



City of Seattle
Department of Planning & Development

2009 SBC Code Solution

Section 1203.2
Unvented Rafter Space
Release Date: February 23, 2012
Page 1 of 3

The following interpretation, policy or code alternate is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code alternate to specific projects may vary.

Code Issue:

Under what conditions does Seattle permit unvented rafter spaces?

Alternate:

Unvented attic spaces are permitted by SBC Section 1203.2, Exception 2.

Unvented rafter spaces are permitted as a formal code alternate per SBC Section 104.5.

Where spray-foam insulation is to be used, approval is conditional on the following:

- a. A specific product having a current ICC-ES Report shall be specified on the plans.
- b. The application is consistent with the "Conditions of Use" section of the Evaluation Service Report.
- c. The application is limited to V-B construction unless specifically addressed and approved with the code alternate.
- d. The insulation shall meet requirements of SBC Sections 202 and 1203.2, Exception 2.
- e. Note on plans says, "Must be applied by certified installers. A copy of the installer's certification must be on site for field inspector verification."

Unless spray-foam insulation meeting the requirements above is specified on the plans, the applicant must demonstrate how the proposed products will meet the air-impermeability standard, and how the joints will be sealed to meet the same standard.

For all types of insulation in unvented assemblies, the designer/architect shall inform the owner of the need for special care in inspecting and maintaining roof covering.



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Page 2 of 3

Approval Process (when spray-foam insulation is used):

- I. Code alternate (SBC 104.5)
 - A. Justification can include 2009 SBC language for attics
 - B. Statement regarding findings (in [professional] opinion, the alternate provides an equivalent level of durability to an unvented attic.)
 1. By designer
 2. If designer is registered design professional, request & statement must be sealed
- II. Plan review requirements
 - A. Specific product to be used must be shown on plans, along with ICC-ES report number
 - B. Applicant should provide ICC-ES report or equivalent for specific product to be used
 - C. Verify consistency with “Conditions of Use” in report
 1. Required thickness of insulation based on R-value per inch
 - a. Some products have maximum thicknesses that will not meet minimum required R value
 2. Permeability/Permeance. Use value in report to classify as “air-impermeable” or not. Follow code requirements above, depending on classification.
 3. Thermal barrier requirement
 4. Note on plans says, “Must be applied by certified installers. A copy of the installer’s certification must be on site for field inspector verification.”
 5. Address V-B construction issue, if installed in other types of construction (design professional statement in request)
 - D. Inform owner of need for special care in inspecting and maintaining roof covering.
- III. Inspection requirements that DPD Inspector will check:
 - A. Product on site matches product approved in plans
 - B. Installer certification
 - C. Insulation thickness



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Section 1203.2
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Page 3 of 3

For questions about whether this code solution applies to your project:

- *If you have submitted a permit application, contact the Building Code plan reviewer assigned to your application*
- *If you have not submitted an application, contact DPD Building Code Technical Support at 206-684-4630 or in person at the Applicant Services Center. Visit the Applicant Services Center website for more information about hours and location http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Permits/Process_Overview/Location_Hours/default.asp*

