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Caisson: A 10" or 12" diameter hole drilled into the earth and embedded into bedrock 3 - 4 feet. The structural support for a type of foundation wall, porch, patio, monopost, or other structure. Two or more "sticks" of reinforcing bars (rebar) are inserted into and run the full length of the hole and concrete is poured into the caisson hole.

Calcium Chloride: A chemical used to speed up curing of concrete in damp conditions.

Calibrate: To check, adjust, or determine by comparison with a standard (the graduations of a quantitative measuring instrument): calibrate a thermometer.

Calibration: The act or process of calibrating or the state of being calibrated.

Camber: A slightly arched surface, as of a road, a ship's deck, an airfoil, or a snow ski.

Camber Arch: An arch whose intrados, though apparently straight, has a slightly concave curve upward.

Camber Beam: A beam whose under side has a concave curve upward.

Camber Windows: Casement windows with a curved top.

Candidate: An indentured servant. Beginning level of inspection association membership. Slave. See Associate Member.

Canopy: An overhanging roof.

Cant Strip: A beveled support used at the junction of a flat surface and a vertical surface to prevent bends and/or cracking of the roofing membrane at the intersection of the roof deck and wall. Used with a base flashing to minimize breaking of the roofing felts.

Cantilever: A projecting beam or other structure supported only at one end. Any part of a structure that projects beyond its main support and is balanced on it.

Cantilevered Void: Foundation void material used in unusually expansive soil conditions. This void is "trapezoid" shaped and has vertical sides of 6" and 4" respectively.

Cap: The upper member of a column, pilaster, door cornice, molding, and the like.

Cap Flashing: The portion of the flashing attached to a vertical surface to prevent water from migrating behind the base flashing.

Cap Sheet: A top layer in built-up roofing.

Cap Sheets: In roofing, one to four plies of felt bonded and top-coated with bitumen that is laid over an existing roof as a treatment for defective roofs.

Cape Chisel: Tool used to clean out mortar joints on brick.

Capital: The principal part of a loan, i.e. the original amount borrowed.

Capital and Interest: A repayment loan and the most conventional form of home loan. The borrower pays an amount each month to cover the amount borrowed (capital or principal) plus the interest charged on capital.

Capped Rate: The mortgage interest rate will not exceed a specified value during a certain period of time, but it will fluctuate up and down below that level.

Carbon Monoxide: CO. A colorless, odorless, highly poisonous gas formed by the incomplete combustion of carbon.

Casement Frames and Sash: Frames of wood or metal enclosing part or all of the sash, which may be opened by means of hinges affixed to the vertical edges.

Casement Window: A sidehinged window that opens on hinges secured to the side of the window frame.

Casing: Molding of various widths and thicknesses used to trim door and window openings at the jambs.

Cast Iron: Heavy metal formed by casting on molds. The metal is covered with a porcelain enamel coating to make fixtures such as the cast iron tubs.

Cast-Iron Pipe (Plumbing): Drain and vent lines. Most older drain-waste venting systems are made of cast-iron pipes. Now increasingly supplanted by ABS and PVC. Pipes were originally joined with molten lead, but most plumbers now join them with no-hub couplers.

Cat's Paw: A variation of a pry bar used to pry up deep set (counter sunk) nails.

Catch Basin: A drain for a low or wet spot, with pipe exiting the side and a pit at the bottom to collect sediment.

Caulk: The application of sealant to a joint, crack or crevice. A compound used for sealing that has minimum joint movement capability; sometimes called low performance sealant.

Caulking: Material used to seal exterior cracks and openings such as windows or foundations.

CCA (Chromated Copper Arsenate): A pesticide that is forced into wood under high pressure to protect it from termites, other wood boring insects, and decay caused by fungus.

Ceiling Joist: One of a series of parallel framing members used to support ceiling loads and supported in turn by larger beams, girders or bearing walls. Also called roof joists.

Cells (Masonry): The hollow spaces in concrete blocks.

Cellulose Insulation: Ground-up newspaper that is treated with a fire retardant.

Celotex™: Black fibrous board that is used as exterior sheathing.

Cement: The gray powder that is the "glue" in concrete. Portland cement. Also, any adhesive.

