

International  
Residential  
Code

## Appendix F

# RADON CONTROL METHODS

### SECTION AF101 SCOPE

**AF101.1 General.** This appendix contains requirements for new construction in jurisdictions where radon-resistant construction is required.

Inclusion of this appendix by jurisdictions shall be determined through the use of locally available data or determination of Zone 1 designation in Figure AF101.

**AF101.2 Where Required.** This appendix shall apply to all new 1, 2 and 3 family dwelling except for homes of closed construction such as: manufactured homes, industrialized units or relocated homes. This appendix shall also apply to R3 residential occupancies as described in section 310 of the Ohio Building Code that use the requirements of the Residential Code of Ohio.

### SECTION AF102 DEFINITIONS

**AF102.1 General.** For the purpose of these requirements, the terms used shall be defined as follows:

#### **SUB-SLAB DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM (Passive).**

A system designed to achieve lower sub-slab air pressure relative to indoor air pressure by use of a vent pipe routed through the conditioned space of a building and connecting the sub-slab area with outdoor air, thereby relying on the convective flow of upward in the vent to draw air from beneath the slab.

#### **SUB-SLAB DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM (Active).**

A system designed to achieve lower-sub-slab pressure relative to indoor air pressure by use of a fan-powered vent drawing air from beneath the slab.

**DRAIN THE LOOP.** A continuous length of drain tile of perforated pipe extending around all or part of the internal or external perimeter of a basement or crawlspace footing.

**RADON GAS.** A naturally occurring, chemically inert, radioactive gas that is not detectable by human senses. As a gas, it can move readily through particles of soil and rock and can accumulate under the slabs and foundations of homes where it can easily enter into the living space through construction cracks and openings.

**SOIL-GAS-RETARDER.** A continuous membrane of 6-mil (0.15mm) polyethylene or other equivalent material used to retard the flow of soil gases into a building.

**SUB-MEMBRANE DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM.** A system designed to achieve lower-sub-membrane air pressure relative to crawl space air pressure by use of a vent drawing air from beneath the soil-gas-retarder membrane.

### SECTION AF103 REQUIREMENTS

**AF103.1 General.** The following construction techniques are intended to resist radon entry and prepare the building for post construction radon mitigation, if necessary (see Figure AF102). These techniques are required in areas where designated by the jurisdiction.

**AF103.2 Subfloor preparation.** A layer of gas-permeable material shall be placed under all concrete slabs and other floor systems that directly contact the ground and are within the walls of the living spaces of the building, to facilitate future installation of a sub-slab depressurization system, if needed. The gas-permeable layer shall consist of one of the following:

4. A uniform layer of clean aggregate, a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) thick. The aggregate shall consist of material that will pass through a 2-inch (51 mm) sieve and be retained by a ¾ inch (6.4 mm) sieve.
5. A uniform layer of sand (native or fill), a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) thick, overlain by a layer of strips of geotextile drainage matting designed to allow the lateral flow of soil gases.
6. Other materials, systems or floor designs with demonstrated capability to permit depressurization across the entire sub-floor area.

**AF103.3 Soil-gas-retarder.** A minimum 6-mil (0.15 mm) [or 3-mil (0.075 mm) cross-laminated] polyethylene or equivalent flexible sheeting material shall be placed on top of the gas-permeable layer prior to casting the slab or placing the floor assembly to serve as a soil-gas-retarder by bridging any cracks that develop in the slab or floor assembly and to prevent concrete from entering the void spaces in the aggregate base material. The sheeting shall cover the entire floor area with separate sections of sheeting lapped at least 12 inches (305 mm). The sheeting shall fit closely around any pipe, wire or other penetrations of the material. All punctures or tears in the material shall be sealed or covered with additional sheeting.

**AF103.4 Entry routes.** Potential radon entry routes shall be closed in accordance with Sections AF103.4.1 through AF103.4.10.

