be described as having alternating high density portions **552** and low density portions **554** between the top face **516** and the bottom face **518**.

A siding panel **560** is aligned with each course and attached using a fastener **562** which passes through the high density portion **552** of each course. Again, this increases the stability of the foam board **510**. The top edge of each siding panel is abutted and positioned by a registration rib **530**.

In addition, the foam board **510** itself might be attached to the exterior wall **501** separately from the siding panels **560**. In such embodiments, the portion of the foam board through which the fastener **568** passes should also be of high density. Thus, as depicted here, the first joining element **540** which rises above the top face **516** is also of high density. Put another way, the density of the first joining element is greater than the density of the low density portion of each course. In yet more specific embodiments, the density of the first joining element is equal to or greater than the density of the high density portion of each course.

It is contemplated that the foam insulation board contains a visual indicator that permits the installer to distinguish between the high density portion **552** and the low density portion **554**. For example, as illustrated in FIG. **20** and course **548**, a dotted line **570** indicates the demarcation between high density and low density. If desired, a letter "H" may be placed in the high density portion and a letter "L" may be placed in the low density portion. Alternatively, each portion can have a different color. The visual indicators are hidden by the siding panel **560** when installation is completed.

The ratio of the height of the high density portion to the height of the low density portion may be from about 2:1 to about 1:3, or more specifically from about 1:1 to about 3:2.

The high density portion may have a density of from about 200 to about 640 g/cm^3, or more specifically from about 250 to about 500 g/cm^3. The low density portion may have a density of from about 16 to about 350 g/cm^3, or more specifically from about 20 to about 200 g/cm^3. The high density portion is of course always denser than the low density portion. However, it should be noted that the difference in density between the high density portion and the low density portion is generally at least 50 g/cm^3.

The foam insulation board of FIG. **14** may include additional features not shown. For example, the opposing vertical sides of the foam board may include the interlocking tab and slot arrangement illustrated in FIG. **2**A. It is contemplated that any of the siding panels shown in FIGS. **8**B-**8**D could be used with the foam board of FIG. **15**.

While the invention has been described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that the fiber cement siding board disclosed in the invention can be substituted with the aforementioned disclosed materials and is not to be limited to the disclosed embodiments but, on the contrary, is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the appended claims, which scope is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and equivalent structures as is permitted under the law.

The invention claimed is:

1. A foam insulation backing board, comprising:

a front face, a rear face, a bottom face, a top face, a first side face, and a second side face;

at least one recess positioned longitudinally across the rear face;

at least one alignment rib complementary in shape to the recess in the rear face, the at least one alignment rib positioned longitudinally across and extending from the front face and running from the first side face to the second side face, the alignment rib comprising a bottom face, a sloped top face, and a front edge, wherein the bottom face and the sloped top face meet at the front edge, and wherein the bottom face of each alignment rib is perpendicular to the front face of the foam insulation board.

2. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the recess in the rear face and the alignment rib are positioned opposite and parallel to each other at the same level.

3. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the front face and the rear face are parallel such that the foam insulation backing board has a constant thickness from the top face to the bottom face of the foam insulation backing board; and

wherein the foam insulation backing board has a thickness between ¼ inch and 4 inches when measured from the front face to the rear face.

4. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the rear face of the foam insulation backing board includes a water management means for directing water.

5. The foam insulation backing board of claim **4**, wherein the water management means comprises diagonal grooves.

6. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the first side face includes a first joining element and the second side face includes a second joining element complementary in shape to the first joining element.

7. The foam insulation backing board of claim **6**, wherein the first joining element of the first side face is a tab and the second joining element of the second side face is a groove and is complementary to the tab.

8. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the top face includes a top joining element and the bottom face includes a bottom joining element complementary in shape to the top joining element.

9. The foam insulation backing board of claim **8**, wherein the top joining element of the top face is a tab and the bottom joining element of the bottom face is a groove and is complementary to the tab.

10. The foam insulation backing board of claim **1**, wherein the foam insulation backing board is made of expanded polystyrene.

11. An insulation system, comprising:

an insulating foam backing board, comprising:

a front face, a rear, face, a bottom face, a top face, a first side face, and a second side face;

wherein the front face has at least one alignment rib positioned longitudinally across the front face and running from the first side face to the second side face, and extending from the front face;

the alignment rib comprising a bottom face, a sloped top face, and a front edge, wherein the bottom face and the sloped top face meet at the front edge, and wherein the bottom face of each alignment rib is perpendicular to the front face of the foam insulation board; and

a plurality of siding panels, each siding panel comprising a front face, rear face, top face and bottom face.

12. The insulation system of claim **11**, wherein the rear face has at least one recess positioned longitudinally across the rear face, wherein the recess in the rear face and the alignment rib are complementary in shape.

13. The insulation system of claim **12**, wherein the recess in the rear face and the alignment rib are positioned opposite and parallel to each other at the same level.

14. The insulation system of claim **11**, wherein the top face of each siding panel is aligned with the bottom face of an