

Seepage Analysis in Partition Walls and Its Control Measures

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.19238140

ABSTRACT

Seepage in partition walls represents a significant challenge in the construction and maintenance of buildings, particularly in regions with high humidity, heavy rainfall, or poor drainage systems. Partition walls, while often non-load-bearing, play a crucial role in space division, privacy, and overall building aesthetics. However, due to their relatively thin structure and material composition, these walls are highly susceptible to moisture ingress. The presence of water within the wall not only compromises the structural integrity of the materials, such as bricks, concrete, or plaster, but also leads to long-term durability issues including efflorescence, mold growth, and paint deterioration.

The mechanisms of seepage in partition walls are multifaceted. Water can infiltrate through micro-cracks, construction joints, porous masonry, and capillary action from foundations or damp floors. Additionally, differential water pressure caused by external rainfall, plumbing leaks, or rising groundwater can exacerbate seepage, creating zones of high moisture concentration. If left untreated, such seepage may accelerate material degradation, cause aesthetic and functional damage, and even pose health hazards due to mold proliferation.

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive investigation of seepage in partition walls by combining theoretical analysis, numerical simulation, and practical evaluation. Using principles such as Darcy's law and finite element modeling, the study analyzes water flow patterns and predicts moisture distribution within walls. Graphical simulations highlight critical zones of seepage and identify factors that influence water movement. Furthermore, the paper explores a variety of control measures, including material selection, waterproofing techniques, structural detailing, surface coatings, and drainage solutions, emphasizing both preventive and corrective strategies. By integrating theoretical insights with practical applications, this study provides valuable guidelines for architects, engineers, and building maintenance professionals seeking to mitigate the adverse effects of seepage and enhance the durability and safety of partition walls in diverse environmental conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

Partition walls are integral components of buildings, used to divide interior spaces. While non-load-bearing in most cases, these walls are vulnerable to water seepage due to:

- Poor construction practices
- Cracks and joints
- Capillary rise from the foundation
- External water pressure

Prolonged seepage results in peeling paint, mold growth, efflorescence, and sometimes compromise of structural integrity. Understanding seepage mechanisms and implementing control measures is essential for enhancing building durability.

2. MECHANISMS OF SEEPAGE IN PARTITION WALLS

2.1 Capillary Action

Water rises through fine pores in masonry due to surface tension. This is significant in walls with high porosity or inadequate waterproofing.

2.2 Cracks and Joints

Cracks from thermal expansion, shrinkage, or mechanical stress serve as direct pathways for water infiltration.

2.3 Differential Moisture Pressure

Variations in water pressure across a wall, from rainfall or plumbing leaks, drive water through masonry, accelerating deterioration.

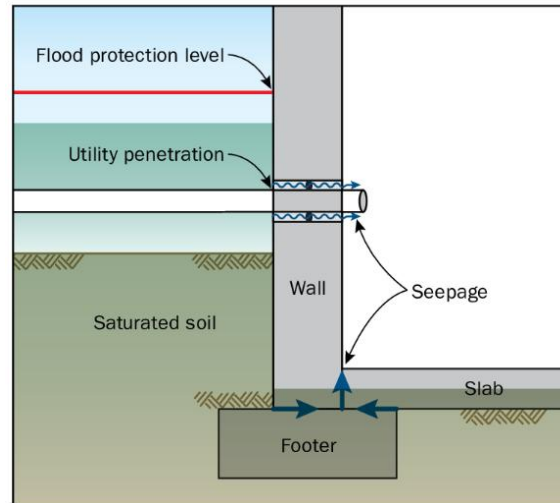


Fig 1: Seepage Pathways in a Partition Wall

3. THEORETICAL MODELING OF SEEPAGE

Seepage through porous walls can be analyzed using **Darcy's Law**:

$$Q = k \cdot A \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{L}$$

Where:

(Q) = discharge (m³/s)

(k) = permeability coefficient (m/s)

(A) = cross-sectional area (m²)

(\Delta h) = hydraulic head difference (m)

(L) = wall thickness (m)

Sample Calculation:

Given:

(k = 1 \times 10^{-6} , m/s)

(A = 1 , m²)

(\Delta h = 2 , m)

(L = 0.2 , m)

$$Q = 1 \times 10^{-6} \times 1 \times \frac{2}{0.2} = 1 \times 10^{-5} \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$$

This shows the potential seepage rate through one square meter of partition wall.

