



COUNTY OF ACCOMACK

BUILDING, PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Building & Code Enforcement
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Wallops Research Park

Memorandum

Date: March 7, 2022

To: Owners, Agents, Contractors, Design Professionals, and Department Staff

From: Arthur E. Berkley, CBO
Interim Building Official

Subject: Energy Code Requirements

I would like to take an opportunity to discuss a couple of Energy Code requirements that will influence your construction schedules in the very near future.

The first is Section N1103.3 (R403.3.3) that requires mandatory duct blaster testing of all mechanical ductwork. This requirement became mandatory with the 2015 edition of the Virginia Residential Code. However, in the past Accomack County chose not to enforce this section. Please be advised effective June 1, 2022, the duct blaster testing will have to be performed successfully prior to the rough in inspection. The certificate of testing will have to be onsite for review at the rough-in inspections. The duct blaster testing is not required where all equipment and ductwork are contained within the building thermal envelope

The second section is N1102.4.1 (R402.1.2) of the 2018 Edition of the Virginia Residential Code. This section makes the blower door test mandatory and no longer provides for the visual inspection option. This test is to be performed prior to the final inspection and the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy with the results made available to the Building Official at the time of the final inspection. If the initial test fails, the applicant will have 30 days in which to make the necessary

repairs and submit a satisfactory certification to the building official. This will go into effect on all projects with permits issued after July 1, 2022.

I have attached copies of the pertinent code sections specifying the test methods and qualifications for those conducting the test for your information and use.

As always any questions or concerns in this matter can be addressed by contacting me at (757)787-5788.

N1103.3.3 (R403.3.3) Duct testing (Mandatory).

Ducts shall be pressure tested to determine air leakage by one of the following methods:

1. Rough-in test: Total leakage shall be measured with a pressure differential of 0.1-inch w.g. (25 Pa) across the system, including the manufacturer's air handler enclosure if installed at the time of the test. All registers shall be taped or otherwise sealed during the test.
2. Postconstruction test: Total leakage shall be measured with a pressure differential of 0.1-inch w.g. (25 Pa) across the entire system, including the manufacturer's air handler enclosure. Registers shall be taped or otherwise sealed during the test.

- Exception: A duct air leakage test shall not be required where the ducts and air handlers are located entirely within the building thermal envelope.

A written report of the results of the test shall be signed by the party conducting the test and provided to the code official. The licensed mechanical contractor installing the mechanical system shall be permitted to perform the duct testing. The contractor shall have been trained on the equipment used to perform the test.

N1102.4.1.2 (R402.4.1.2) Testing.

The building or dwelling unit shall be tested and verified as having an air leakage rate not exceeding five air changes per hour in Climate Zone 4. Testing shall be conducted in accordance with RESNET/ICC 380, ASTM E779, or ASTM E1827 and reported at a pressure of 0.2 inches w.g. (50 Pa). A written report of the results of the test shall be signed by the party conducting the test and provided to the building official.

Testing shall be conducted by a Virginia licensed general contractor, a Virginia licensed HVAC contractor, a Virginia licensed home inspector, a Virginia registered design professional, a certified BPI Envelope Professional, a certified HERS rater, or a certified duct and envelope tightness rater. The party conducting the test shall have been trained on the equipment used to perform the test. Testing shall be performed at any time after creation of all penetrations of the building thermal envelope.

Note: Should additional sealing be required as a result of the test, consideration may be given to the issuance of temporary certificate of occupancy in accordance with Section 116.1.1.

During testing:

1. Exterior windows and doors and fireplace and stove doors shall be closed, but not sealed beyond the intended weatherstripping or other infiltration control measures;
2. Dampers, including exhaust, intake, makeup air, backdraft, and flue dampers shall be closed, but not sealed beyond intended infiltration control measures;
3. Interior doors, if installed at the time of the test, shall be open;
4. Exterior doors for continuous ventilation systems and heat recovery ventilators shall be closed and sealed;
5. Heating and cooling systems, if installed at the time of the test, shall be turned off; and
6. Supply and return registers, if installed at the time of the test, shall be fully open.