

Expanded Polystyrene (EPS)

Key facts

- High risk of rapid fire spread.
- Typically not considered safe for use on multistorey buildings.
- Increased usage over the past 20 years.
- Looks like rendered concrete.
- Usually white.

Expanded polystyrene is a type of cladding that increases the likelihood of fire spreading more quickly as it may shrink, melt or ignite when exposed to elevated temperatures.

When used on a building, it is typically covered with render and looks like rendered concrete.

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If you tap on a building's rendered surface and hear a hollow sound, it may indicate a lightweight building material is covered by the render. This may be [expanded polystyrene](#), however, it may also be a non-combustible product, such as fibre cement sheets.

The non-compliant use of EPS as external wall cladding presents an increased risk of fire spread, particularly in multi-storey buildings.

The National Construction Code allows the use of expanded polystyrene on townhouses and houses (class 1 buildings).

The Minister for Planning announced a prohibition on the use of EPS as external wall cladding for any building work in connection with Class 2-9 buildings of Type A and Type B construction. This prohibition took effect from 1 February 2021.

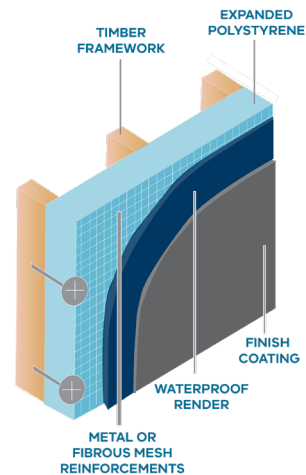
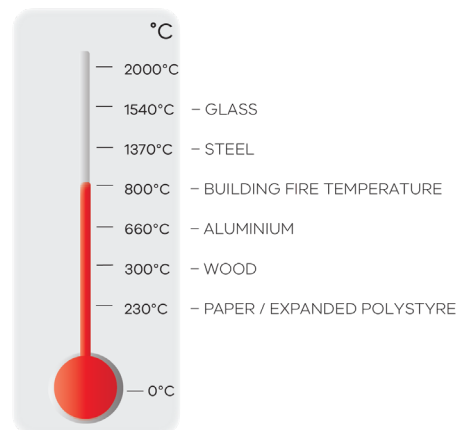


Diagram of EPS when used as external wall cladding



A thermometer shows EPS melting and ignition points

Want to know more?

If you have any questions about this information, please contact the VBA.

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