Mil Polyethylene Requirements for ICRA Containment Barriers

THE DIRECT ANSWER

ICRA containment barriers commonly use fire-retardant polyethylene sheeting at least 6 mil thick (0.006 inches), a widely used practice rather than an ICRA 2.0 or CDC requirement. The sheeting must be completely sealed from top to bottom , continuously supported where sagging can occur (e.g., at ceilings), with entry/exit points double-layered — overlapping plastic with a weighted flap at least 2 feet wide at the bottom, or a full-length zipper door sealed at the bottom during work. Waste bags used in containment must also be 6-mil.

THE SPECIFICATION

- Thickness: 6 mil (0.006") is common practice, not an ICRA 2.0 or CDC requirement. Thinner sheeting tears, sags, and won't hold a seal.
- Fire retardant: all polyethylene sheeting must be flame/fire retardant — non-FR poly is a fuel load and an ILSM problem.
- Sealing: sealed top to bottom with tape that won't leave residue; supported continuously to prevent sagging gaps.
- Access: double-layer overlap with weighted 2-ft flap, or full-length zipper with bottom seal.
- Waste: 6-mil bags for contained waste transport.

WHEN POLY ISN'T ENOUGH

- Plastic barriers — even 6-mil FR — may not be used for Class III or Class IV projects lasting more than two weeks, or anywhere hot work (torch cutting, welding, burning) occurs. Those situations require hard barriers.

FIELD QUESTION

What thickness of poly is required for ICRA barriers?

6 mil (0.006 inches) is common practice rather than an ICRA 2.0 or CDC requirement; fire-retardant, sealed top to bottom.

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Caution: codes, editions, and targets vary by facility and authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). Figures marked as common practice are facility targets, not code requirements. Confirm against your AHJ and the current code text before acting.