



Home Tips®



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 1003 STAR COURT, NORCROSS, GEORGIA 30093, 770-925-8518 • JULY 2000 •

Q & A

Home Builders Limiting Home Inspectors?

Our builder gave us a copy of their "Independent Professional Inspection Exhibit" which requires our home inspector to inspect our new home according to the "Homebuilding Company's Limited Warranty and Homeowner's Handbook". We cannot find a professional inspector to inspect according to their requirements. What is wrong with their standards?

Most professional inspectors inspect new construction according to the CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code which is our state building code and is the same standards the local municipal inspectors use when they inspect your home. Many independent inspectors also use the Georgia Association of Home Inspectors standards of practice which requires going beyond the limitations of the building codes.

According to the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association, the "Homeowner Handbook" is a "Home Care Guide". Their advertising states the following:

"The Homeowner Handbook is an easy-to-read, new homebuyer's resource guide to home maintenance and care. It's published by the Greater Atlanta Homebuilder Association and it's offered to you through an approved builder member. The Homeowner Handbook details used and simple steps you can take in preserving and protecting your new home. Repair and warranty items are clearly stated, so that the builder's responsibilities and simple homeowner maintenance items are defined for most every component of your new home. One of the purposes of the Homeowner Handbook is to establish Building Performance Standards which have been developed and approved by the membership of the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association."

Unfortunately, the handbook does not cover local building code requirements and manufacturer installation requirements which are critical for the proper construction and installation of many of the components that go into your home. This is why most inspectors will not use their standards alone. When combined with the local codes, the handbook does cover some items not found in the building codes. The Greater Atlanta Home Builders have a very informative website which can be found at <http://www.atlantahomebuilders.com> or call 770-938-9900.

Insulating Roof Rafters?

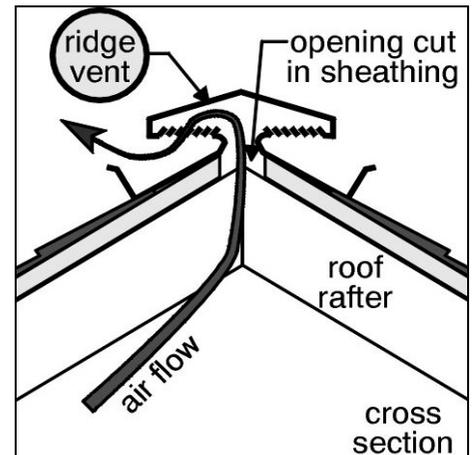
Our air conditioner just cannot keep our upstairs cool. Our attic already has 6" deep floor insulation. Would it help to add insulation between the rafters?

Adding insulation between the rafters is not a good idea for two reasons. First, your attic is ventilated below the rafters to remove heat in the summer and moisture in the winter. Second, the insulation may increase the temperature of the roof shingles which could reduce the life of the shingles.

It is a better idea to increase the amount of insulation on the attic floor. Your attic probably has R-19 which required 6" of blown fiberglass insulation. It would be a better idea to increase it to R-38 which is approximately 16" of blown insulation. Be careful not to allow the new insulation to cover your soffit vents and block the air flow. Even though this could be a "do-it-yourself" project, take a tip from someone who "did-it-himself" and have a professional install it.

Increasing the amount of attic ventilation is also important.

The cooler the attic, the less heat will penetrate the insulation and enter the structure. Adding continuous ridge vents are the best way to ventilate the upper half of the attic since they continue all the way down the ridges. The use of power roof



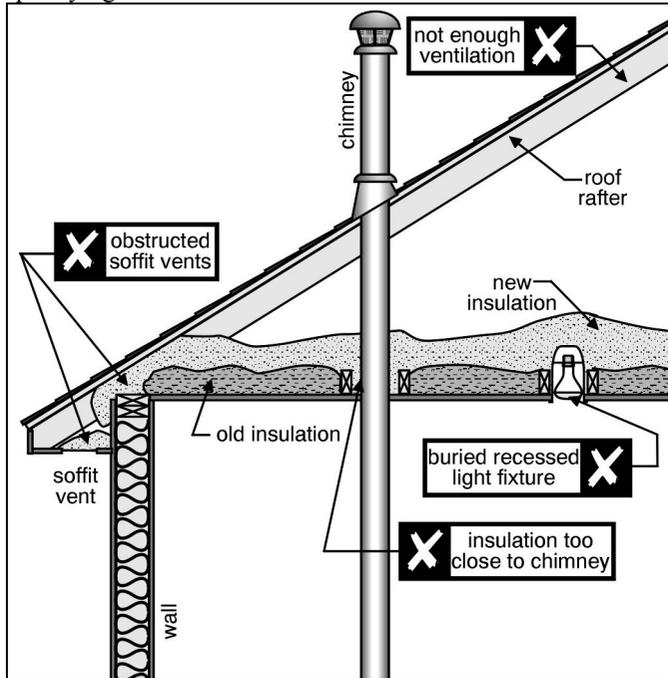
ventilators are not recommended because not only do they require energy to save you energy, they could actually pull cool air out of the house through openings in the attic floor.

Sealing holes in the attic floor is critical in preventing heat gain and heat loss. Large openings in the floor are called "chases" and are dead areas in the walls below. If you look at the walls below, you will probably notice that the inside of the walls are not insulated. All of the holes should be covered with tightly fit insulated foam sheathing or drywall and then seal around the edges with caulking. Cover the areas with insulation.

Also look for opening around pipes and air conditioning ducts. Be careful around furnace and fireplace flue pipes. They may get hot enough to ignite combustible materials. It is better to use sheet metal around the flues and seal with a

heat proof sealant.

When working around recessed lights, be careful not to cover the light fixtures with insulation. Most recessed lights have openings in the housings to allow heat from the bulbs to escape. If you cover the housings, the heat build-up could cause a fire. If the lights go off during use, this could indicate overheating. Only cover light fixtures that have a UL label specifying "For use in direct contact with insulation".



In conclusion, there are four areas to be aware of when increasing the energy efficiency of your attic:

- Attic Ventilation
- Attic Insulation
- Flue Pipes and Floor Openings
- Heat Sources

By increasing the energy efficiency of your attic, you should increase the efficiency of your air conditioning system.

For more information on energy efficient homes, check out these web sites:

<http://www.homeenergy.org/>

<http://www.energyright.com/>

<http://www.goodcents.com/>

<http://www.100topenergysites.com/Energy/efficienthomes/>

If you have a question, change of address, comment, home tip or would like to send *Home Tips* to your clients, send your letter to *Home Tips*, Christian Building Inspectors, Inc., 1003 Star Court, Norcross, Georgia 30093. You can E-Mail your questions to us at cbii@mindspring.com/.

We reserve the right to edit questions for length.

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Quote Of The Month

"IF YOU WANT AN ACCOUNTING OF YOUR
REAL WORTH, COUNT YOUR FRIENDS"

- MERRY BROWNE

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Barbara and Ausker Morris

Northside Realty

4177 Roswell Road

Marietta, Georgia 30062



Thank You

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• Member: ASHI, GAHI, MAIA, SBCCI •

• SBCCI CODE CERTIFIED CABO ONE & TWO FAMILY DWELLING INSPECTOR NO. 1619 •

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