

CODE

COMMENTARY

19.3.1 Exposure categories and classes

19.3.1.1 The licensed design professional shall assign exposure classes in accordance with the severity of the anticipated exposure of members for each exposure category in Table 19.3.1.1.

Table 19.3.1.1—Exposure categories and classes

Category	Class	Condition	
Freezing and thawing (F)	F0	Concrete not exposed to freezing-and-thawing cycles	
	F1	Concrete exposed to freezing-and-thawing cycles with limited exposure to water	
	F2	Concrete exposed to freezing-and-thawing cycles with frequent exposure to water	
	F3	Concrete exposed to freezing-and-thawing cycles with frequent exposure to water and exposure to deicing chemicals	
Sulfate (S)		Water-soluble sulfate (SO_4^{2-}) in soil, percent by mass ^[1]	Dissolved sulfate (SO_4^{2-}) in water, ppm ^[2]
	S0	$\text{SO}_4^{2-} < 0.10$	$\text{SO}_4^{2-} < 150$
	S1	$0.10 \leq \text{SO}_4^{2-} < 0.20$	$150 \leq \text{SO}_4^{2-} < 1500$ or seawater
	S2	$0.20 \leq \text{SO}_4^{2-} \leq 2.00$	$1500 \leq \text{SO}_4^{2-} \leq 10,000$
	S3	$\text{SO}_4^{2-} > 2.00$	$\text{SO}_4^{2-} > 10,000$
In contact with water (W)	W0	Concrete dry in service	
	W1	Concrete in contact with water where low permeability is not required	
	W2	Concrete in contact with water where low permeability is required	
Corrosion protection of reinforcement (C)	C0	Concrete dry or protected from moisture	
	C1	Concrete exposed to moisture but not to an external source of chlorides	
	C2	Concrete exposed to moisture and an external source of chlorides from deicing chemicals, salt, brackish water, seawater, or spray from these sources	

^[1]Percent sulfate by mass in soil shall be determined by ASTM C1580.

^[2]Concentration of dissolved sulfates in water, in ppm, shall be determined by ASTM D516 or ASTM D4130.

concrete properties from Table 19.3.2.1 to include in the construction documents.

The Code does not include provisions for especially severe exposures, such as acids or high temperatures.

R19.3.1 Exposure categories and classes

The Code addresses four exposure categories that affect the requirements for concrete to ensure adequate durability:

Exposure Category F applies to concrete exposed to moisture and cycles of freezing and thawing, with or without deicing chemicals.

Exposure Category S applies to concrete in contact with soil or water containing deleterious amounts of water-soluble sulfate ions.

Exposure Category W applies to concrete in contact with water.

Exposure Category C applies to nonprestressed and prestressed concrete exposed to conditions that require additional protection against corrosion of reinforcement.

Severity of exposure within each category is defined by classes with increasing numerical values representing increasingly severe exposure conditions. A classification of 0 is assigned if the exposure severity has negligible effect (is benign) or the exposure category does not apply to the member.

The following discussion provides assistance for selecting the appropriate exposure class for each of the exposure categories. Members are required to be assigned to four exposure classes, one for each exposure category, and are also required to meet the most restrictive requirements of all of these exposures. For example, the slabs of a parking garage in a cold climate might be assigned to Exposure Classes F3, S0, W2, and C2, and a potable water tank inside a heated building might be assigned to Exposure Classes F0, S0, W2, and C1.

Exposure Category F: Whether concrete is damaged by cycles of freezing and thawing depends on the amount of water in the pores of the concrete at the time of freezing (Powers 1975). The amount of water present may be described in terms of the degree of saturation of the concrete. If the degree of saturation is high enough, there will be sufficient water in the concrete pores to produce internal tensile stresses large enough to cause cracking when the water freezes and expands. The entire member need not be saturated to be susceptible to damage. For example, if the top 10 mm of a slab or outer 6 mm of a wall is saturated, those portions are vulnerable to damage from freezing and thawing, regardless of how dry the interior may be.

For any portion of a member to be resistant to freezing and thawing, that portion of the concrete needs to have sufficient entrained air and adequate strength. Adequate strength is obtained by requiring a low w/cm , which also reduces the pore volume and increases resistance to water penetration. Entrained air makes it more difficult for the