

**NC Department of Insurance  
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**Definition of Residential Basement Wall And Above Grade Wall**

**Code:** 2012 Energy Conservation Code  
**Section:** 202

**Date:** July 3, 2012

**Question:**

For low-rise residential buildings, when is a wall considered a “**basement wall**” rather than an “**above grade wall**”?

**Answer:**

Per the definition in Section 202, a residential building “basement wall” is:

*A wall 50% or more below grade and enclosing conditioned space.*

Note that a below-grade wall having an average below-grade area **less than fifty per cent of its total wall area** is considered an “above grade wall”.

Table 402.1.1 contains distinct separate R-value requirements for above grade walls and basement walls.