Cement Mixtures: Rich - 1 part cement, 2 parts sand, 3 parts coarse aggregate. Used for concrete roads and waterproof structures. Standard - 1 part cement, 2 parts sand, 4 parts coarse aggregate. Used for reinforced work floors, roofs, columns, arches, tanks, sewers, conduits, etc. Medium - 1 part cement, 2 1/2 parts sand, 5 parts coarse aggregate. Used for foundations, walls, abutments, piers, etc. Lean - 1 part cement, 3 parts sand, 6 parts coarse aggregate. Used for all mass concrete work, large foundations, backing for stone masonry, etc. Mixtures are always listed Cement to Sand to Aggregate.

Centerset: A style of faucet that is installed on a lavatory with 4" center-to-center faucet holes and that has the spout and handle(s) combined into a single part.

Ceramic Disk Valve: A type of valve that relies on two-part revolving disks in a sealed cylinder. Each disk has a port in it that, when aligned with the other, will allow water to pass through.

Ceramic Tile: A man-made or machine-made clay tile used to finish a floor or wall. Generally used in bathtub and shower enclosures and on counter tops.

Certificate of Occupancy: A document stating that a building is approved for occupancy. The Building Authority issues the Certificate of Occupancy.

Certified: Having a formal document testifying to qualification or completion of requirements.

Certified Commercial Inspector (CCI): A professional designation and a U.S. federal certification mark administered by the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors, Inc. (InterNACHI).

CFM (Cubic Feet per Minute): Measure of volume of air. When testing systems, find the CFM by multiplying the face velocity (amount of air passing through the face of an outlet or return) times the free area (the total area of the openings in the outlet or inlet through which air can pass) in square feet.

Chair Rail: A molding that runs horizontally along the wall at about 3 feet from the ground. In storefront, window wall, or curtain wall systems, a chair rail is an aluminum extrusion applied horizontally to the inside of the system 3 feet from the floor to create a barrier in floor-to-ceiling glazing applications.

Chalk Line: A line made on the roof by snapping a taut string or cord dusted with chalk. Used for alignment purposes.

Change Order: A written document which modifies the plans and specifications and/or the price of the Construction Contract.

Channel Glazing: The installation of glass products into U-shaped glazing channels. The channels may have fixed stops; however, at least one glazing stop on one edge must be removable.

Chapter: A local group of members of a larger association, as in a local NACHI Chapter. A local branch.

Chase: A framed enclosed space around a flue pipe or a channel in a wall or through a ceiling for something to lie in or pass through.

Checking: Fissures that appear with age in many exterior paint coatings. At first superficial, but in time may penetrate entirely through the coating. It produces a pattern of surface cracks running in irregular lines. When found in the top pour of an asphalt built-up roof, checking is the preliminary stage of alligatoring.

Checkrails: Meeting rails sufficiently thicker than a window to fill the opening between the top and bottom sash made by the parting stop in the frame of double-hung windows. They are usually beveled.

Chemical Injection Grouting: Leak repair technique usually used below grade in cracks and joints in concrete walls and floors that involves the injection of sealant (usually urethane) that reacts with water to form a seal.

Chimney: A structure containing one or more flues for removing gases to the outside atmosphere.

Chink: To install fiberglass insulation around all exterior door and window frames, wall corners, and small gaps in the exterior wall.

Chip Board: A manufactured wood panel made out of 1"- 2" wood chips and glue. Often used as a substitute for plywood in the exterior wall and roof sheathing. Also called OSB (Oriented Strand Board) or Wafer Board.

Circuit: A network of wiring that typically commences at a panel box, feeds electricity to outlets and ultimately returns to the panel box.

Circuit Breaker: A protective device which automatically opens an electrical circuit when it is overloaded.

Cistern: Reservoir for water. Common in houses built prior to the fifties in the Midwest.

Class "A" Fire Resistance: The highest fire-resistance rating for roofing per ASTM E-108. Indicates that roofing is able to withstand severe exposure to fire originating from sources outside the building.

Class "B" Fire Resistance: Fire-resistance rating that indicates roofing material is able to withstand moderate exposure to fire originating from sources outside the building.

Class "C" Fire Resistance: Fire-resistance rating that indicates roofing material is able to withstand light exposure to fire originating from sources outside the building.

Class B Door: A fire resistant rating applied by the Underwriters Laboratories Classification for a door having a 1 to 1 1/2 hour rating.

Cleanout: A plug in a trap or drain pipe that provides access for the purpose of clearing an obstruction.

