

2018 IECC/IRC Attic Access Requirements

Table R402.4.1.1 Air Barrier and Insulation Installation

Requirement:

- IECC Table R402.4.1.1 Air Barrier and Insulation Installation
 - Access openings, drop-down stairs or knee wall doors to unconditioned attic spaces **shall be sealed**.
- **IECC Section R402.2.4 Access hatches and doors.**
 - Access doors from *conditioned spaces to unconditioned spaces* such as attics and crawl spaces shall be weather-stripped and insulated to a level equivalent to the insulation on the surrounding surfaces.
 - Access that prevents damaging or compressing the insulation shall be provided to all equipment.
 - Where loose-fill insulation is installed, a wood-framed or equivalent baffle or retainer shall be installed to prevent the loose-fill insulation from spilling into the living space when the attic access is opened.
 - The baffle or retainer shall provide a permanent means of maintaining the installed *R*-value of the loose-fill insulation.
- **IRC Section R807.1 Attic Access**
 - Buildings with combustible ceiling or roof construction shall have an *attic* access opening
 - The rough-framed opening shall be not less than 22 inches by 30 inches
 - shall be located in a hallway or other location with *ready access*.
 - Where located in a wall, the opening shall be not less than 22 inches wide by 30 inches.....
 - Minimum unobstructed headroom in the *attic* space shall be 30 inches.....
 - See Section M1305.1.3 for access requirements where mechanical *equipment* is located in *attics*.

Translated:

- The attic must be accessible – DO NOT caulk or seal the attic hatch shut.
- The attic hatch must be air sealed (weather striped) to prevent air leakage.
- The attic hatch must be insulated with the same R-value as the ceiling of wall that the hatch is penetrating.
- An Insulation dam must be installed to prevent loose-fill insulation from spilling into the living space and to maintain the attic R-value surrounding the attic hatch opening.
- If a walkway is installed to access mechanical equipment or deeper into the attic it must be installed so that the full R-value of the attic insulation is maintained and protected.

Example Execution of Requirement:

