  - Blower door
    - Apply infiltration model

# Tracer gas testing

---

- Release gas and measure concentration
- Use well-mixed model to estimate AER from decay
- Properties of a good tracer gas?
  - Nontoxic
  - Non-reactive (chemically inert)
  - Not present at significant concentrations in typical environments
  - Easy to measure over wide concentration range

# Common tracer gases

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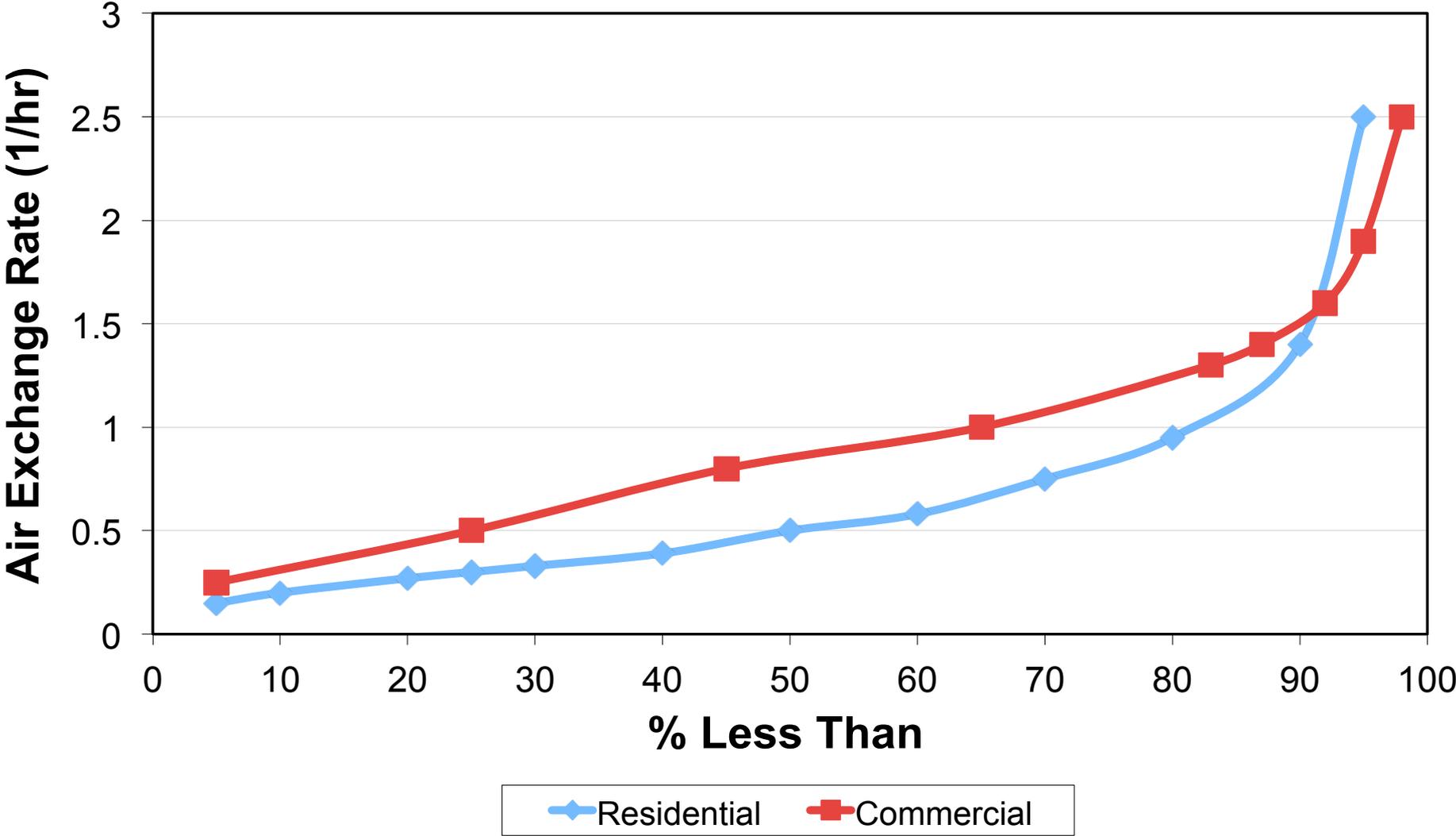
- SF<sub>6</sub>
  - ppm with IR absorption
  - ppb with GC/ECD
- CO<sub>2</sub>
- Nitrous oxide
- Freon
- Helium
  
- Really no “perfect” tracer yet
  - Some are too expensive
  - Humans are sources of some
  - Some have human health and/or climate impacts of others

# Decay test for AER

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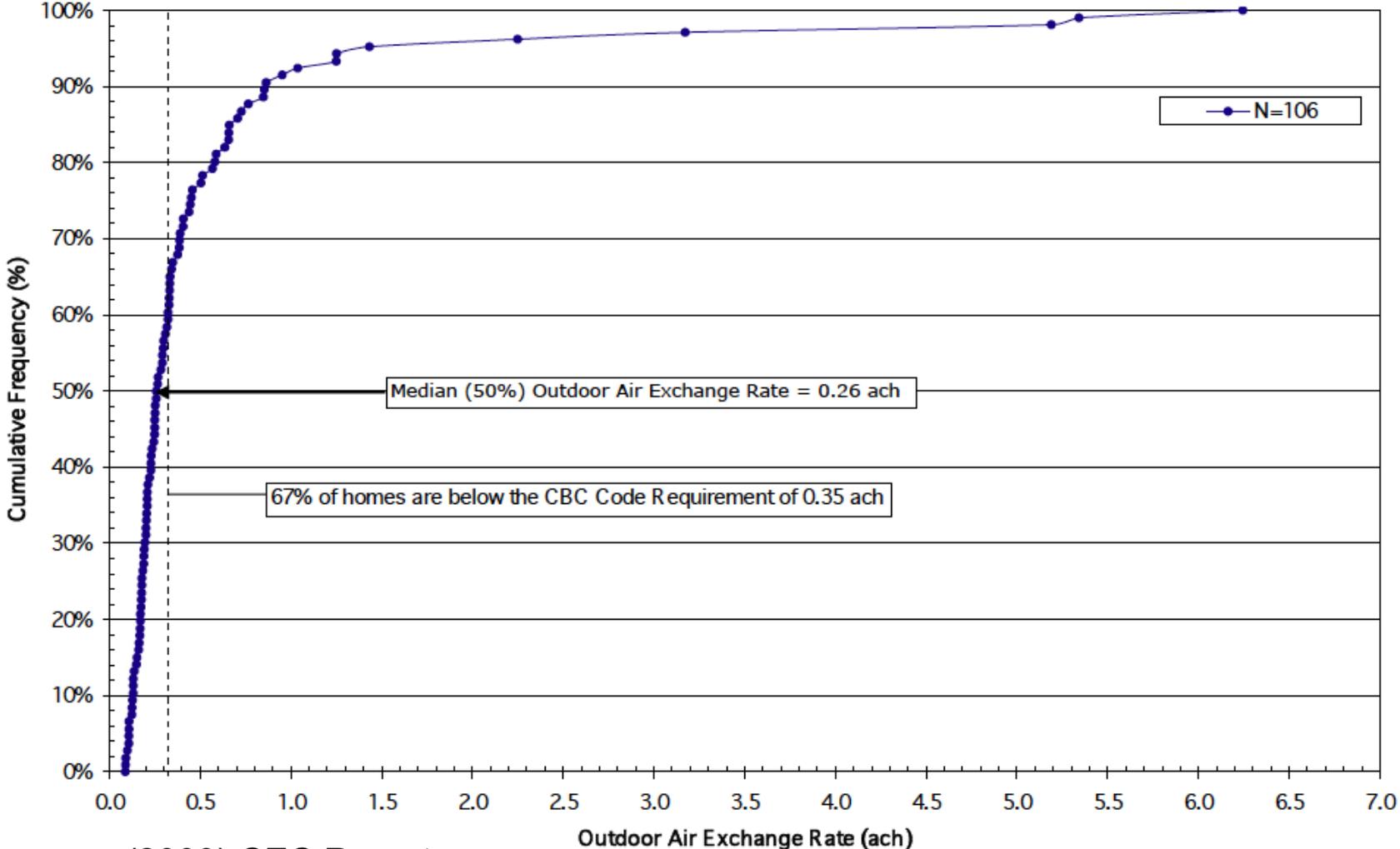
- Advantages
  - Don't need to release precise amount
  - Don't need to measure volume (if you just want air exchange rate)
- Disadvantages
  - Need to keep building well-mixed
  - Recontamination from buffer spaces
  - House needs to stay in one condition for entire test