Cleanout (Plumbing): A drain fitting, usually a wye or a tee, with a removable plug to permit inspection and access for an auger or snake.

Clearance: The minimum distance through air measured between the surface of something heat-producing and the surface of something combustible.

Clearly Identifiable: Capable of being recognized by a person of normal vision.

Cleat: A wedge-shaped piece (usually of metal) which serves as a support or check. A strip fastened across something to give strength or hold something in position.

Client: The party that retains the inspector and pays for the inspection.

Clip Ties: Sharp cut metal wires that protrude out of a concrete foundation wall that at one time held the foundation form panels in place.

Closed Cut Valley: A method of valley treatment in which shingles from one side of the valley extend across the valley, while shingles from the other side are trimmed 2 inches from the valley centerline. The valley flashing is not exposed.

Closet Auger: A flexible rod with a curved end used to access the toilet's built-in trap and remove clogs.

Closet Bend: A curved fitting that connects the closet flange to the toilet drain.

Closet Bolts: Bolt whose head is fitted to a closet flange and protrudes up through a toilet base. A nut is tightened around it on the toilet base. Two (or four) bolts serve one toilet.

Closet Flange: An anchoring ring secured to the floor. The base of the toilet is secured to this ring with bolts.

CO: An abbreviation for "Certificate of Occupancy."

Coal Tar: A viscous liquid mixture of hydrocarbon compounds, derived, along with coke, from the destructive distillation of coal.

Coal Tar Pitch: A bituminous material, which is a by-product from the coking of coal. It is used as the waterproofing material for tar and gravel built-up roofing.

Code of Ethics: Ethical standards of conduct for home inspectors.

Code Official: The officer or other government designated authority charged with enforcement of building codes.

Cohesive Failure: Internal splitting of a compound resulting from over-stressing of the compound.

Cold Air Return: The ductwork (and related grills) that carries room air back to the furnace for re-heating.

Cold Applied: Products that can be applied without heating. These are in contrast to products which need to be heated to be applied.

Cold Patch: In roofing, a roof repair done with cold-applied material.

Cold Process Adhesive: Mastic prepared with SBS modifiers to adhere laps, flashing and joints of built-up or low-slope roofing without hot-mopping or torching equipment.

Cold-Method or Lap Cement: Special multipurpose adhesive for low-sloped, cold-applied roof construction. Bonds 19" selvedge, mineral surface and cap sheets to the underlayment. Doubles as an adhesive on 2" selvedge lap of mineral-, granule- or smooth-surfaced roofing. Available in both summer and winter grades.

Collar: In roofing, a conical metal cap flashing used in conjunction with vent pipes or stacks usually located several inches above the plane of the roof for the purpose of shedding water away from the base of the vent.

Collar Beam: In carpentry, a tie that keeps the roof from spreading. They serve to stiffen the roof structure. Connects similar rafters on opposite sides of roof.

Collar Tie: A horizontal board attached perpendicular to rafters.

Column: In architecture: A perpendicular supporting member, circular or rectangular in section, usually consisting of a base, shaft, and capital. In engineering: A vertical structural compression member which supports loads acting in the direction of its longitudinal axis.

Combination Doors or Windows: Combination doors or windows are used over regular openings. They provide winter insulation and summer protection and often have self storing or removable glass and screen inserts. This eliminates the need for handling a different unit each season.

Combustible: Describes any material that will burn.

Combustion Air: The duct work installed to bring fresh, outside air to the furnace and/or hot water heater. Normally 2 separate supplies of air are brought in: one high and one low.

Combustion Chamber: The part of a boiler, furnace or woodstove where the burn occurs; normally lined with firebrick or molded or sprayed insulation.

Commercial Cooking Appliances: Appliances used in a commercial food service establishment for heating or cooking food.

Commercial Property: The building structures and improvements located on a parcel of commercial real estate. These may include structures such as buildings with residential units operated for profit, mixed use buildings, strip malls, motels, factories, storage facilities, restaurants, and office buildings.

Common Rafter: Rafter that extends from the top plate to the ridge. Generally set 12, 16, or 24 inches apart.

Compatible: Two or more substances, which can be mixed or blended without separating, reacting, or affecting either material adversely.

Component: A permanently installed or attached fixture, element or part of a system.