AF103.4.1 Floor openings. Openings around bathtubs, showers, water closets, pipes, wires or other objects that penetrate concrete slabs or other floor assemblies shall be filled with a polyurethane caulk or equivalent sealant applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

AF103.4.2 Concrete joints. All control joints, isolation joints, construction joints and any other joints in concrete slabs or between slabs and foundation walls shall be sealed with a caulk or sealant. Gaps and joints shall be cleared of loose material and filled with polyurethane caulk or other elastomeric sealant applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

AF103.4.3 Condensate drains. Condensate drains shall be trapped or routed through nonperforated pipe to daylight.

AF103.4.4 Sumps. Sump pits open to soil or serving as the termination point for sub-slab or exterior drain tile loops shall be covered with a gasketed or otherwise sealed lid. Sumps used as a suction point in a sub-slab depressurization system shall have a lid designed to accommodate the vent pipe. Sumps used as a floor drain shall have a lid equipped with a trapped inlet.

AF103.4.5 Foundation walls. Hollow block masonry foundation walls shall be constructed with either a continuous course of solid masonry, one course of masonry grouted solid, or a solid concrete beam at or above finished ground surface to prevent passage of air from the interior of the wall into the living space. Where a brick veneer or other masonry ledge is installed, the course immediately below that ledge shall be sealed. Joints, cracks or other openings around all penetrations of both exterior and interior surfaces of masonry block or wood foundation walls below the ground surface shall be filled with polyurethane caulk or equivalent sealant. Penetrations of concrete walls shall be filled.

AF103.4.6 Dampproofing. The exterior surfaces of portions of concrete and masonry block walls below the ground surface shall be dampproofed in accordance with Section R406 of this code.

AF103.4.7 Air-handling units. Air-handling units in crawl spaces shall be sealed to prevent air from being drawn into the unit.

Exception: Units with gasketed seams or units that are otherwise sealed by the manufacturer to prevent leakage.

AF103.4.8 Ducts. Ductwork passing through or beneath a slab shall be of seamless material unless the air-handling system is designed to maintain continuous positive pressure within such ducting. Joints in such ductwork shall be sealed to prevent leakage.

Ductwork located in crawl spaces shall have all seams and joints sealed by closure systems in accordance with Section M1601.3.1.

AF103.4.9 Crawl space floors. Openings around all penetrations through floors above crawl spaces shall be caulked or otherwise filled to prevent air leakage.

AF103.4.10 Crawl space access. Access doors and adjoining crawl spaces shall be closed, gasketed or otherwise filled to prevent air leakage.

AF103.5 Passive sub-membrane depressurization system. In buildings with crawl space foundations, the following components of a passive sub-membrane depressurization system shall be installed during construction.

Exception: Buildings in which an approved mechanical crawl space ventilation system or other equivalent system is installed.

AF103.5.1 Ventilation. Crawl spaces shall be provided with vents to the exterior of the building. The minimum net area of ventilation openings shall comply with Section R408.1 of this code.

AF103.5.2 Soil-gas-retarder. The soil in crawl spaces shall be covered with a continuous layer of minimum 6-mil (0.15mm) polyethylene soil-gas-retarder. The ground cover shall be lapped a minimum of 12 inches (305 mm) at joints and shall extend to all foundation walls enclosing the crawlspace area.

AF103.5.3 Vent pipe. A plumbing tee or other approved connection shall be inserted horizontally beneath the sheathing and connected to a 3-or-4-inch-diameter (76 mm or 102 mm) fitting with a vertical vent pipe installed through the sheathing. The vent pipe shall be expanded up through the building floors, terminate at least 12 inches (305 mm) above the roof in a location at least 10 feet (3048 mm) away from any window opening into the conditioned spaces of the building that is less than 2 feet (610 mm) below the exhaust point, and 10 feet (3048 mm) from any window or other opening in adjoining or adjacent buildings.

