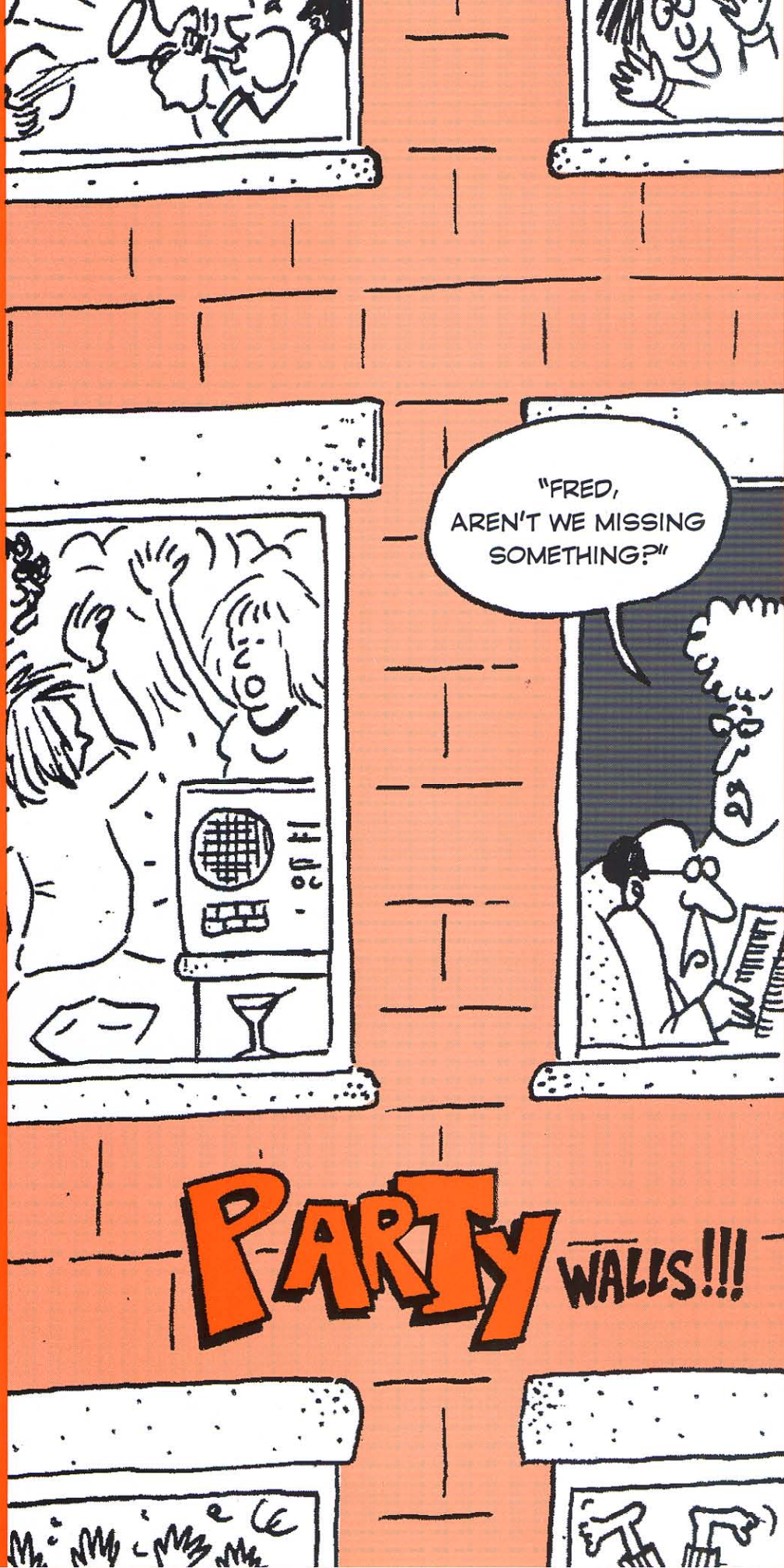


# BUILDING ANALYSTS



"FRED,  
AREN'T WE MISSING  
SOMETHING?"

