



#### SCOPE:

This Technical Bulletin illustrates and describes proper treatment for the butt joints and overlap of James Hardie® lap siding products.

International Residential Code IRC R703.10.2 requires lap siding to have:

1. A minimum vertical overlap of 1 ¼ inch (31.75 mm), and
2. One of the following butt joint treatments:
  - a) Joint Flashing,
  - b). Caulking, or
  - c). "H" jointer covers

James Hardie recommends 6 inch (152.4 mm) wide joint flashing that overlaps the course below by 1 inch (25.4 mm). See Figure 1. Some local building codes may require different size flashing. Joint-flashing material must be durable, waterproof material that does not react with cement based products. Examples of suitable material include painted or coated coil stock and code compliant water-resistive barriers, such as HardieWrap® weather barrier. Other products may also be suitable.

James Hardie DOES NOT recommend using caulk or "H"-jointers for the butt joints of HardiePlank® siding with ColorPlus® technology.

James Hardie also DOES NOT recommend applying caulk to the horizontal overlap between siding planks (see Figure 2).

Joint Flashing  
6 in. (152.4 mm) wide,  
1 in. (25.4 mm) on overlap

FIGURE 1

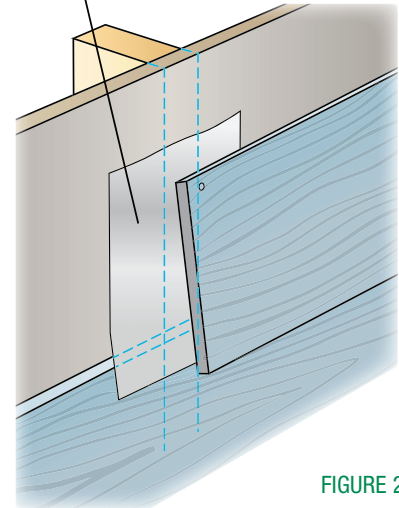


FIGURE 2



James Hardie does not recommend caulking butt joints or the horizontal overlaps

## Why does James Hardie recommend using flashing instead of caulk or “H” - Jointers?

Experts across the industry recognize flashings as an effective and responsible method for draining a wall system:

- 1. Moisture management** –Inherent in lap siding design is the provision of drainage at the laps and drying through the airspace that exists behind each plank. In line with this and fundamental water management principles, joint flashing behind field butt joints provides a physical layer that directs water down and out away from the wall cavity. Caulking at the horizontal overlaps is not recommended because it impedes these drainage and drying mechanisms inherent to lap siding.

*“The fundamental principle of water management is to shed water by layering materials in such a way that water is directed downwards and outwards out of the building or away from the building. The key to this fundamental principle is drainage. The most elegant expression of this concept is flashing. Flashings are the most under-rated building enclosure component and arguably the most important.”*

*EEBA (Energy & Environmental Building Association™) Water Management Guide by Joseph W. Lstriburek, Ph.D., P.eng. June 2004.*
- 2. Caulk requires maintenance** – Caulk manufacturers and industry experts agree that the caulk in field butt joints and horizontal laps will need to be periodically removed and/or reapplied to maintain the seal over the life of the building.
- 3. Improved appearance** – When installed properly, flashing at a field butt joint creates a better looking joint. James Hardie recommends butting field joints together in moderate contact to achieve a continuous looking joint. In contrast, caulk manufacturers specify a minimum gap at butt joints, which can become more visible as the caulk ages. It is also difficult to achieve the specified gap in the horizontal overlap. “H”-jointers also age differently than finished siding and can become more visible over time. For the same reason, James Hardie does not recommend applying caulk to field butt joints and exposed nailheads on products with ColorPlus® technology.

**IMPORTANT:** Failure to install and finish this product in accordance with applicable building codes and James Hardie written application instructions may affect system performance, violate local building codes, void the product-only warranty and lead to personal injury.

**DESIGN ADVICE:** Any information or assistance provided by James Hardie in relation to specific projects must be approved by the relevant specialists engaged for the project eg. builder, architect or engineer. James Hardie will not be responsible in connection with any such information or assistance.

Additional Installation Information, Warranties, and Warning are available at [JamesHardie.com](http://JamesHardie.com)



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