# Measured air exchange rates: Residences



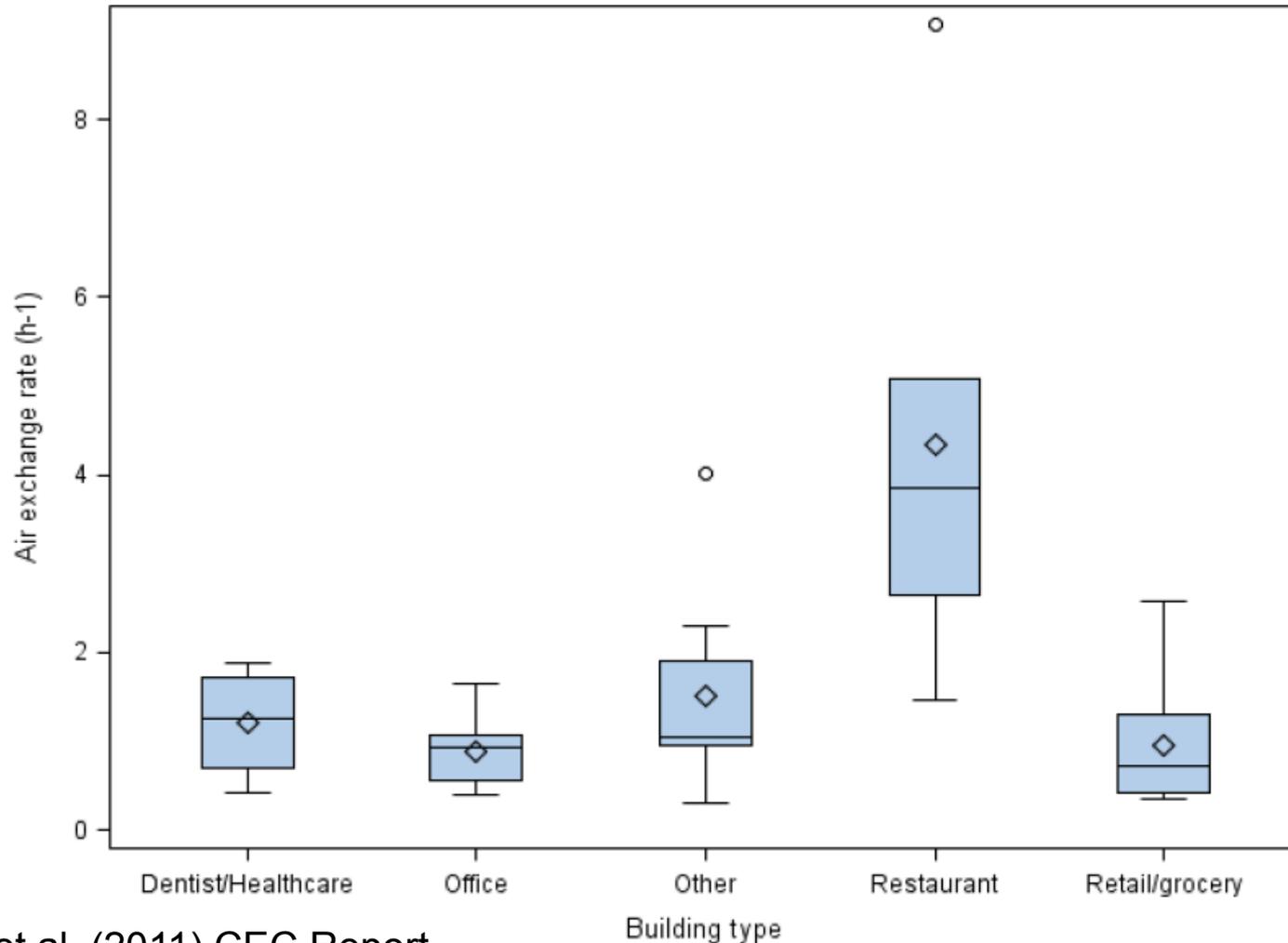
# Measured air exchange rates: New homes

- Study of about 100 new homes in CA



# Measured air exchange rates: Commercial buildings

- Recent study of ~40 commercial buildings in CA



# Where does that leave us?

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- Some have tried to correlate blower door leakage parameters to actual AER
  - One way is to simply divide  $ACH_{50}$  by a factor,  $F$ :  $ACH \approx \frac{ACH_{50}}{F}$ 
    - $F = 16$  has been shown to provide accurate enough descriptions across a large dataset
    - But not sufficient for instantaneous AER in a building
- Can use models and blower door data to predict AER with reasonable accuracy
  - ASHRAE 2005 Handbook of Fundamentals Chapter 27
  - Requires some inputs that are potentially difficult to obtain
    - More advanced forms of models require distribution of leakage sites (really just impossible to get)

