



Dam, Seal, and Insulate a Pull-Down Attic Stairway

Job Aid for Treat Attic Hatch Badge

Aligns With Standard Work Specifications 3.0103.1

BEFORE



Pull-down stairs can be a weak point in thermal/pressure boundaries, and they can also allow insulation to fall into the home if not properly dammed.

1



Build cover above and around pull-down stair, taller than final insulation height.

2



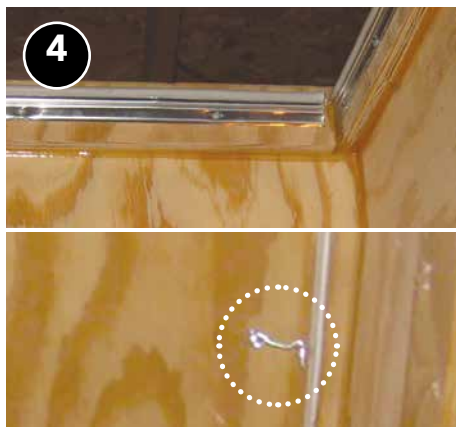
Insulate top and sides of dam cover, to appropriate R-value. Use materials that meet the requirements of the applicable fire safety code (e.g., thermal or ignition barriers).

3



Air seal gaps in framing and edges of trim as needed.

4



Air seal with closed cell foam tape or weatherstripping. Install latches as needed to ensure the access door closes tight to the weatherstripping.

AFTER



Attic pull-down stairs are safely and durably sealed and insulated to prevent air movement and reduce heat transfer.



Checklist

Treat attic hatch

DESIRED OUTCOME

Attic access door or hatches properly sealed and insulated to minimize heat loss or gain and prevent insulation from falling out of attic when accessed.¹

- ☐ Install rigid,² durable attic hatch blocking/dam in a permanent way.
- ☐ Dam will remain 2" taller than final attic insulation depth.
- ☐ Insulate hatch to proper R-value (the maximum R-value structurally allowable, up to the final insulation level of surrounding attic).
- ☐ Durably attach insulation to hatch.
- ☐ Weatherstrip or otherwise treat access to prevent air movement when hatch is closed.
- ☐ Ensure access closes with a tight fit or latch.
- ☐ Air seal trim with appropriate material.
- ☐ Verify air-tightness of hatch when closed with blower door and smoke (or infrared, if temperatures permit).

1. Relevant Standards: 3.0103.1

2. When height around access is limited and variance request has been approved, nonrigid materials may be used for damming attics, but to earn this badge, an appropriate attic must be found to display skills in constructing a rigid dam.