**PARTY WALLS!!!**



# PARTY WALLS – PART I

## HOW ARE PARTY WALLS DIFFERENT FROM TYPICAL WALLS?

- They separate individual living units from each other to prevent the spread of fire. Because of this, they usually have a more stringent **Fire Rating Requirement**.
- The walls are designed to reduce **Sound Transmission** between living units, and must meet certain **Sound Transmission Class** ratings.

In light framing, typical in the West, party walls include:

- **Double-wall construction**, creating an air gap between the units to prevent the passage of sound.
- **Additional fireproofing materials & assemblies** as a part of their construction.

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTY WALLS?

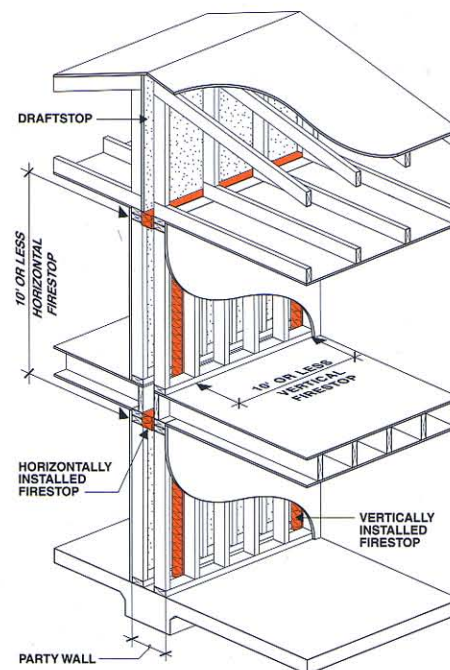
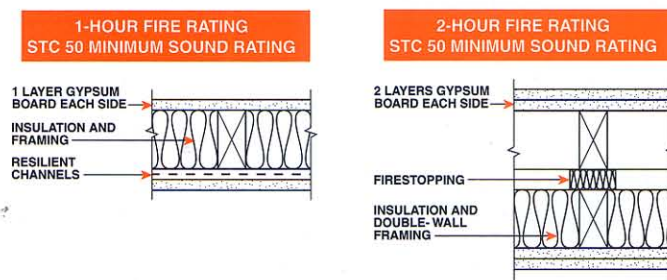
1. Party wall assemblies must be built in accordance to the **Sound and Fire Rating** required by their use. These fire ratings are based on standardized tests and are proportional to the amount of fire resistance that the wall will provide, if properly constructed.

- **1-Hour** rated walls, usually used between units, stairs and corridors.
- **2-Hour** rated walls, usually used as **area separation walls**, to divide buildings into smaller areas. This allows buildings to be larger, based on construction categories and allowed by the **Uniform Building Code**.
- **Sound Transmission** is controlled by additional insulation and resilient mounting or backing assemblies, which must comply with a Sound Transmission Class, usually **STC 50** or greater, mandated by the **Uniform Building Code**.

2. Walls with these ratings require construction using special materials and assemblies. These include:

- **Surface materials** that resist the spread of fire and reduce sound transmission.
- **Draftstops** in the attic areas that separate larger attic areas, at the party wall location.
- **Wrap-backs or Returns**, installed at 2-hour walls, in place of building a **Parapet Wall** above the roof surface to prevent fire from traveling over the separated building areas.
- **Blocking & Firestopping** in the wall, floor, ceiling & attic spaces and cavities to prevent the travel of fire and smoke through these concealed spaces, both vertically and horizontally.
- **Insulation** is installed in the wall cavity to dampen sound transmission.
- **Penetrations** properly installed, using related boxes for electrical items, and metal for plumbing and other pipes.

- **Seals**, at penetrations for plumbing, electrical and other items in the wall to maintain the integrity of the fire related surface.



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SPRING 2001 Next Issue: **PARTY WALLS-SOLUTIONS PART II**