

A knee wall is a wall that is often located upstairs in a home and has conditioned living space on one side and attic space behind it.

However, a knee wall is most accurately described as any wall inside living space that backs up to an attic. In larger homes, it is not uncommon to find knee walls that are 10 to 20 feet high in a den or family room.

Without a proper seal, the extremely hot and cold air of the attic can leak into the living space, resulting in higher electricity usage to heat or cool the home.

A major problem with many knee walls is improper sealing of doors that provide access to the attic.

A good first step to solve the problem is to add weather-stripping to the inside of each attic access door just as one would for any exterior door. In addition, make sure the knee wall has a latch that pulls tightly against the frame.

Next, add a threshold to ensure that unconditioned attic air is not infiltrating beneath the access door.

Finally, stop the conduction of unconditioned air directly through the door. Do so by attaching rigid insulation or foam board to the attic side of the door, using construction adhesive and screws to attach these items.