# Air infiltration models

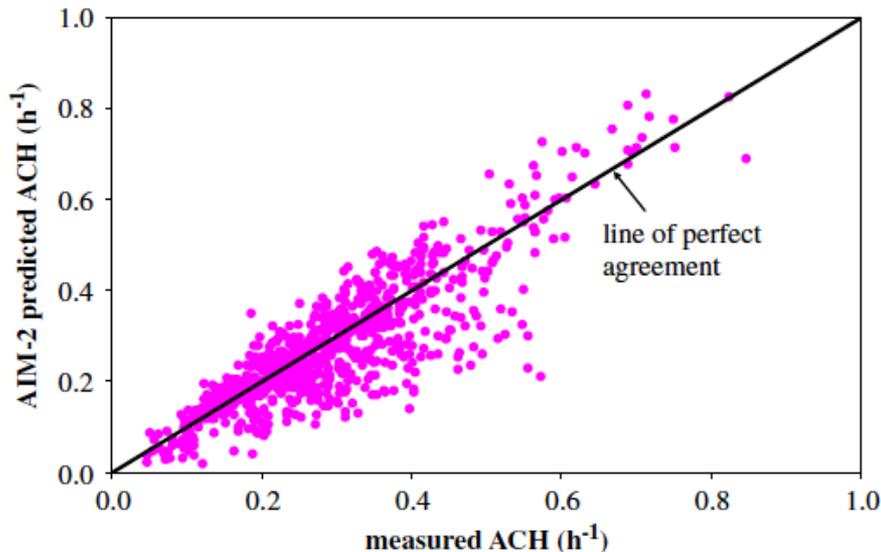
- Alberta air infiltration model (AIM-2)

$$Q = [Q_s^{1/n} + Q_w^{1/n} + \beta(Q_s Q_w)^{1/2n}]^n$$

where  $\beta$  is an empirical constant equal to  $-0.33$ .

$$Q_s = C f_s (\Delta P_s)^n = C f_s \left[ \rho_{\text{out}} g H \frac{|T_{\text{in}} - T_{\text{out}}|}{T_{\text{in}}} \right]^n$$

$$Q_w = C f_w (\Delta P_w)^n = C f_w \left[ \frac{\rho_{\text{out}} (S_w U)^2}{2} \right]^n$$



These factors  $f_s$ ,  $f_w$ , and  $S_w$  take several parameters into account, including leakage distribution sites and shielding by other buildings

- Empirical
- Difficult to get

# Air infiltration models

- LBL model

$$Q_{\text{inf}} = A_{\text{inf}} \sqrt{k_s |T_{\text{in}} - T_{\text{out}}| + k_w U^2}$$

**Table S1.** Stack coefficient  $k_s \left[ (\text{L/s})^2 / (\text{cm}^4 \cdot \text{K}) \right]$

	House height (stories)		
	One	Two	Three
Stack coefficient	0.000145	0.000290	0.000435

**Table S2.** Wind coefficient  $k_w \left[ (\text{L/s})^2 / (\text{cm}^4 \cdot (\text{m/s})^2) \right]$

Shelter class	House height (stories)		
	One	Two	Three
1	0.000319	0.000420	0.000494
2	0.000246	0.000325	0.000382
3	0.000174	0.000231	0.000271
4	0.000104	0.000137	0.000161
5	0.000032	0.000042	0.000049

**Table S3.** Local sheltering

Shelter class for LBL and LBLX models <sup>1</sup>	Shelter class for SF model <sup>2</sup>	Description <sup>1</sup>
1	Exposed	No obstructions or local shielding
2	Normal	Typical shelter for an isolated rural house
3	Normal	Typical shelter caused by other buildings across street from building under study
4	Normal	Typical shelter for urban buildings on larger lots where sheltering obstacles are more than one building height away
5	Well-shielded	Typical shelter produced by buildings or other structures immediately adjacent (closer than one building height): e.g., neighboring houses on same side of street, trees, bushes, etc.

# Summary of air leakage measurements

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- Blower door
  - Easy to perform
    - Spot measurements
    - Compare building to building
  - *Can* be used to link to actual AER
    - Difficult to get accurate predictions
- AER testing with tracer gas
  - Harder to perform
  - More time consuming (and expensive)
    - Real-life accurate measurements
      - Providing assumptions are met
- In enclosure design
  - Best to target tight envelope
  - Use blower door during construction

# **ENERGY IMPACTS**

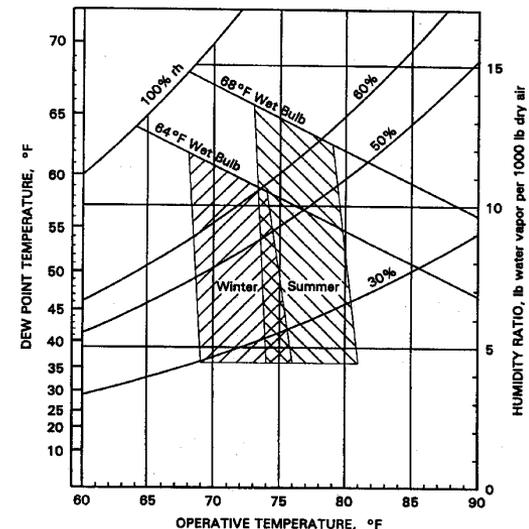
of air leakage

# Infiltration and energy use

- Infiltration is estimated to account for 25-50% of heating loads in both residential and commercial buildings
  - What factors does this depend on?
    - Outdoor climate
    - Indoor climate
    - Airtightness of building
    - Driving forces

$$Q_{inf} = \dot{m}C_p (T_{in} - T_{out})$$

$$\dot{m} = \dot{V}_{leaks} \rho_{air}$$



**As we keep  $T_{in}$  in the thermal comfort zone**

# Temperature: Heating- and Cooling-Degree Days

---

- Energy use driven by amount of Annual Degree-Days

## Heating Degree Days (HDD)

$$HDD = (1 \text{ day}) \times \sum_{\text{days}} (T_{\text{balance}} - T_{\text{outdoor}}) \quad [\text{K-days}]$$

