

General Contractor Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What is the minimum ventilation requirement for Type R construction?**
 - A. 10 square feet**
 - B. 15 square feet**
 - C. 20 square feet**
 - D. 25 square feet**
- 2. What is a common property of open graded asphalt concrete?**
 - A. High density**
 - B. Heavily bound particles**
 - C. Minimal fine material**
 - D. Cold weather resistance**
- 3. When installing vinyl siding horizontally, what is the maximum vertical spacing for fasteners?**
 - A. 10 inches**
 - B. 12 inches**
 - C. 14 inches**
 - D. 16 inches**
- 4. What fall protection is required for a person working on a concrete deck at 8 feet high with controlled access?**
 - A. Full fall harness**
 - B. Guardrails**
 - C. Not required**
 - D. Safety nets**
- 5. Which adhesive is recommended for attaching foam insulation to concrete?**
 - A. Epoxy adhesive**
 - B. Latex adhesive**
 - C. Polyurethane adhesive**
 - D. Silicone adhesive**

- 6. What percentage of a masonry wall must be filled for it to be considered solid?**
- A. 50%**
 - B. 65%**
 - C. 75%**
 - D. 85%**
- 7. What is the angle of a 1/8 pipe bend?**
- A. 30 degrees**
 - B. 45 degrees**
 - C. 60 degrees**
 - D. 90 degrees**
- 8. What is one characteristic of expansive soil that prevents its use for backfill?**
- A. High permeability**
 - B. Low shear strength**
 - C. Compressibility**
 - D. Expansiveness**
- 9. What is the minimum size requirement for weep holes in a masonry wall?**
- A. 1/8 inch**
 - B. 3/16 inch**
 - C. 1/4 inch**
 - D. 1/2 inch**
- 10. Before beginning an excavation, what is the best way to locate underground utilities?**
- A. Ground-penetrating radar**
 - B. Hand tools**
 - C. Electric tracing**
 - D. Utility maps**

Answers

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1. D
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. D
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What is the minimum ventilation requirement for Type R construction?

- A. 10 square feet**
- B. 15 square feet**
- C. 20 square feet**
- D. 25 square feet**

The minimum ventilation requirement for Type R construction, specifically for residential buildings, is crucial for ensuring adequate air quality and preventing the accumulation of moisture and pollutants. In this case, the correct answer is based on established building codes and standards that outline the necessary ventilation for various types of construction. For Type R construction, which refers to residential buildings, the requirement is set at 25 square feet. This ensures that living spaces have sufficient fresh air circulation, contributing to a safe and healthy indoor environment. Adequate ventilation helps to mitigate risks such as mold growth, excessive humidity, and the buildup of indoor pollutants, which can adversely affect the health of occupants. Compliance with the 25 square feet requirement is vital for maintaining safety standards and promoting overall well-being in residential settings. Understanding these ventilation requirements is important for general contractors as they play a key role in project planning and execution, ensuring all aspects of construction meet local codes and guidelines.

2. What is a common property of open graded asphalt concrete?

- A. High density**
- B. Heavily bound particles**
- C. Minimal fine material**
- D. Cold weather resistance**

Open graded asphalt concrete is characterized by having minimal fine material, which is a key property that differentiates it from other types of asphalt mixtures. This composition allows for enhanced drainage and reduces the likelihood of water accumulation on the surface. The lower amount of fine aggregates creates larger voids within the mix, promoting better permeability. As a result, open graded asphalt concrete can effectively manage surface water and provide better traction in wet conditions, which is particularly beneficial for reducing hydroplaning risks. This minimal fine content also contributes to the structure's flexibility and sound absorption qualities, making it a popular choice for applications such as noise barriers on roads and parking lots. While high density is more associated with dense graded mixtures, and bound particles imply a stronger adherence of materials, these attributes do not define open graded asphalt. Cold weather resistance is also not a primary characteristic of open graded asphalt; instead, this is more relevant to other specific asphalt formulations designed to withstand extreme temperatures.

3. When installing vinyl siding horizontally, what is the maximum vertical spacing for fasteners?

- A. 10 inches**
- B. 12 inches**
- C. 14 inches**
- D. 16 inches**

When installing vinyl siding horizontally, the maximum vertical spacing for fasteners is indeed 12 inches. This spacing guideline is crucial because it ensures the vinyl siding is securely attached to the structure. Fasteners spaced too far apart could lead to inadequate support, resulting in sagging or shifting of the siding over time, especially in adverse weather conditions. The 12-inch spacing helps to distribute the load more evenly across the siding panels, allowing for proper expansion and contraction as temperatures change. Additionally, this spacing accommodates the natural movement of the siding material, helping to prevent warping or other damage. Using appropriate fastener spacing is essential for maintaining the integrity and longevity of the siding installation, ensuring that the siding performs well against elements such as wind, rain, and temperature fluctuations.

4. What fall protection is required for a person working on a concrete deck at 8 feet high with controlled access?

- A. Full fall harness**
- B. Guardrails**
- C. Not required**
- D. Safety nets**

When working on a concrete deck that is 8 feet high, under certain conditions, fall protection may not be immediately necessary. The requirement for fall protection in construction settings generally depends on the height of the work surface and the type of work being performed. For heights up to 6 feet for general industry and up to 8 feet for the construction industry, some regulations allow for controlled access zones where fall protection measures may not be required if the area is clearly marked and access is limited. In this scenario, if there are safety protocols in place, such as controlled access to the area where the work is being done, it's possible that workers may be allowed to work without the necessity for fall protection. This controlled access can consist of delineating areas where only trained and authorized personnel are permitted, thereby minimizing the risk of falls among untrained workers. Thus, depending on the specific guidelines or standards followed, in this context, the absence of a fall protection requirement at 8 feet with controlled access can be justified. Different contexts or worksites may impose stricter regulations where harnesses, guardrails, or other fall protection measures would be mandatory, but under these specified conditions, fall protection may be deemed unnecessary.

