



New Castle County Government Center
87 Reads Way
New Castle, DE 19720
Department of Land Use - Building Inspections

Date: **February 3, 2010**
Subject: **Access doors to unconditioned spaces**
References: **2009 International Energy Conservation Code**

This Staff Code Interpretation is intended to be used to clarify Section 402.2.3 (Access hatches and doors) in the above referenced Code Edition.

Below is the exact text from the section of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code in question.

Section 402.2.3, Access hatches and doors. Access doors from conditioned spaces to unconditioned spaces (e.g., attics and crawlspaces) shall be weatherstripped and insulated to a level equivalent to the insulation on the surrounding surfaces. Access shall be provided to all equipment that prevents damaging or compressing the insulation. A wood framed or equivalent baffle or retainer is required to be provided when loose fill insulation is installed, the purpose of which is to prevent the loose fill insulation from spilling into the living space when the attic access is opened, and to provide a permanent means of maintaining the installed value of the loose fill insulation.

Question: Is it the intent of this section to require the insulation be permanently attached to the access door? For instance, can the insulation simply lie on top of the access door when located in a ceiling below an attic?

Answer: The code does not prescribe how the access doors are to be insulated. The code states that the access hatches or doors are to be insulated to a level equivalent to the surrounding surfaces. The surrounding surfaces have insulation that is not permanently attached, but it does not move. The hatch door will be moved and the intent of the code is that the insulation can be moved with the door and then be in place when the hatch door is put back in the opening. That is the intent.

STAFF CODE INTERPRETATION

NCC Stance: The County requires that insulation on doors and hatches between conditioned and unconditioned spaces be secured to the door or hatch.

Code Updates: The code section above was relocated to Section 402.2.4 with the adoption of the 2012 IECC. This code interpretation was unaffected by the change.

George O. Haggerty
Code Official

STAFF CODE INTERPRETATION