Wall construction information sheet

On-Ground Energy Efficiency Assessment Project

Moreland Energy Foundation

Wall construction type	Description and tips for working out the wall construction type of your home
Timber weatherboard 	Timber weatherboard houses are traditionally clad with horizontal timber weatherboards. Some houses may use vertical weatherboards but this is construction technique that is mainly used with more modern houses. In some older houses you might have horizontal weatherboards on the sides and the rear of the house but on the front you may find weatherboards that have been cut to look like stone blocks. This is used as a decorative effect and the house is obviously still a timber weatherboard house. Some houses may have aluminium or plastic weatherboards that look like timber weatherboards. These houses should NOT be classified as timber weatherboard houses. Please classify them as metal cladding or as 'other' if plastic.
Brick veneer 	Brick veneer is one of the most common house construction types in Victoria. It consists of an external layer of bricks, a timber frame, and then plasterboard inside. If you knock on the internal wall there should be a hollow sound; it should not feel like you are knocking on a solid brick surface. If you have ever had to put in picture hooks or screw something to the internal plasterboard wall it should be relatively easy to do and you may have had to locate a stud to drill into.
Double brick 	Double brick is more common in houses built in the 1940s or earlier. It consists of an external layer of bricks, an air gap, and then an internal layer of bricks. If you knock on the internal wall it should feel very solid as you would be knocking on solid brick. If you have ever had to put in picture hooks or screw something to the internal brick wall it would have been quite hard as you would have been drilling straight into brick and mortar.

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Fibre cement sheeting/Fibro

Generally houses built using fibre cement sheeting are built in the same way as timber weatherboard houses but use fibre cement sheeting for the external cladding instead of timber weatherboard.

The internal wall will be made from plasterboard and will sound hollow if you knock on it. If have ever had to put in picture hooks or screw something to the internal plasterboard wall it should be relatively easy and you may have had to locate a stud to drill into.

These days the external fibre cement sheeting is often covered with render but in the past it was simply painted or left with no finish. If you knock on the external wall it should not feel or sound solid like a brick or masonry wall. Sometimes the rendering of these walls make them look like a solid brick/masonry wall but the hallow sound when knock on them should give it away. You may also be able to see the outline of the fibre cement sheets underneath the render. Fibre cement sheeting is commonly referred to as 'fibro'.

Concrete block/concrete panel

A term used to describe houses made out of pre-cast semi-hollow concrete blocks. Sometimes concrete block walls will be rendered. There may be plasterboard affixed to the inside wall or it may be a solid internal concrete wall. The size of concrete blocks is much larger than standard bricks.

This term is also used to describe the construction technique called 'tilt slab' construction. This is where pre-cast solid concrete slabs are used for the walls. There may be plasterboard affixed to the inside or it might be a solid internal concrete wall. If you knock on the external wall it will feel solid and you should be able to see the outline of large slabs of concrete.

Corrugated iron

In the last decade corrugated iron has started to be used more commonly for external walls. This construction generally consists of a timber frame with corrugate iron fastened to the outside and plasterboard fastened on the inside.

Metal cladding (eg metal weatherboards, aluminium cladding)

A term used to describe houses with aluminium weatherboards that either replace or cover up timber weatherboards. Also used for houses that have flat aluminium/metal sheeting as the external cladding.

Photo sources: Fibre cement sheeting: www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/blog/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Fibro-house-wall1-450x650.jpg. Concrete block: cdn-viper.demandvideo.com/media/cc7b2f25-ea61-4bb4-866d-f39ff2aa4a33/jpeg/aa9dd42f-47fa-405c-89b4-3b47b803d916_11.jpg. Corrugated iron: www.homedesigndirectory.com.au/blog/uploaded_images/corrugated-iron-siding-766625.jpg. Metal cladding: laminators.files.wordpress.com/2008/10/dsc03143-2.jpg