5. Which adhesive is recommended for attaching foam insulation to concrete?

- A. Epoxy adhesive**
- B. Latex adhesive**
- C. Polyurethane adhesive**
- D. Silicone adhesive**

The recommended adhesive for attaching foam insulation to concrete is typically polyurethane adhesive. This type of adhesive is specifically designed to bond various materials and provides strong adhesion to both foam and concrete surfaces. Polyurethane adhesives are moisture-resistant and can expand slightly upon curing, which helps to fill gaps and create a strong bond. While latex adhesive may generally be used for lighter applications, it does not offer the same strength and bonding capabilities necessary for securely attaching foam insulation in outdoor or high-stress environments. Silicone adhesive is more suited for applications needing flexibility and weather resistance but may not adhere as effectively to foam insulation compared to polyurethane options. Epoxy adhesive offers strong bonding but is more commonly used in demanding structural applications, which may not be as practical or necessary for standard foam insulation attachment to concrete. Therefore, polyurethane adhesive stands out as the most suitable choice, as it combines the necessary strength, adaptability, and compatibility with both concrete and foam insulation materials.

6. What percentage of a masonry wall must be filled for it to be considered solid?

- A. 50%**
- B. 65%**
- C. 75%**
- D. 85%**

A masonry wall is considered solid when a significant percentage of its volume is filled with material. This filling provides structural integrity and resistance to forces acting on the wall. The standard for defining a solid masonry wall is typically around 75%, which means that a minimum of 75% of the wall's volume must be filled with mortar or other masonry material for it to be categorized as solid. This requirement ensures that the wall can effectively bear loads and meet safety standards. The discrepancy in percentages can stem from regional building codes or specific material standards, but 75% is widely accepted as the threshold for a wall to be deemed solid, providing the needed assurance of durability and performance in construction.

7. What is the angle of a 1/8 pipe bend?

- A. 30 degrees
- B. 45 degrees**
- C. 60 degrees
- D. 90 degrees

The angle of a 1/8 pipe bend is 45 degrees. In plumbing and piping, different bends serve to redirect the flow of liquids or gases within a pipe system. The term "1/8 bend" specifically refers to the fraction of a full circle that the bend represents. Since a full circle is 360 degrees, an 1/8 bend corresponds to one-eighth of that total, which is calculated as 360 degrees divided by 8, equating to 45 degrees. This understanding is crucial for contractors and plumbers who must design and install systems correctly to ensure optimal flow and fit of piping components. It's important to recognize that as the fractions of bends decrease (such as 1/4 or 1/3 bends), the angles increase, leading to sharper turns in the piping system. Hence, knowing the angle for specific bends aids in accurate planning and installation within construction and plumbing projects.

8. What is one characteristic of expansive soil that prevents its use for backfill?

- A. High permeability
- B. Low shear strength
- C. Compressibility
- D. Expansiveness**

Expansive soils are characterized by their ability to undergo significant volume changes in response to moisture fluctuations. When these soils absorb water, they expand, and when they dry out, they shrink. This trait can lead to substantial ground movement, which can compromise the structural integrity of any constructions made above them. Such volatility makes expansive soils highly unsuitable for backfill, as they can exert unpredictable pressure on foundations and other structural elements, potentially causing cracks and structural failure. While factors like compressibility, permeability, and shear strength are also important aspects of soil mechanics, they do not capture the inherent challenge posed by expansive soils. Other soil types may have compressibility, high permeability, or low shear strength without undergoing the dramatic volume changes that expansive soils do, which is why expansiveness is specifically noted as a critical characteristic preventing their use in backfill applications.

9. What is the minimum size requirement for weep holes in a masonry wall?

A. 1/8 inch

B. 3/16 inch

C. 1/4 inch

D. 1/2 inch

The minimum size requirement for weep holes in a masonry wall is generally established to ensure adequate drainage of water that might accumulate within the wall system. A size of 3/16 inch aligns with standard practices and building codes to effectively allow moisture to escape without compromising the structural integrity of the masonry. This size is sufficiently small to prevent pests from entering while still large enough to permit effective water drainage. Weep holes serve a crucial function in managing water by facilitating drainage, thereby protecting the wall from water damage and reducing the risk of mold growth. Maintaining this minimum size is essential to achieve the desired balance between preventing water accumulation and keeping unwanted insects or debris out of the masonry structure. It's important for contractors to adhere to these specifications in order to ensure the longevity and durability of masonry constructions.

10. Before beginning an excavation, what is the best way to locate underground utilities?

A. Ground-penetrating radar

B. Hand tools

C. Electric tracing

D. Utility maps

The best method to locate underground utilities before starting an excavation is through the use of ground-penetrating radar. This technology employs radar pulses to image the subsurface and can effectively detect various underground utilities, including non-metallic ones, providing a clear visualization of their locations. While utility maps can offer some guidance, they may not always be up to date or accurate, presenting a risk in excavation work. Electric tracing is a method for locating conductive utilities but may miss others that are non-conductive. Hand tools are typically used for exposing or digging after locating utilities but do not serve as a primary detection method. Ground-penetrating radar stands out as a non-invasive, highly effective way to map out underground utilities accurately, thereby minimizing the risk of damaging them during excavation.