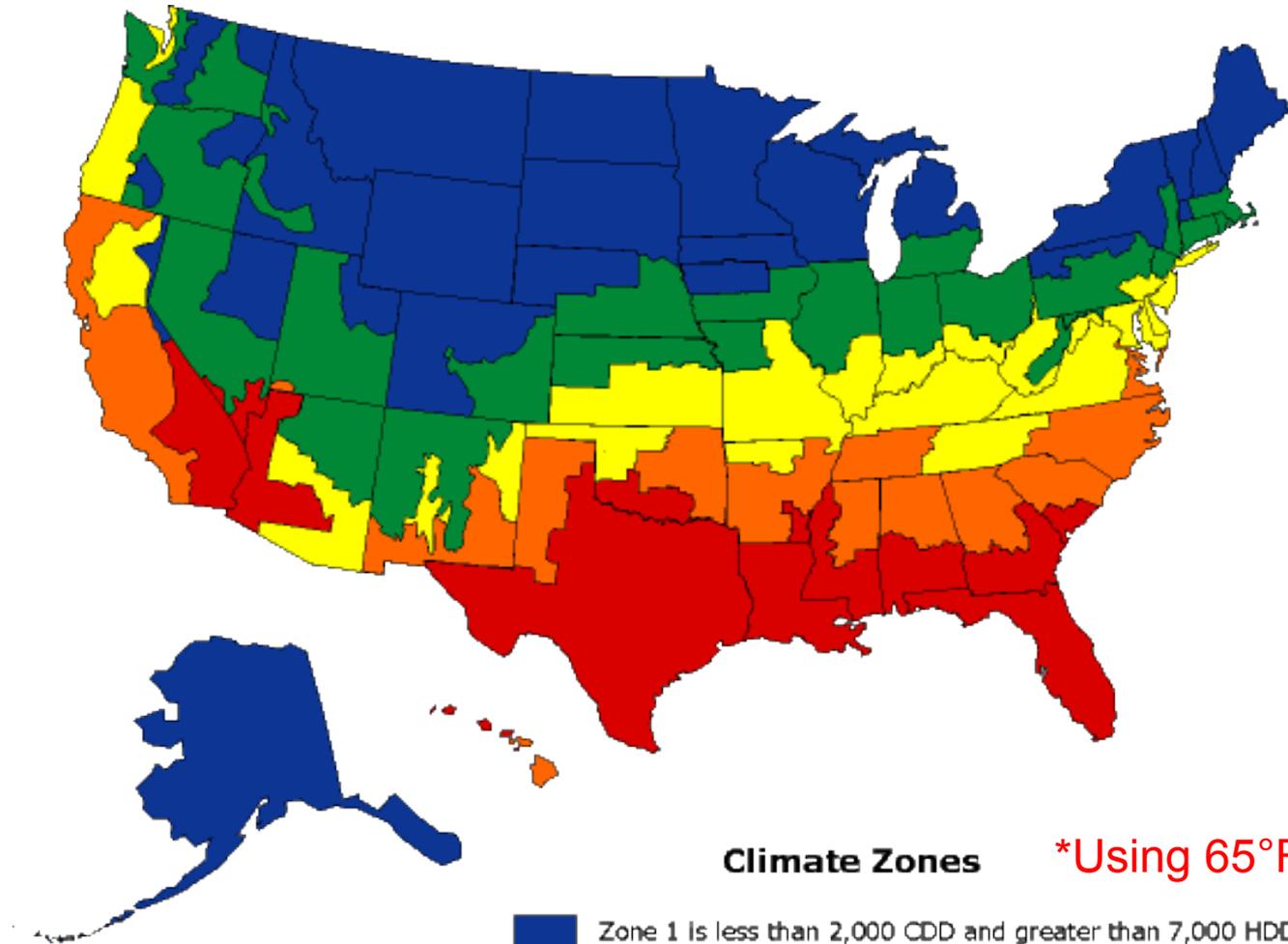
### Notes:

- Summed over entire year or entire heating season
- $T_{\text{outdoor}}$  = daily average outdoor temperature
- $T_{\text{balance}}$  = balance point temperature, or the outdoor temperature at which heating is required (function of specified interior temperature, internal heat gains, and heat loss properties of building)
- Typical  $T_{\text{balance}} = 18.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $65^{\circ}\text{F}$ )

## Cooling Degree Days (CDD)

$$CDD = (1 \text{ day}) \times \sum_{\text{days}} (T_{\text{outdoor}} - T_{\text{balance}}) \quad [\text{K-days}]$$

# Department of Energy U.S. temperature zones

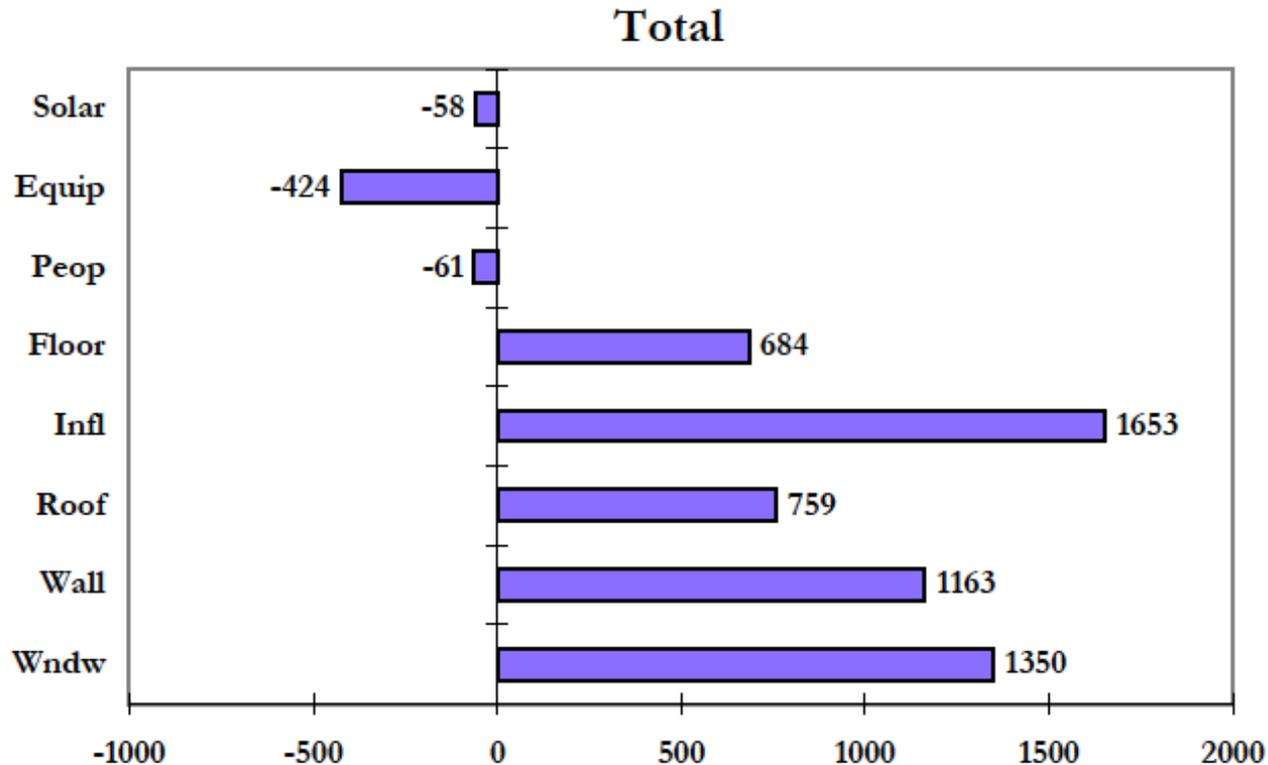


**Climate Zones** \*Using 65°F base

- Zone 1 is less than 2,000 CDD and greater than 7,000 HDD.
- Zone 2 is less than 2,000 CDD and 5,500-7,000 HDD.
- Zone 3 is less than 2,000 CDD and 4,000-5,499 HDD.
- Zone 4 is less than 2,000 CDD and less than 4,000 HDD.
- Zone 5 is 2,000 CDD or more and less than 4,000 HDD.