4. NUMERICAL SIMULATION OF SEEPAGE

Finite Element Method (FEM) is effective for simulating seepage.

Simulation Parameters:

Permeability coefficient: (1 \times 10^{-6} , m/s)

Wall thickness: 0.2 m, Wall height: 3 m, Water head: 2 m

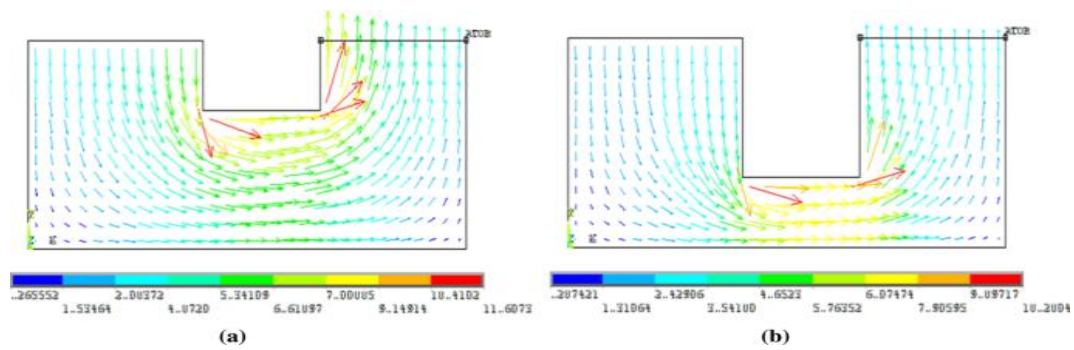


Fig 2: FEM Mesh of Partition Wall Showing Flow Paths

Analysis:

Highest moisture concentration occurs at wall base
Cracks and construction joints significantly alter flow paths
FEM simulation validates theoretical calculations

5. CONTROL MEASURES FOR SEEPAGE

5.1 Material-Based Measures

Use low-permeability bricks and waterproof concrete
Proper curing to reduce porosity
Admixtures for water resistance

5.2 Structural Measures

Epoxy or polyurethane sealing of cracks
Installing **damp-proof courses (DPC)**
Proper detailing at plumbing penetrations

5.3 Surface Treatments

Water-repellent paints or coatings
Regular inspection and maintenance

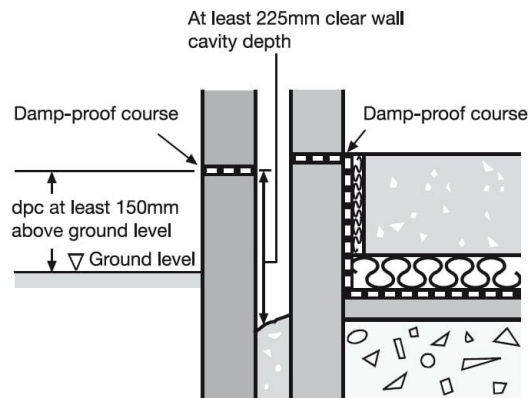


Fig 3: Cross-Section of Partition Wall with DPC and Coating

5.4 Drainage Measures

Sloped surfaces to direct water away from walls
Gutters and channels to avoid water accumulation

6. CONCLUSION

Seepage in partition walls is influenced by capillary action, cracks, and differential water pressure. Analytical, numerical, and empirical methods can predict seepage zones and intensity. Proper selection of materials, structural detailing, surface treatments, and drainage systems effectively mitigate seepage. Regular maintenance is key to sustaining wall integrity and aesthetics.

7. REFERENCES

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