

History and Use of AHCA Standard Details

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IMPORTANT NOTE:

Check for approval with AHCA and Local AHJ before using any of the AHCA Standard Details

As the *Introduction* to these Details describes, the AHCA Standard Details were developed by AHCA (previously HRS) architects and engineers in the 1980s, and utilized by designers and contractors in Florida for health care facilities for many years.

They were used to satisfy fire and smoke rated construction requirements of the building and fire codes in effect during that period of time. There were no, or very few, tested and listed fire penetration assemblies before the early 1990s, so these construction details were developed out of a situational need to achieve a compliance recognized by the AHCA Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

Most of them are untested and address particular construction situations that were often found during the field surveys and were accepted and approved by AHCA to achieve satisfactory compliance with the rigorous inspections undertaken at that time by the AHCA field inspectors.

The famous “blow-out” patch (sometimes referred to as “red-neck engineering”) actually passed a two-hour fire rated wall assembly test. However, the “five sided box” detail for a recessed wall-cabinet has never, to my knowledge, been tested.

Others of them were developed in close coordination with the Gypsum Association and some were tested by that organization. Mr. Bob Lindegard, who at that time was with Gypsum Association, and who is now the owner of *Lindegard Enterprises*, was especially helpful to AHCA during this period. Mr. Lindegard provided an invaluable resource by contributing his expertise from many years of experience with fire rated assemblies.

Because it is time and cost prohibited to engineer and conduct a fire test for every particular construction circumstance that might arise during a project, some of these details may still serve to provide a way to achieve a level of compliance acceptable to the AHCA and the local AHJ.

But today many of them are no longer acceptable or approvable for use in current construction. Since the time these details were developed, the building and fire codes have been revised to require tested through-wall penetrations. Now there are many more tested assemblies available to the designer for immediate use in almost every conceivable construction situation.

However, it is important to note that all of the existing installations reviewed and approved by AHCA under previously adopted building and fire codes are still acceptable by AHCA today.

Unless these details have been removed, renovated, destroyed, or altered, they may remain without further correction or action and do not require any further documentation that would involve additional testing or inspection by a field representative of an NRTL.

Although they may not have received the benefit of recognized fire tests, they were developed through the use of engineering judgment and may continue in use until they are replaced with newer tested assemblies.