# Just how important are building envelopes for energy use?

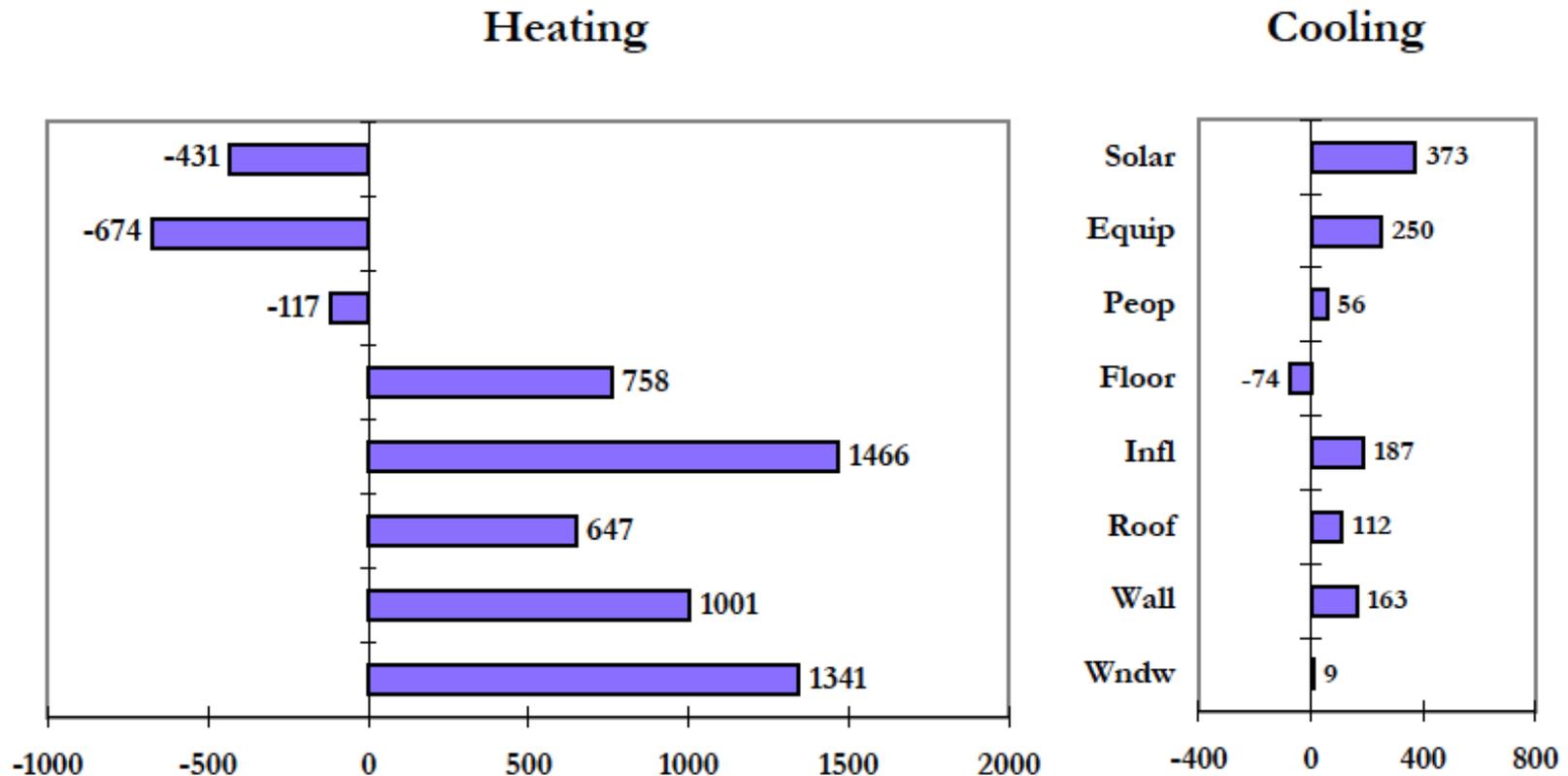
- 1999 study by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
  - *Residential Heating and Cooling Loads Component Analysis*
  - Air infiltration is the **single biggest contributor** to energy use in U.S. homes



Aggregate component loads for all residential buildings (trillion BTUs)

# Just how important are building envelopes for energy use?

- 1999 study by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
  - *Residential Heating and Cooling Loads Component Analysis*
  - Infiltration particularly important for **heating** loads



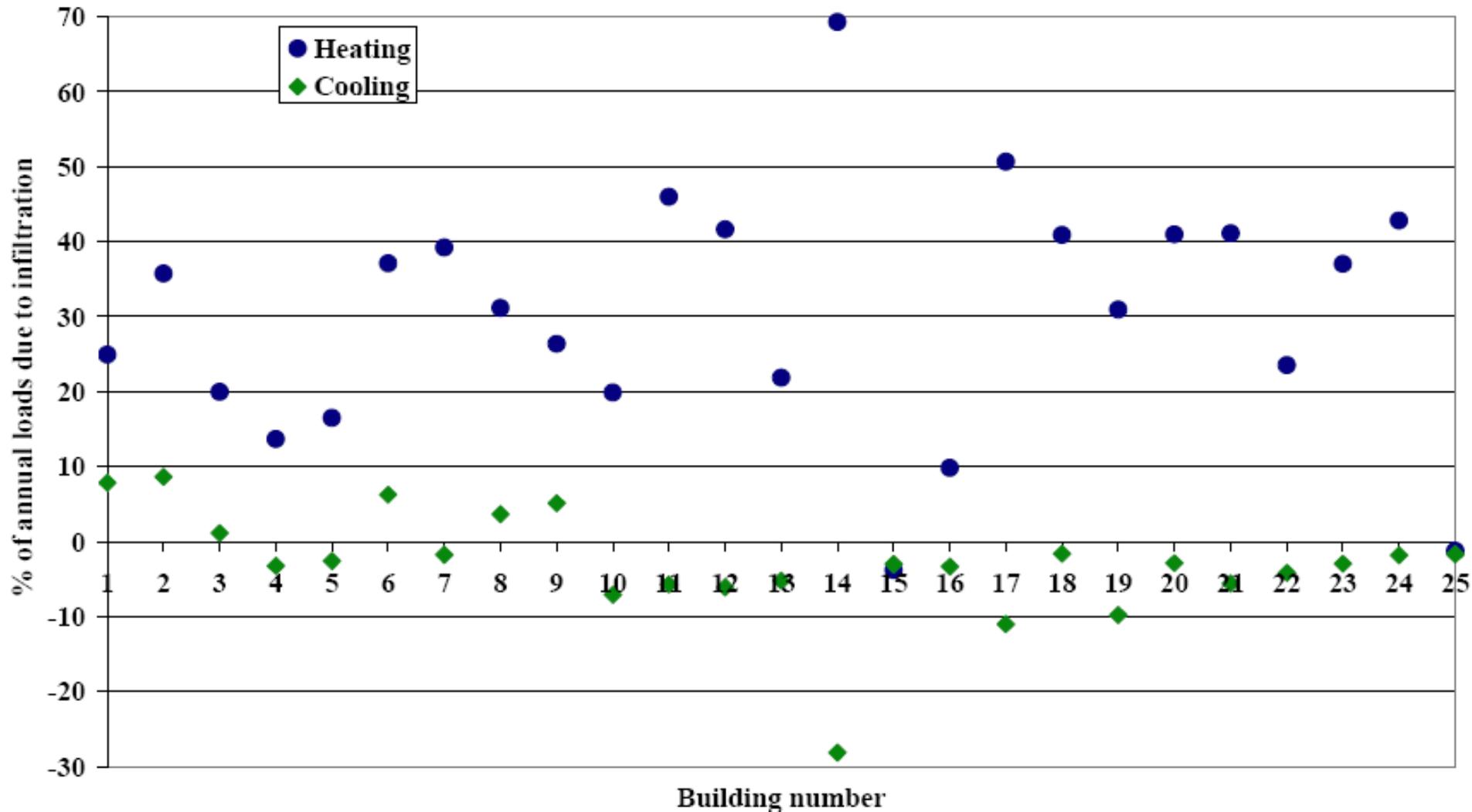
Aggregate component loads for all residential buildings (trillion BTUs)

