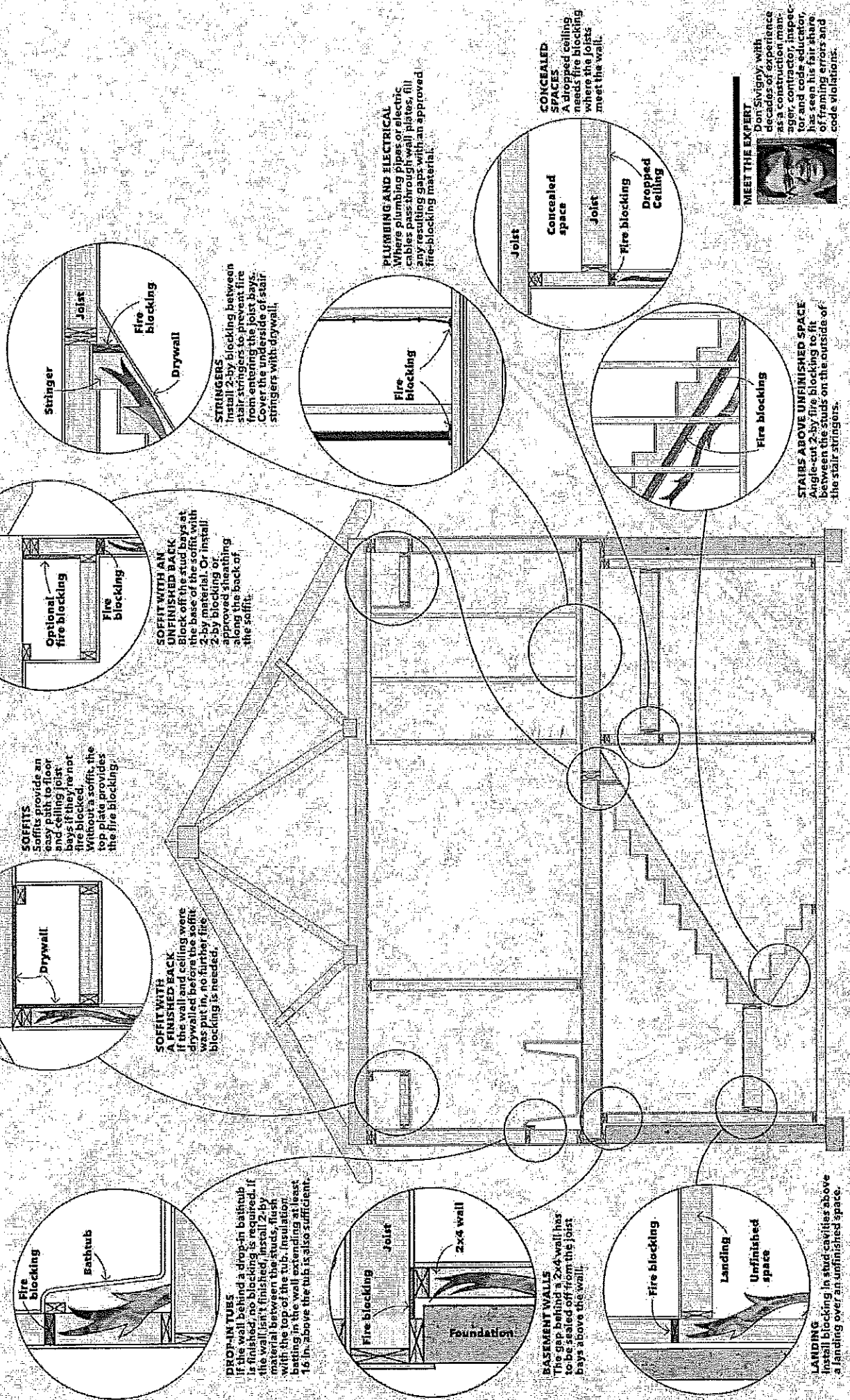


Figure A
Whole-House Fire Blocking



DROP-IN TUBS
If the wall behind a drop-in bathtub is finished, no blocking is required. If the wall isn't finished, install 2-by-4 material between the studs, flush with the top of the tub. Insulating at least 16 in. above the tub is also sufficient.

SOFFIT WITH A FINISHED BACK
If the wall and ceiling were drywalled before the soffit was put in, no further fire blocking is needed.

SOFFITS
Soffits provide an easy path to floor and ceiling joist bays if they're not fire blocked. Without a soffit, the top plate provides the fire blocking.

SOFFIT WITH AN UNFINISHED BACK
Block off the stud bays at the base of the soffit with 2-by material. Or install 2-by blocking or approved sheathing along the back of the soffit.

STRINGERS
Install 2-by blocking between stair stringers to prevent fire from entering the base bays. Cover the underside of stair stringers with drywall.

BASEMENT WALLS
The gap behind a 2x4 wall has to be sealed off from the joist bays above the wall.

PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL
Where plumbing pipes or electrical cables pass through wall plates, fill any resulting gaps with an approved fire-blocking material.

CONCEALED SPACES
A dropped ceiling needs fire blocking where the joists meet the wall.

STAIRS ABOVE UNFINISHED SPACE
Angle-cut 2-by fire blocking to fit between the studs on the outside of the stair stringers.

LANDING
Install blocking in stud cavities above a landing over an unfinished space.

MEET THE EXPERT
Don Sivigny, with decades of experience as a construction manager, contractor, inspector, and code educator, has seen his fair share of framing errors and code violations.