AF103.5 Passive sub-slab depressurization system. In basement or slab-on-grade buildings, the following components of a passive sub-slab depressurization system shall be installed during construction.

AF103.5.1 Vent pipe. A minimum 3-inch diameter (76 mm) ABS, PVC or equivalent gas-tight pipe shall be embedded vertically into the sub-slab aggregate or other permeable material before the slab is cast. A "T" fitting or equivalent method shall be used to ensure that the pipe opening remains within the sub-slab permeable material. Alternatively the 3 inch (76 mm) pipe shall be inserted directly into an interior perimeter drain tile loop or through a sealed sump cover where the sump is exposed to the sub-slab aggregate or connected to it through a drainage system.

The pipe shall be extended up through the building floors, terminate at least 12 inches (305 mm) above the surface of the roof in a location at least 10 feet (3048 mm) away from any window or other opening into the conditioned spaces of the building that is less than 2 feet (610 mm) below the exhaust point, and 10 feet (3048 mm) from any window or other opening in adjoining or adjacent buildings.

**AF103.6.2 Multiple vent pipes.** In buildings where interior footing or other barriers separate the sub-slab aggregate or other gas-permeable material, each area shall be fitted with an individual vent pipe. Vent pipes shall connect to a single vent that terminates above the roof or each individual vent pipe shall terminate separately above the roof.

**AF103.7 Vent pipe drainage.** All components of the radon vent pipe system shall be installed to provide positive drainage to the ground beneath the slab or soil-gas-retarder.

**AF103.8 Vent pipe accessibility.** Radon vent pipes shall be accessible for future fan installation through an attic or other area outside the habitable space.

**Exception:** The radon vent pipe need not be accessible in an attic space where an approved roof-top electrical supply is provided for future use.

**AF103.9 Vent pipe identification.** All exposed and visible interior radon vent pipes shall be identified with at least one label on each floor and in accessible attics. The label shall read: "Radon Reduction System."

**AF103.10 Combination foundations.** Combination basement/crawl space or slab-on-grade/crawl space foundations shall have separate radon vent pipes installed in each type of foundation area. Each radon vent pipe shall terminate above the roof or shall be connected to a single vent that terminates above the roof.

**AF103.11 Building depressurization.** Joints in air ducts and plenums in unconditioned spaces shall meet the requirements of Section M1601. Thermal envelope air infiltration requirements shall comply with the energy conservation provisions in Chapter 11. Firesfopping shall meet the requirements contained in Section R602.8.

**AF103.12 Power source.** To provide for future installation of an active sub-membrane or sub-slab depressurization system, an electrical circuit terminated in an approved box shall be installed during construction in the attic or other anticipated location of vent pipe fans. An electrical supply shall also be accessible in anticipated locations of system failure alarms.

NOTES:

1. ALL CONCRETE SLABS THAT COME IN CONTACT WITH THE GROUND SHALL BE LAID OVER A GAS PERMEABLE MATERIAL MADE UP OF EITHER A MINIMUM 4" THICK UNIFORM LAYER OF CLEAN AGGREGATE, OR A MINIMUM 4" THICK UNIFORM LAYER OF SAND, OVERLAIN BY A LAYER OR STRIPS OF MANUFACTURED MATTING DESIGNED TO ALLOW THE LATERAL FLOW OF SOIL GASES.