Composite Board: An insulation board which has two different insulation types laminated together in 2 or 3 layers.

Compression Fitting: Used to join or connect pipes and conduit by causing a ring to compress against the connecting tube when tightening with a wrench.

Compression Gasket: A gasket designed to function under compression.

Compression Set: The permanent deformation of a material after removal of the compressive stress.

Compression Valve: A type of valve that works by raising or lowering a stem. Water passes through the valve by turning the faucet handle, which causes the stem to drop or rise.

Compression Web: A member of a truss system which connects the bottom and top chords and which provides downward support.

Compressor: A mechanical device that pressurizes a gas in order to turn it into a liquid, thereby allowing heat to be removed or added. A compressor is the main component of conventional heat pumps and air conditioners. In an air conditioning system, the compressor normally sits outside and has a large fan (to remove heat).

Concealed: Rendered inaccessible by the structure or finish of the building. Wires in concealed raceways are considered concealed, even though they may become accessible by withdrawing them.

Concealed Nail Method: Application of roll roofing in which all nails are driven into the underlying course of roofing and covered by a cemented, overlapping course. Nails are not exposed to the weather.

Concrete Block: A hollow concrete 'brick' often 8"x8"x16" in size. Often used in low rise commercial and some residential construction. The original design and use is attributed to the architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Concrete Board: A panel made out of concrete and fiberglass usually used as a tile backing material.

Concrete Board or Wonderboard (TM): A panel made out of concrete and fiberglass usually used as a tile backing material.

Concrete Grout: A mixture of 3/8-inch pea gravel, sand, cement and water which is poured into the cells of concrete-block walls to reinforce them.

Concrete Plain: Concrete either without reinforcement, or reinforced only for shrinkage or temperature changes.

Condensate Line: The copper pipe that runs from the outside air conditioning condenser to the inside furnace (where the A/C coil is located).

Condensation: Water condensing on walls, ceiling and pipes. Normal in areas of high humidity, usually controlled by ventilation or a dehumidifier.

Condensing Unit: The outdoor component of a cooling system. It includes a compressor and condensing coil designed to give off heat.

Condition: The visible and conspicuous state of being of an object.

Conditioned Space: An area or room within a building being heated or cooled.

Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions (CC and Rs): The standards that define how a property may be used and the protections the developer makes for the benefit of all owners in a subdivision.

Conduction: The flow of heat from one part of a substance to another part. A piece of iron with one end placed in a fire will soon become warm from end to end due to the transfer of heat by the actual collision of the air molecules.

Conductivity: The rate at which heat is transmitted through a material.

Conductor: In roofing, a pipe for conveying rainwater from the roof gutter to a drain, or from a roof drain to the storm drain; also called a leader, downspout, or downpipe. In electrical contracting, a wire through which a current of electricity flows, better known as an electric wire.

Conductor (Electrical): Anything that conducts or carries electricity.

Conduit: A hollow pipe casing through which electric lines run.

Conduit (Electrical): Tubing used to protect wiring.

Connector: The pipe that connects a fuel-burning appliance to a chimney.

Console Lavatory: A table-like lavatory in which the basin is attached to a wall at the back and by table or piano legs at the front.

Construction Adhesive: Thick-bodied adhesive, suited to a wide range of repair and construction tasks. Packaged in convenient cartridges for caulking guns.

Construction Contract: A legal document which specifies the details of a construction project. A good construction contract will include: 1.The contractors registration number. 2.A statement of work quality such as 'Standard Practices of the Trades' or 'according to Manufacturers Specifications.' 3.A set of blue prints or plans. 4.A set of specifications. 5.Any allowances. 6.A construction timetable including starting and completion dates. 7.A fixed price for the work, or a time and materials formula. 8.A payment schedule. 9.A written warrantee. 10.A clause which outlines how any disputes will be resolved.

Construction Drywall: A type of construction in which the interior wall finish is applied in a dry condition, generally in the form of sheet materials or wood paneling as contrasted to plaster.

Construction Loan: A loan provided by a lending institution specifically to construct or renovate a building.

Construction, Frame: A type of construction in which the structural parts are wood or depend upon a wood frame for support. In codes, if masonry veneer is applied to the exterior walls, the classification of this type of construction is usually unchanged.

Consultant: A person with particular expertise in a subject who assists the inspector with portions of the inspection.

