

Frequently Asked Questions About Building with PorterSIPs

Here are a few of the most commonly asked questions about building with SIP's. For questions not listed here, send your inquiries to:

sales@portersips.com

Q: What are structural insulated panels?

A: Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) consist of a foam core of rigid insulation laminated between two sheets of 7/16" Oriented Strand Board (OSB) with an industrial adhesive to form one solid structural member. Other lamination faces are available, both structural and non structural. These SIP panel components serve as your exterior wall and roof systems to give you loading and spanning capabilities not found in ordinary construction.

Q: What are the advantages to building with SIPs?

A: The advantages of working with SIPs are primarily economical and environmental. SIPs can reduce a build time by 30-40%, save 30-40% in energy costs after completion, and are made with materials that have a lesser impact on the environment than some conventional building systems.

Q: How do I run electrical in an enclosed panel?

A: We supply, upon your request and discretion, horizontal wire chases located through the core of your panel at standard outlet and switch heights. Vertical chases are not made on the edges of the panel, they are cored within the panels. Wire channel cores will allow your electrician to snake wires through these channels and loop from under the floor or in your roof trusses. Our installation manual has more information and helpful tips on electrical wiring using SIPs panels.

Q: Will using SIP panels limit my home design?

A: Not at all! We manufacture PorterSIPs



PorterSIPs panels are nailed into place at the Holland, MI O'Charley's Restaurant

panels to your specifications and your home design. Panels work in conjunction with roof trusses and any other building products used to build your home. One thing to keep in mind: when ordering your windows and doors (exterior) to fit a 4½" thick SIPs panel wall, you will require a finished window jamb of 5-1/16" after drywall is installed or to fit a 6½" thick SIPs panel wall, you will require a finished window jamb of 7-1/16" after drywall is installed. Please check with your preferred window/door supplier to see if there is any additional cost.

Q: What is the R-Value of PorterSIPs Panels?

A: A lamination of OSB/EPS/OSB: 4.5" SIPs Panels have "R" values listed in the table above. R-Value is an important consideration for the home owner and builder. It's the thermal efficiency of SIPs that brings them even further above standard construction. Thermal efficiency is also improved by less air leakage through the panel that results in significant energy savings.



"R" VALUE CHART

| Panel Thickness | Panel "R" Value |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 4 1/2" (11.4 cm) | 15.2 |
| 6 1/2" (16.5 cm) | 24.7 |
| 8 1/4" (21.0 cm) | 33.0 |
| 10 1/4" (26.0 cm) | 42.5 |
| 12 1/8" (30.8 cm) | 52.0 |

Q: Does building with SIPs cost more?

A: The cost of SIPs construction is comparable to conventional stick construction, with the added benefit of increased long-term savings. Typical costs can be broken down roughly as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Materials: | plus 10-25% |
| Labor: | minus 30-40% |
| Long-term energy savings: | 30-40% |

Q: What are the limitations of SIPs panels?

A: Building scientists recommend an air exchange system for all types of "tight" construction. The ventilation may be done with a localized air to air exchanger, central HVAC attached system or properly controlled fans which exhaust to the outside of the building envelope and maintain relative humidity to 35% or less. Those systems that work best are controlled with an electronic thermostat that measures the humidity and temperature, then cycles the air exchange for proper volume.

To avoid further moisture problems, it is also recommended to install an interfilm vapor barrier at the ridge joint(s). SIPs are not recommended for pool/spa enclosure applications.

Testimonials on PorterSIPs

From Jarzembowski Builders, Holland, MI:

Our experience with PorterSIPs has been great. The service we have gotten, and the relationships that we have with the sales and customer service people have been outstanding. The quality of the product has also been superior.

One thing that has set Porter apart from other SIP manufacturers has been the effort they have put into working with our subcontractors to train them. Their extra effort at training has led to the subs learning the SIP installation process faster. On our last job, our newest framer liked the system so much he is planning on building his own house using SIPs.

PorterSIPs have set us apart from other builders in the area. Our customers love the product as a result of the lower energy costs and fewer quality issues such as drywall cracking due to settling. We have also been able to offer our customers unique panel skin materials.

While other builders are concerned about the new, more stringent Michigan energy code, PorterSIPs have allowed us to meet the new energy code without making any changes to the way that we build.

We are so thoroughly satisfied, we never want to go back to stick construction.

Damian Jarzembowski
Jarzembowski Builders

"...We put up our SIPS this weekend. Quite a sturdy little building. You have delivered a product that has exceeded our expectations on cost and quality. Good job. I think I will have to build my next house out of those suckers..."

Erik Ebersole
Gulbrandsen Chemicals, Inc.

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