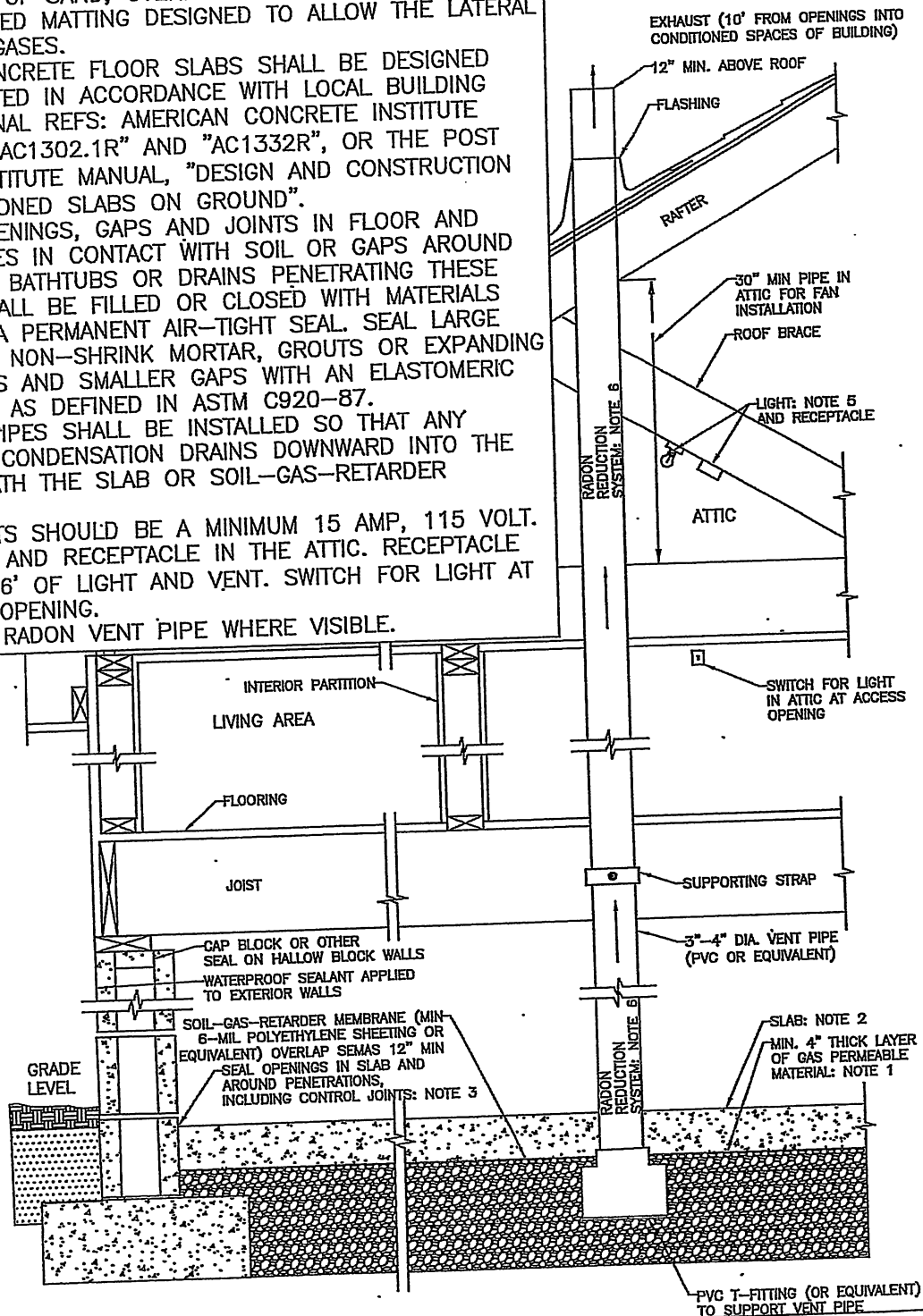
2. ALL CONCRETE FLOOR SLABS SHALL BE DESIGNED AND CONSTRUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL BUILDING CODES. ADDITIONAL REFS: AMERICAN CONCRETE INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS, "AC1302.1R" AND "AC1332R", OR THE POST TENSIONING INSTITUTE MANUAL, "DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF POST-TENSIONED SLABS ON GROUND".