Contamination: An impairment of the quality of the potable water.

Continuing Education: Ongoing education, often a requirement for membership in a home inspection association. For example, NACHI's Continuing Education Policy.

Continuity Tester: An electrical tool used to identify and diagnose a circuit as either open or closed.

Contractor: An individual licensed to perform certain types of construction activities. In most states, the general contractor's license and some specialty contractor's licenses don't require of compliance with bonding, workmen's compensation and similar regulations. Some of the specialty contractor licenses involve extensive training, testing and/or insurance requirements. There are various types of contractors: General Contractor - responsible for the execution, supervision and overall coordination of a project and may also perform some of the individual construction tasks. Most general contractors are not licensed to perform all specialty trades and must hire specialty contractors for such tasks, e.g. electrical, plumbing. Remodeling Contractor - a general contractor who specializes in remodeling work. Specialty Contractor - licensed to perform a specialty task e.g. electrical, side sewer, asbestos abatement. Sub Contractor - a general or specialty contractor who works for another general contractor.

Control Joint: A control joint controls or accommodates movement in the surface component of a roof.

Convection: A method of transferring heat by the actual movement of heated molecules, usually by a freestanding unit such as a furnace.

Conventional Loan: A mortgage loan not insured by a government agency (such as FHA or VA).

Convertibility: The ability to change a loan from an adjustable rate schedule to a fixed rate schedule.

Cooling Load: The amount of cooling required to keep a building at a specified temperature during the summer, usually 78° Fahrenheit, regardless of outside temperature.

Cooling Tower: A large device mounted on roofs, consisting of many baffles over which water is pumped in order to reduce its temperature.

Coped: Removing the top and bottom flange of the end(s) of a metal I-beam. This is done to permit it to fit within, and bolted to, the web of another I-beam in a "T" arrangement.

Coped Joint: Cutting and fitting woodwork to an irregular surface.

Coping: A construction unit placed at the top of the parapet wall to serve as a cover for the wall.

Coping Joint: The intersection of a roof slope and an exterior vertical wall.

Copper Pipe Types: Type K has the heaviest or thickest wall and is generally used underground. It has a green stripe. Type L has a medium wall thickness and is most commonly used for water service and for general interior water piping. It has a blue stripe. Type M has a thin wall and many codes permit its use in general water piping installation. It has a red stripe.

Corbel: The triangular, decorative and supporting member that holds a mantel or horizontal shelf.

Corbel Out: To build out one or more courses of brick or stone from the face of a wall to form a support for timbers.

Core: A small section cut from any material to show internal composition.

Corner Bead: A strip of formed sheet metal, sometimes combined with a strip of metal lath, placed on corners before plastering to reinforce them. Also, a strip of wood finish three-quarters-round or angular placed over a plastered corner for protection.

Corner Boards: Used as trim for the external corners of a house or other frame structure against which the ends of the siding are finished.

Corner Braces: Diagonal braces at the corners of frame structure to stiffen and strengthen the wall.

Cornerite: Metal-mesh lath cut into strips and bent to a right angle. Used in interior corners of walls and ceilings on lath to prevent cracks in plastering.

Cornice: A horizontal projecting course on the exterior of a building, usually at the base of the parapet. In residential construction, the overhang of a pitched roof at the eave line, usually consisting of a fascia board, a soffit for a closed cornice, and appropriate moldings.

Cornice Return: The portion of the cornice that returns on the gable end of a house.

Corrosion: The deterioration of metal by chemical or electrochemical reaction resulting from exposure to weathering, moisture, chemicals or other agents or media.

Corrugated: Folded or shaped into parallel ridges or furrows so as to form a symmetrically wavy surface.

Cost Breakdown: A breakdown of all the anticipated costs on a construction or renovation project.

Cost Plus Contract: See Time and Materials Contract.

Counter Flashing: The formed metal secured to a wall, curb, or roof top unit to cover and protect the upper edge of a base flashing and its associated fasteners. This type of flashing is usually used in residential construction on chimneys at the roofline to cover shingle flashing and to prevent moisture entry.

Counterfort: A foundation wall section that strengthens (and is generally perpendicular to) a long section of foundation wall.

Coupling: In plumbing, a short collar with only inside threads at each end, for receiving the ends of two pipes which are to be fitted and joined together. A right/left coupling is one used to join 2 gas pipes in limited space.

