

A home's attic access is often an area where poor insulation and improper sealing causes air leaks that can increase the monthly electric bill.

One common type of access is the scuttle hole or attic hatch, which is simply a removable portion of the ceiling that allows access to the attic. Many times this is located in a closet or main hallway.

If the attic hatch is not sealed properly, the result is that during the cold months the heat from the living space escapes into the attic. During hot months, the blistering heat from the attic infiltrates into your home.

This causes the heating and cooling system to work extra hard, and reduces overall comfort in the home.

The good news is that this can be eliminated with a little effort.

First, make sure that the piece of ceiling dry-wall or wood that is used for the hatch is level and flat to ensure a tight fit.

Install weather stripping on the sides of the hatch on the inside of the trim where the hatch rests. Attach 2 or more inches of rigid foam board to the attic side of the hatch, using glue and screws. Make sure the foam board has one-fourth inch clearance on the sides so it is easier to push the hatch out of the way for access.

Finally, glue the paper side of a piece of fiberglass batt insulation to the top of the last layer of rigid insulation. Try to achieve the same total R-value as the rest of the ceiling (R-38), keeping in mind that rigid foam has an insulation value of R-5 per inch.

These steps will eliminate the air infiltration and plug a major hole in the ceiling.

Attic Hatch

