

10 - Attic Sealing

Tools and Materials Needed

Before Sheetrock

- Blue sill seal
- Staple Guns
- Ladders or benches

After Sheetrock

- Fall arrest harnesses, self-retracting lanyards (SRL), nylon straps for fall arrest anchors
- Caulk & Caulking gun (about 20 tubes for a 2 story house attic)
- Utility knife to cut tip of caulking tube
- Window and door foam sealant (about 2-3 cans)
- Boards to kneel or lie on (2x6 or ¾ inch OSB, about 30 inches long. 2 per worker.
- Portable light

Most Common Mistakes

1. Missing Deadwood
2. Having an angle that creates a gap at the 90 degree transition from top plate to deadwood/roof trusses.
3. Missing the gap under a truss chord
4. Not sealing the electrical boxes or wire passages

Sealing

Before sheetrock

1. Install sill seal as a gasket by stapling it to the top plate so that half of the sill seal is on the top plate and the other half makes a clean 90 degree turn onto the deadwood.
2. Use at least 2 3/8th staples every 12 inches into both the top plate and deadwood to ensure that sill seal is flat against the top plate or deadwood.

After Sheetrock

1. Install fall arrest anchor straps at high point in trusses, mid-way across house. Insure it will not slip down and will not be cut by steel mending plates in trusses. Hang SRLs from anchor and attach to your harness.
2. Organize the several workers into areas of the attic so that their SRL cables are less likely to cross and tangle.
3. Kneel on boards placed across the trusses to foam & caulk most of the gaps. You will have to lie on the boards to reach the gaps near the eaves
4. The idea is to form a continuous air barrier between the inside and outside of the house. If you find a break in the barrier, seal it closed. Specifically, the gaps between wall 2x4 and 2x6 top plates and drywall must be plugged. Gaps around electric fixtures must be plugged. Drywall mud should have adequately plugged gaps between multiple sheets of ceiling drywall.
5. Watch for holes where a screw missed the truss and then was removed. Don't get poked!
6. When applying caulk, push the caulk into the joint with your finger instead of just laying a bead over the top.
7. If there is a shaft liner between connected homes, the space between the shaft liner and the bottom chord of the gable truss is sealed off with the orange fire retardant foam. This should have been done before drywall was put up. Verify it is done.
8. The holes in the top plates where wires come through should have been foamed before the drywall was put up. Verify it was done.

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Safety

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|----|-------------------------|--|--|
| 11 | Fall From Height | Fall while standing in roof trusses doing rat-runs, gable bracing, air sealing, etc. | Use fall arrest harness with SRL. Tie off to trusses near top. Be sure tie-off is secure and cannot slide down the truss cord. |
| 67 | Confined Spaced - Attic | Getting into and out of the attic is a tight squeeze | Set an extension ladder through the crawl space hole. Send people up. They will have to climb over the insulation dam (about 16 inches high) and find the truss bottom cords to stand on. Remove the ladder. Have another worker stand on a 2 ft drywall platform and pass up all the material and tools. Reverse these steps to get out of the attic |
| 68 | Confined Spaced - Attic | Must wear fall arrest harness and must not put weight on ceiling drywall | Wrap nylon strap around high point on roof truss, mid-way in house. Attach your self retracting lanyard to this anchor. Attach cable end to your harness. Use 2x6 or ¾ OSB, about 30 inches long for kneeling while working. Take care to only walk on tops of walls or truss bottom cords. Do not put weight on the ceiling drywall – it will break as you will fall! |
| 69 | Confined Spaced - Attic | Shingle nails extend through roof sheeting | When in attic, do not stand up quickly. Always stay bent over to the extent necessary so your head does not touch the underside of the roof sheeting. Nails used to put up the shingles extend through the sheeting and can poke you in the head. |

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58 Confined space Fumes from adhesives, caulk, etc could accumulate and affect worker's breathing Set up fan to insure fresh air brought into confined space. Expanding foam is not to be used in confined spaces. Only use low VOC construction adhesive.

34 Hazardous Material Adhesives, caulk, etc used in crawl space and attic Anything in a tube or can has a chemical content. Almost everything we use is harmless for almost all workers. Ask and verify no worker is especially sensitive to any of our material.

Keep your head (eyes, nose, mouth) well away from these substances. If you get it on your hands, keep your hands well away from your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Wear gloves when using expanding foam. Use only in areas with fresh air. Keep well away from any ignition source.

When adhesives or foam is used in attic or crawl space, setup carpet fan and duct to supply frequent air exchanges in that area.

Be alert to any hazardous material brought on site without an approved management plan. Red tag and remove any such material

I have heard and understood the briefings on how to safely perform this activity and use the required tools.

Date _____

_____ Instructor Name _____ Signature

_____ Name _____ Signature