Course: A single layer of brick or stone or other building material.

Cove Molding: A molding with a concave face used as trim or to finish interior corners.

Covenants: Rules usually developed by a builder or developer regarding the physical appearance of buildings in a particular geographic area. Typical covenants address building height, appropriate fencing and landscaping, and the type of exterior material (stucco, brick, stone, siding, etc) that may be used.

Coverage: Amount of weather protection provided by the roofing material. Depends on number of layers of material between the exposed surface of the roofing and the deck; i.e. single coverage, double coverage, etc.

CPVC: Plastic water piping.

CPVC (Chlorinated Polyvinyl Chloride): Rigid plastic pipe used in water supply systems where code permits.

Crater: Pit in the surface of concrete resulting from cracking of the mortar due to expansive forces associated with a particle of unsound aggregate or a contaminating material, such as wood or glass.

Crawl Space: A shallow open area between the floor of a building and the ground, normally enclosed by the foundation wall.

Crawlspace: The area within the confines of the foundation and between the ground and the underside of the lowest floor structural component.

Crazing: A series of hairline cracks in the surface of weathered materials, having a web-like appearance. Also, hairline cracks in pre-finished metals caused by bending or forming (see Brake Metal).

Credit Rating: A report ordered by a lender from a credit agency to determine a borrower's credit habits.

Cricket: A peaked saddle construction at the back of a chimney to prevent accumulation of snow and ice and to deflect water around the chimney.

Cripple Stud: Short stud used as support in wall openings that replaces a normal 93 inch or 96 inch stud.

Cripple Walls: In a wood-frame house, the section of wall under the house between the concrete foundation and the floor joists. Also called crawl space walls.

Crock: Used in the ground to hold water for pumping sump pumps.

Cross Connection: Any connection between two otherwise separate piping systems, one of which contains potable water and the other which contains something which could contaminate the potable water.

Cross Tee: Short metal "T" beam used in suspended ceiling systems to bridge the spaces between the main beams.

Cross-Bridging: Diagonal bracing between adjacent floor joists, placed near the center of the joist span to prevent joists from twisting.

Crosscutting: Cutting across the wood grain; to crosscut a board is to cut across its width.

Crown: The sloped top of a masonry chimney designed to shed water away from the flue; also called a splay or a wash.

Crown Molding: A molding used on cornice or wherever an interior angle is to be covered.

Culvert: Round, corrugated drain pipe (normally 15" or 18" in diameter) that is installed beneath a driveway parallel to and near the street.

Cupola: A small dome at the peak of a pitched roof.

Cupping: A type of warping that causes boards to curl up at their edges.

Curb: A short wall or masonry built above the level of the roof that provides a means of flashing the deck equipment.

Curb Roof: A roof with an upper and lower set of rafters on each side, the under-set being less inclined to the horizon than the upper; a mansard roof.

Curing: In concrete application, the process in which mortar and concrete harden. The length of time is dependent upon the type of cement, mix proportion, required strength, size and shape of the concrete section, weather and future exposure conditions. The period may be 3 weeks or longer for lean concrete

mixtures used in structures such as dams or it may be only a few days for richer mixes. Favorable curing temperatures range from 50 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Design strength is achieved in 28 days.

Curing (Paint): The process of paint bonding to a surface. Curing and drying are not the same.

Curing Agent: One part of a multi-part sealant which, when added to the base, will cause the base to change its physical state by chemical reaction between the two parts.

Curtain Drain: A ditch sometimes filled with gravel and a drain tile which diverts storm and drain water away from a structure.

Curtain Wall: A thin wall, supported by the structural steel or concrete frame of the building independent of the wall below. Also a metal (most often aluminum) framing system on the face of a building containing vision glass panels and spandrel panels made of glass, aluminum, or other material.

Cut Off: A piece of roofing membrane consisting of one or more narrow plies of felt usually mopped in hot to seal the edge of insulation at the end of a day's work.

Cut-In Brace: Nominal 2-inch-thick members, usually 2x4s, cut in between each stud diagonally.

Cutback: In roofing, basic asphalt or tar which has been "cut back" with solvents and oils so that the material become fluid.

Cutoff Valves: Valves used to shut water off, generally located under sinks or behind bathtub and shower access panels. They cut off hot and/or cold water at the source without cutting all water off throughout the house.