3. ALL OPENINGS, GAPS AND JOINTS IN FLOOR AND WALL ASSEMBLIES IN CONTACT WITH SOIL OR GAPS AROUND PIPES, TOILETS, BATHTUBS OR DRAINS PENETRATING THESE ASSEMBLIES SHALL BE FILLED OR CLOSED WITH MATERIALS THAT PROVIDE A PERMANENT AIR-TIGHT SEAL. SEAL LARGE OPENINGS WITH NON-SHRINK MORTAR, GROUTS OR EXPANDING FOAM MATERIALS AND SMALLER GAPS WITH AN ELASTOMERIC JOINT SEALANT, AS DEFINED IN ASTM C920-87.

4. VENT PIPES SHALL BE INSTALLED SO THAT ANY RAINWATER OR CONDENSATION DRAINS DOWNWARD INTO THE GROUND BENEATH THE SLAB OR SOIL-GAS-RETARDER MEMBRANE.

5. CIRCUITS SHOULD BE A MINIMUM 15 AMP, 115 VOLT. PROVIDE LIGHT AND RECEPTACLE IN THE ATTIC. RECEPTACLE TO BE WITHIN 6' OF LIGHT AND VENT. SWITCH FOR LIGHT AT ATTIC ACCESS OPENING.

6. LABEL RADON VENT PIPE WHERE VISIBLE.



TITLE: PASSIVE RADON CONTROL SYSTEM IN BASEMENTS FOR NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOME CONSTRUCTION

NOTES:

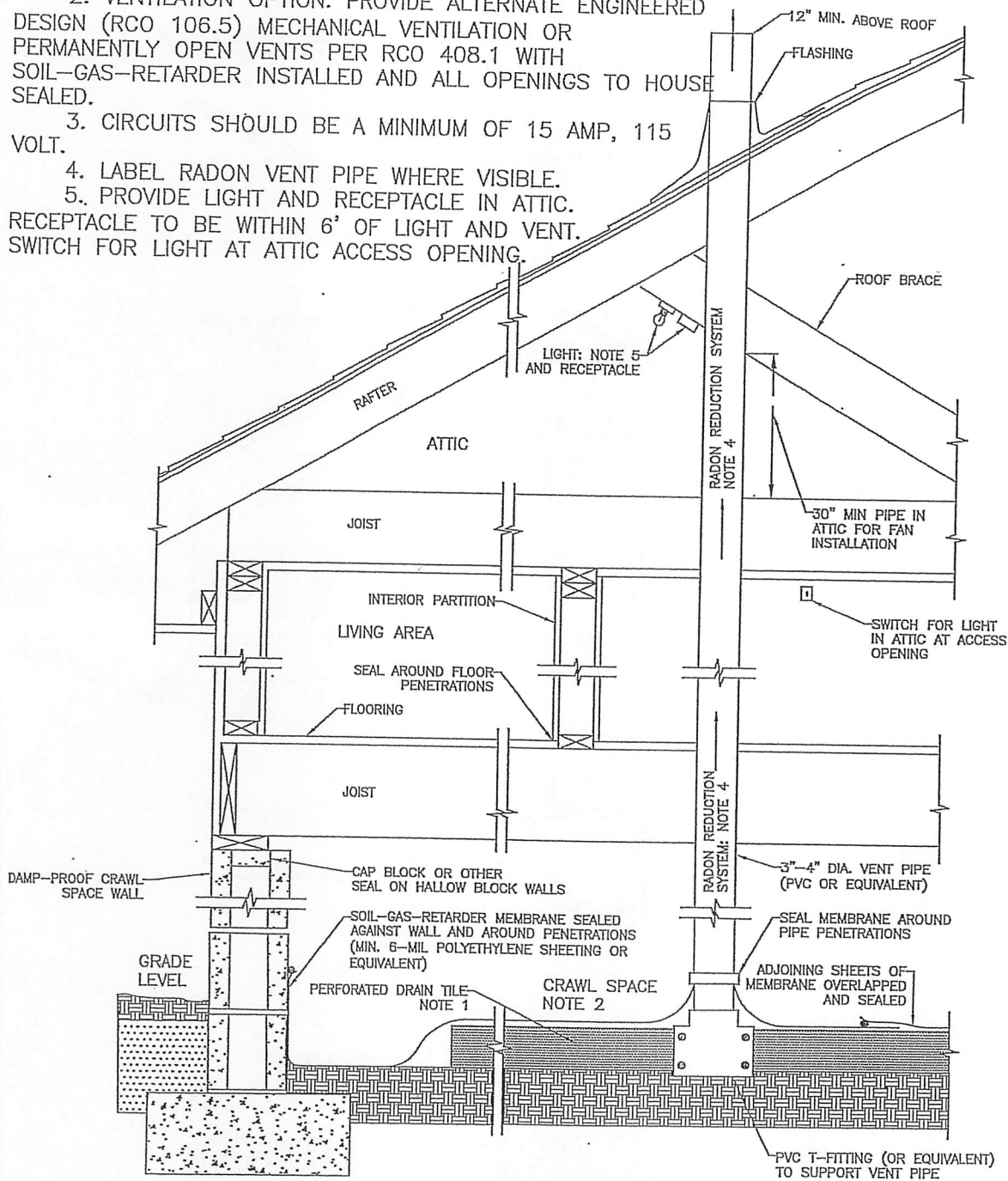
1. INSTALL A LENGTH OF 3" OR 4" DIAMETER PERFORATED DRAIN TILE HORIZONTALLY BENEATH THE SHEETING AND CONNECT TO THE "T" FITTING WITH THE VERTICAL STAND PIPE THROUGH THE SOIL-GAS-RETARDER MEMBRANE.