# Infiltration in commercial buildings

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- The following figure is from a 2005 NIST study on the effect of infiltration on heating and cooling loads in commercial buildings
  - Buildings ranged in size from 1 to 45 floors
  - 576 to 230000 m<sup>2</sup> in floor space
  - Located all over the US

# Infiltration in commercial buildings



# Infiltration in commercial buildings

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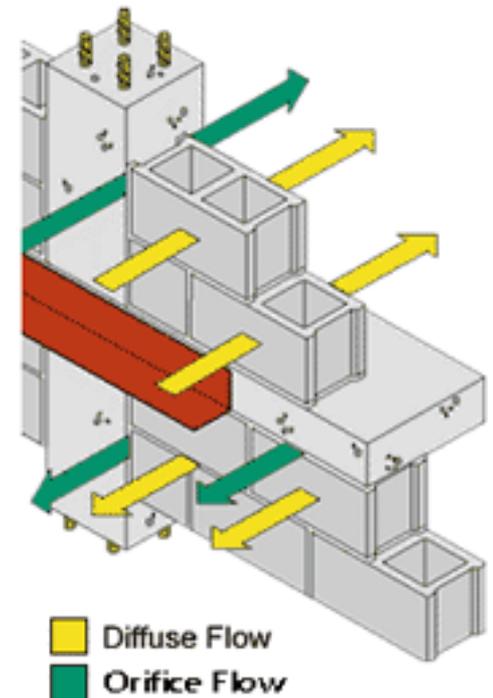
- Results show that infiltration accounts for 33% of **heating** loads in all buildings, on average
  - Huge!
- Cooling load effects vary by climate and are smaller
  - Infiltration actually accounted for a net negative cooling load of about 3.3% on average
  - Means that commercial buildings were probably dominated by internal loads and cold infiltrated air actually reduced need for cooling

# **CONTROLLING LEAKAGE**

in design and construction

# Controlling air leakage

- We can control air leakage primarily through good construction
  - No sloppy joints
  - Proper air sealing/caulking
  - Proper use of air barriers
- Even with good construction, air can diffuse through porous materials
- Let's learn a little more about air barriers and the related water and vapor barriers



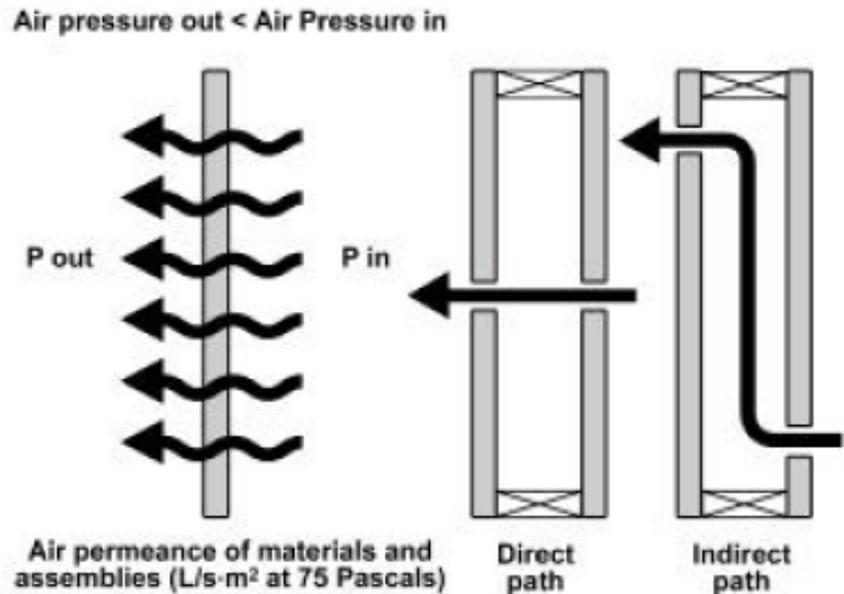
# A tale of three barriers ...

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- You have probably encountered three terms that are often interchanged and confused:
  - Air Barrier
  - Water Barrier
  - Vapor Barrier
- They are three different terms with three different meanings
  - An **air barrier** resists or blocks the movement of air
    - It does not necessarily stop vapor diffusion
  - A **water barrier** blocks transmission of liquid water
    - Does not necessarily stop vapor diffusion or air movement
  - A **vapor barrier** blocks vapor diffusion
    - Does not necessarily stop air movement

# Air barrier systems

- **Air barrier systems** are designed to control the movement of air between the inside and outside of the building through all paths
  - Air diffusion
  - Direct Leaks
  - Indirect Leaks
- An air barrier **material** resists diffusion and direct transport of air
  - Most air barriers are also water barriers
  - But not all are vapor barriers



# Air barrier materials

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- An air barrier is a material with an air permeance of no more than 0.02 L/s/m<sup>2</sup> @ 75 Pa
  - 0.004 cfm/ft<sup>2</sup> @0 .3 in H<sub>2</sub>O
- Air barrier materials only work properly if there are no other air leaks that allow airflow to bypass the materials
- This is tested using ASTM E 2178 and is regulated by the Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA)
- Here is some information on material testing:  
[http://www.airbarrier.org/materials/index\\_e.php](http://www.airbarrier.org/materials/index_e.php)

# Air permeance of materials

## Air barriers

Material	Leakage L/(s·m <sup>2</sup> )
Roofing Membrane	0
Aluminum Foil	0
Mod. Bitum Roof	0
Plywood (3/8")	0
Extruded Poly (38mm)	0
Foil Back Urethane (1")	0
Cement Board	0
Foil Backed Gypsum	0
Plywood (1/4")	0.0067
OSB (1/2")	0.019

