

CHAPTER 12

INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT

User note:

About this chapter: Chapter 12 provides minimum provisions for the interior of buildings—the occupied environment. Ventilation, lighting, and space heating are directly regulated in this chapter and in conjunction with the International Mechanical Code® and the International Energy Conservation Code®. Minimum room size and maximum room-to-room sound transmission are set for certain occupancies.

SECTION 1201 GENERAL

1201.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter shall govern ventilation, temperature control, lighting, yards and courts, sound transmission, room dimensions, surrounding materials and rodentproofing associated with the interior spaces of buildings.

SECTION 1202 VENTILATION

1202.1 General. Buildings shall be provided with natural ventilation in accordance with Section 1202.5, or mechanical ventilation in accordance with the *International Mechanical Code*.

Where the air infiltration rate in a *dwelling unit* is less than 5 air changes per hour where tested with a blower door at a pressure 0.2 inch w.c. (50 Pa) in accordance with Section R402.4.1.2 of the *International Energy Conservation Code—Residential Provisions*, the *dwelling unit* shall be ventilated by mechanical means in accordance with Section 403 of the *International Mechanical Code*. *Ambulatory care facilities* and Group I-2 occupancies shall be ventilated by mechanical means in accordance with Section 407 of the *International Mechanical Code*.

1202.2 Roof ventilation. Roof assemblies shall be ventilated in accordance with this section or shall comply with Section 1202.3.

1202.2.1 Ventilated attics and rafter spaces. Enclosed attics and enclosed rafter spaces formed where ceilings are applied directly to the underside of roof framing members shall have cross ventilation for each separate space by ventilation openings protected against the entrance of rain and snow. Blocking and bridging shall be arranged so as not to interfere with the movement of air. An airspace of not less than 1 inch (25 mm) shall be provided between the insulation and the roof sheathing. The net free ventilating area shall be not less than $\frac{1}{150}$ of the area of the space ventilated. Ventilators shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's installation instructions.

Exception: The net free cross-ventilation area shall be permitted to be reduced to $\frac{1}{300}$ provided both of the following conditions are met:

1. In Climate Zones 6, 7 and 8, a Class I or II vapor retarder is installed on the warm-in-winter side of the ceiling.

2. At least 40 percent and not more than 50 percent of the required venting area is provided by ventilators located in the upper portion of the attic or rafter space. Upper ventilators shall be located not more than 3 feet (914 mm) below the ridge or highest point of the space, measured vertically, with the balance of the ventilation provided by eave or cornice vents. Where the location of wall or roof framing members conflicts with the installation of upper ventilators, installation more than 3 feet (914 mm) below the ridge or highest point of the space shall be permitted.

1202.2.2 Openings into attic. Exterior openings into the attic space of any building intended for human occupancy shall be protected to prevent the entry of birds, squirrels, rodents, snakes and other similar creatures. Openings for ventilation having a least dimension of not less than $\frac{1}{16}$ inch (1.6 mm) and not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.4 mm) shall be permitted. Openings for ventilation having a least dimension larger than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.4 mm) shall be provided with corrosion-resistant wire cloth screening, hardware cloth, perforated vinyl or similar material with openings having a least dimension of not less than $\frac{1}{16}$ inch (1.6 mm) and not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6.4 mm). Where combustion air is obtained from an attic area, it shall be in accordance with Chapter 7 of the *International Mechanical Code*.

1202.3 Unvented attic and unvented enclosed rafter assemblies. Unvented attics and unvented enclosed roof framing assemblies created by ceilings applied directly to the underside of the roof framing members/rafters and the structural roof sheathing at the top of the roof framing members shall be permitted where all of the following conditions are met:

1. The unvented attic space is completely within the building thermal envelope.
2. No interior Class I vapor retarders are installed on the ceiling side (attic floor) of the unvented attic assembly or on the ceiling side of the unvented enclosed roof framing assembly.
3. Where wood shingles or shakes are used, not less than a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6.4 mm) vented airspace separates the shingles or shakes and the roofing underlayment above the structural sheathing.
4. In Climate Zones 5, 6, 7 and 8, any air-impermeable insulation shall be a Class II vapor retarder or shall