2. VENTILATION OPTION: PROVIDE ALTERNATE ENGINEERED DESIGN (RCO 106.5) MECHANICAL VENTILATION OR PERMANENTLY OPEN VENTS PER RCO 408.1 WITH SOIL-GAS-RETARDER INSTALLED AND ALL OPENINGS TO HOUSE SEALED.

3. CIRCUITS SHOULD BE A MINIMUM OF 15 AMP, 115 VOLT.

4. LABEL RADON VENT PIPE WHERE VISIBLE.

5. PROVIDE LIGHT AND RECEPTACLE IN ATTIC. RECEPTACLE TO BE WITHIN 6' OF LIGHT AND VENT. SWITCH FOR LIGHT AT ATTIC ACCESS OPENING.



TITLE: PASSIVE RADON CONTROL SYSTEM IN CRAWL SPACE  
FOR NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOME CONSTRUCTION

NOTES:

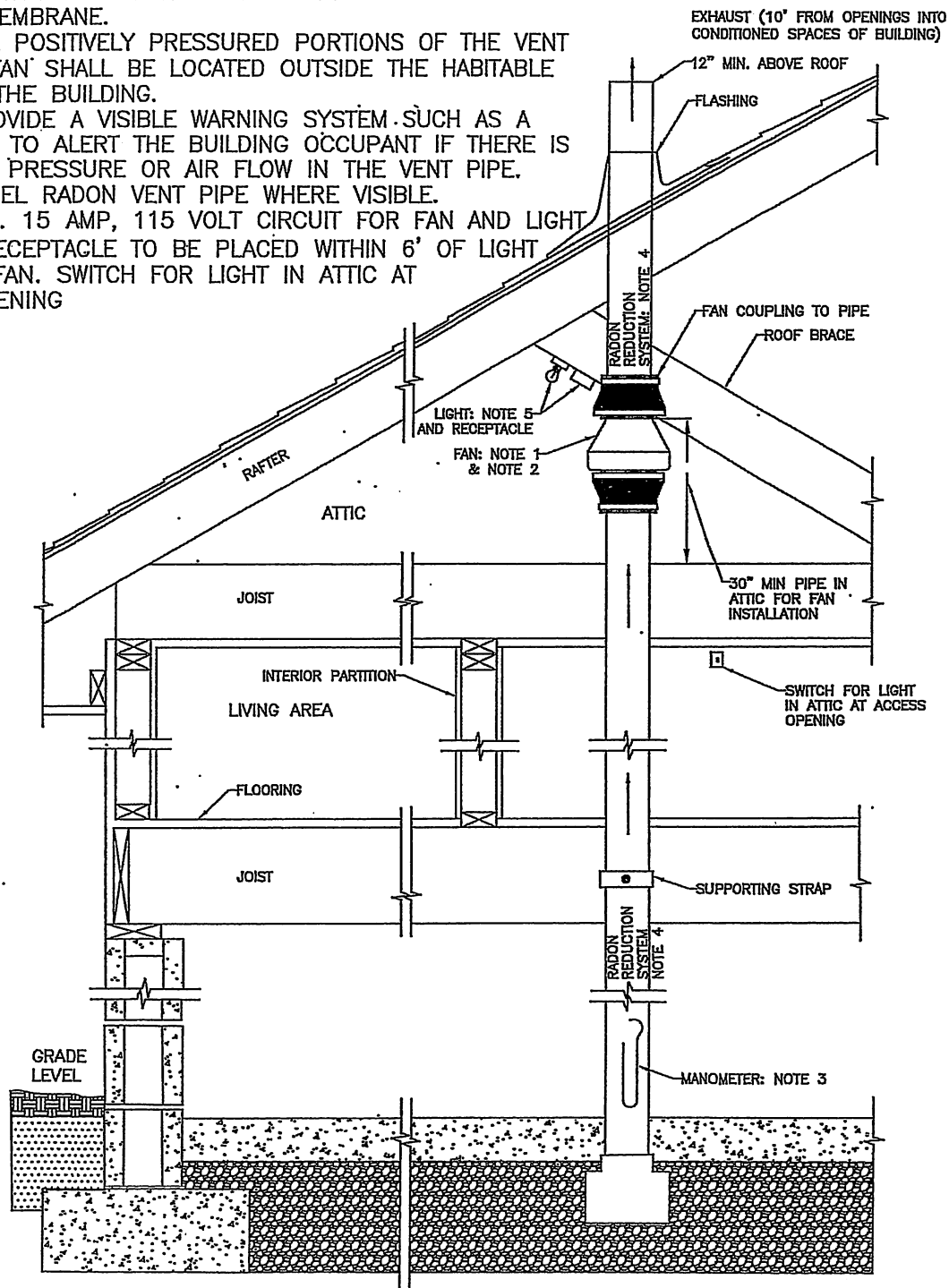
1. INSTALL THE VENT FAN IN THE VERTICAL RUN OF THE VENT PIPE. THE SIZE AND AIR MOVEMENT CAPACITY OF THE VENT FAN SHALL BE SUFFICIENT TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A PRESSURE FIELD BENEATH THE SLAB OR CRAWLSPACE MEMBRANE THAT IS LOWER THAN THE PRESSURE ABOVE THE SLAB OR MEMBRANE.

2. ALL POSITIVELY PRESSURED PORTIONS OF THE VENT PIPE AND FAN SHALL BE LOCATED OUTSIDE THE HABITABLE SPACE OF THE BUILDING.

3. PROVIDE A VISIBLE WARNING SYSTEM SUCH AS A MANOMETER TO ALERT THE BUILDING OCCUPANT IF THERE IS A LOSS OF PRESSURE OR AIR FLOW IN THE VENT PIPE.

4. LABEL RADON VENT PIPE WHERE VISIBLE.

5. MIN. 15 AMP, 115 VOLT CIRCUIT FOR FAN AND LIGHT IN ATTIC. RECEPTACLE TO BE PLACED WITHIN 6' OF LIGHT AND VENT FAN. SWITCH FOR LIGHT IN ATTIC AT ACCESS OPENING



ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS REQUIRED FOR ACTIVATION OF  
TITLE: PASSIVE BASEMENT OR CRAWL SPACE RADON CONTROL  
SYSTEM