## Not air barriers

Material	Leakage L/(s·m <sup>2</sup> )
Gypsum (1/2")	0.020
Particle Board (5/8")	0.026
Expanded Poly	0.19
Roofing Felt (30lb)	0.19
Asphalt Felt (15lb)	0.40
Fibreboard (1/2")	0.082
Olefin Film	0.953
Glasswool Insulation	36.7

From CMHC Study 98-109

Air Permeance of Building Materials

# Tyvek building wrap

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- Tyvek and other building wrap materials are **air** and **water** barriers
  - But NOT **vapor** barriers
  - Install them on the exterior of the building without regards to condensation caused by vapor diffusion
  - A material that is also a vapor barrier can be added for climates where vapor barriers should be installed toward the outside
- Tyvek must be installed with care to ensure proper sealing and flashing and to minimize penetrations through the material

# Tyvek building wrap



# Building wrap components

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# Building wraps: exterior air barrier

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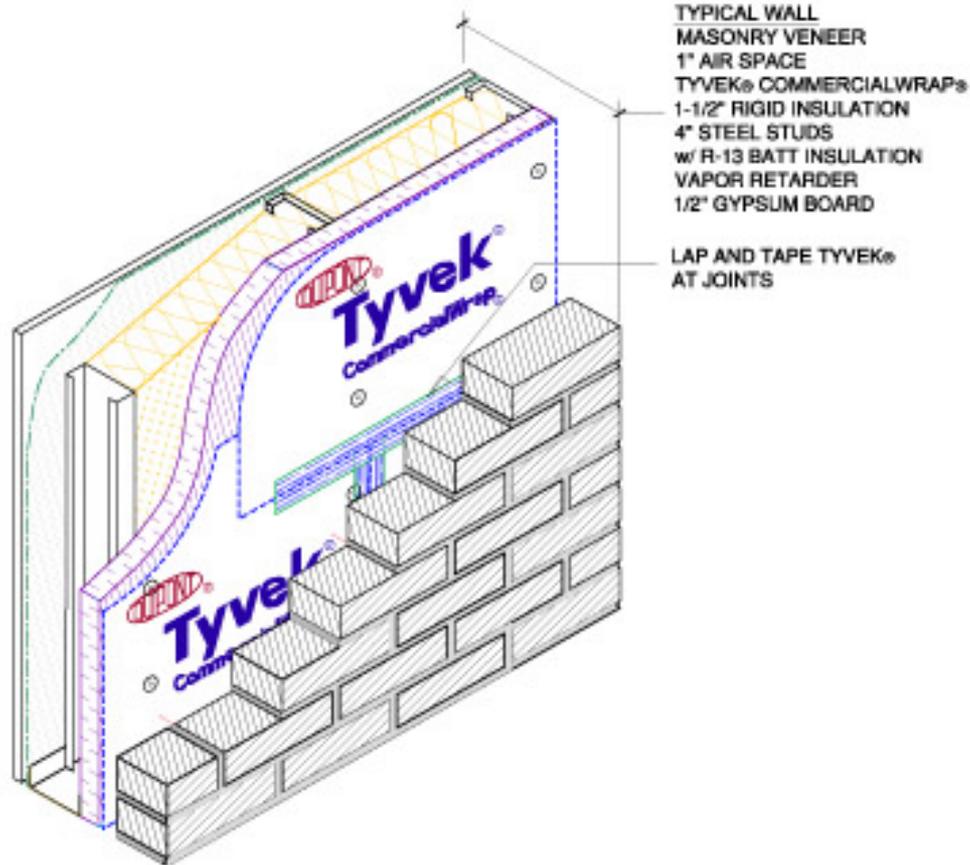
# Building wraps: exterior air barrier

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Photograph 2 – Exterior Air Barrier Using Adhered Membrane

# Building wraps: detail drawings

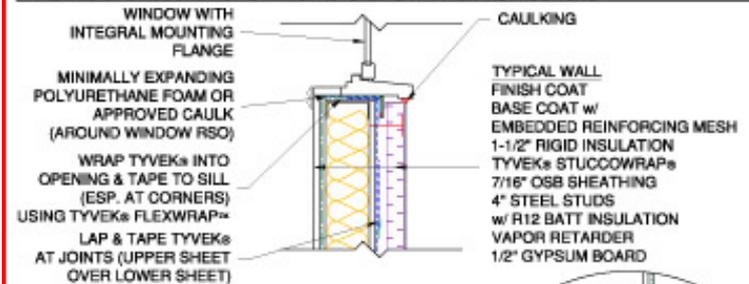


## TYPICAL WALL ISOMETRIC

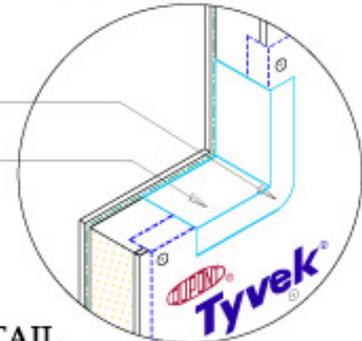
STEEL FRAME BACK-UP WALL w/ MASONRY VENEER (HEATING CLIMATE)

### GENERAL NOTES

- \*SEAL ALL TYVEK® JOINTS AND PENETRATIONS WITH APPROVED TAPE. (ex. DUPONT CONTRACTOR TAPE).
- \*FASTEN TYVEK® AND RIGID INSULATION TO STEEL STUDS USING SCREWS w/ PLASTIC WASHERS. (ex. DUPONT WRAPCAPS)
- \*LOCAL LAWS, ZONING, AND BUILDING CODES VARY AND THEREFORE GOVERNS OVER MATERIAL SELECTION AND DETAILING SHOWN BELOW.
- \*INSTALL EIFS ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER'S WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS



- FASTEN TYVEK® FLEXWRAP™ CORNER USING MECHANICAL FASTENER
- INSTALL TYVEK® FLEXWRAP™ AROUND PERIMETER OF OPENING



## WINDOW SILL DETAIL

STEEL FRAME BACK-UP WALL w/ EIFS CLADDING (HEATING CLIMATE)

# Air barriers also require sealants

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- To ensure the air barrier system really stops air, the overlap of air barriers must be considered
  - Proper adhesives and sealants must be used
  - Tapes are used to seal all overlaps on building wraps
  - Caulks are used to seal around joints between framing members, sill plates, sheathing, joists, etc.
  - If proper sealing is not done, air transport will occur
- Consult with manufacturers for instructions
  - And do as they say!

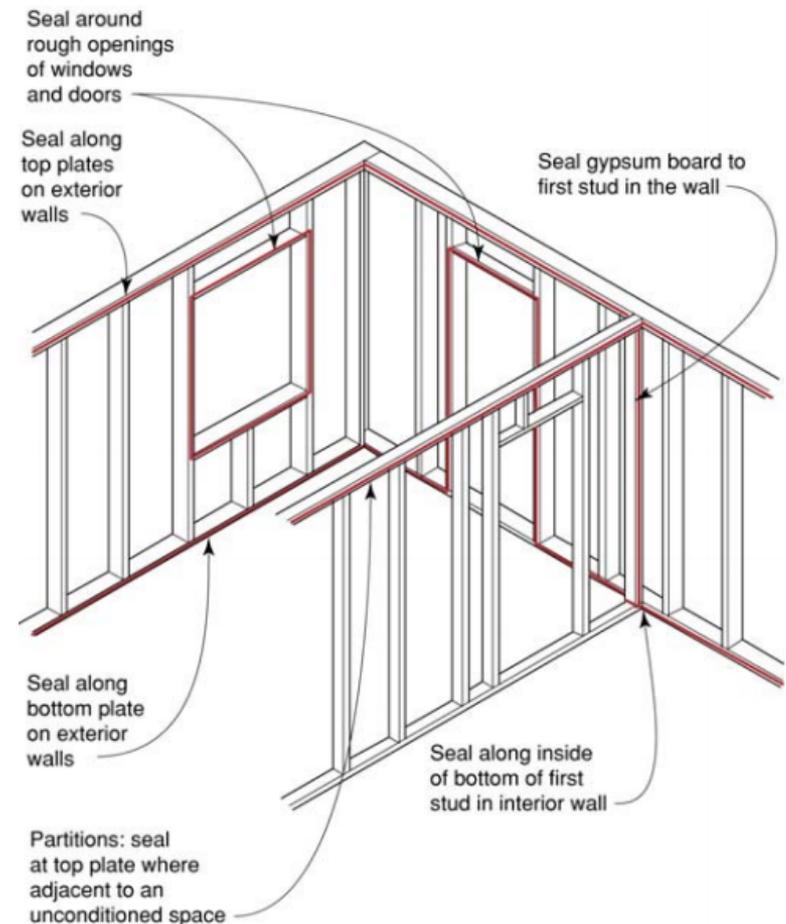
# Visual evidence of air leakage

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# Air sealing

- Air sealing around framing members, sill plates, sheathing, joists, plumbing penetrations, and many other places is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to reduce air leakage during construction
  - “Great Stuff” lives up to its name



# Air sealing at construction

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# Air sealing during retrofits

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Before chimney sealing



After chimney sealing

# Air sealing during retrofits

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Before band joist sealing



After band joist sealing

# Air sealing during retrofits

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- Case study at NIST test house
  - Manufactured test house in Gaithersburg, Maryland USA



- Performed retrofits
  - Increased envelope and HVAC ductwork airtightness
  - Installing house wrap and air sealing penetrations

# Air sealing during retrofits

- Case study at NIST test house



Drain line in floor (from below), leakage associated with large hole in floor relative to pipe diameter



Drain and water lines after sealing

# Air sealing during retrofits

- Case study at NIST test house
- Blower door tests
  - Pre-retrofit:  $ACH_{50} = 11.8 \text{ hr}^{-1}$
  - Post-retrofit:  $ACH_{50} = 9.0 \text{ hr}^{-1}$
- Measured air exchange rates
  - 4 to 51% reduction in AERs after house wrap and air sealing retrofits
    - Depending on HVAC and climate conditions

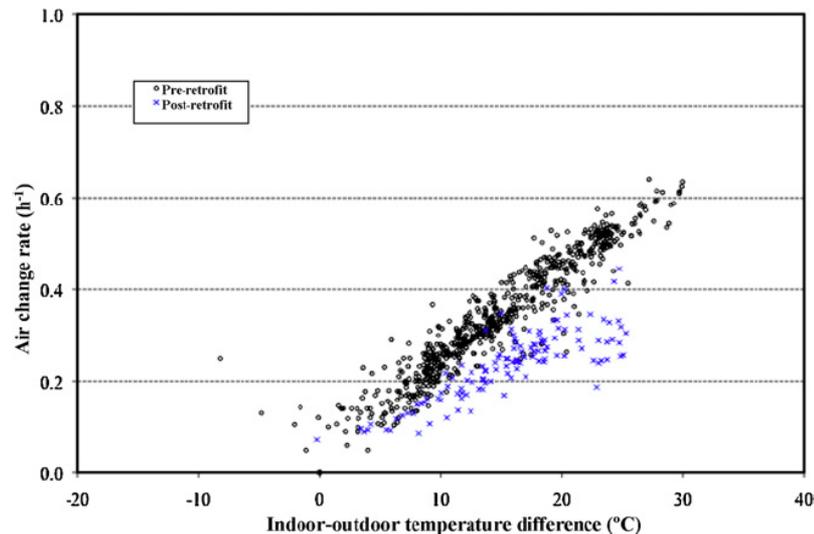


Fig. 6. Pre- and post-retrofit measured air change rates as a function of temperature difference (low wind speed): forced-air fan off (Condition 0).

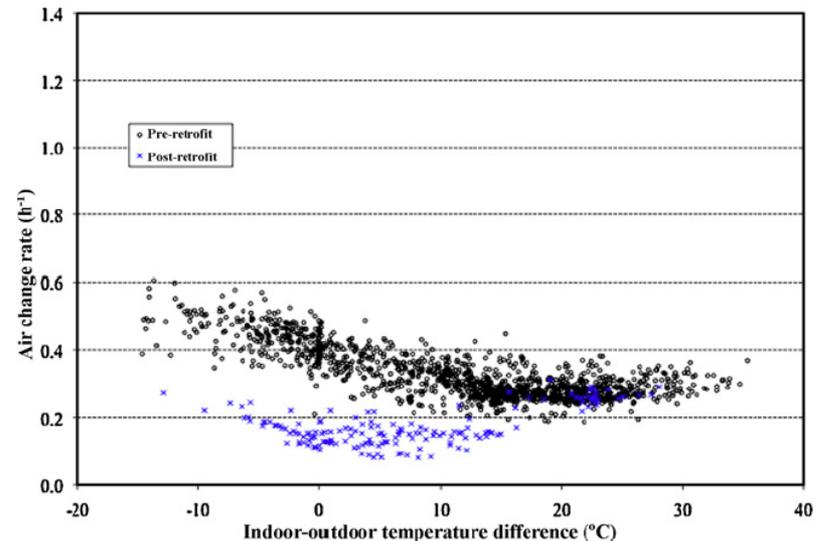


Fig. 8. Pre- and post-retrofit measured air change rates as a function of temperature difference (low wind speed): forced-air fan on, outdoor air intake sealed (Condition 1a).

# Air sealing during retrofits

- Case study at NIST test house
- Measured changes in heating energy use
  - A lot of scatter (many influencing factors)
  - General trend was ~8% reduction in heating energy use

