Fireblocking

An Overview of Code Requirements

City of Hopkins ~ **Inspections Division**
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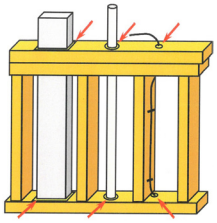
What is fireblocking?

Fireblocking, as the name implies, is intended to block the spread of fire from one concealed space to another. Fireblocking is required in a variety of places. In the average home, the two areas where fireblocking is most likely going to be required are:

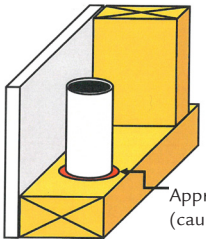
- At openings around wires, vents, pipes, and ducts where those items penetrate a top or bottom wall plate.
- At the interconnection between wall and ceiling spaces. Most likely this will happen at kitchen soffits and dropped ceilings.

Fireblocking at Wire, Vent, Pipe, and Duct Penetrations

There are a number of ways to comply with fireblocking requirements for wire, vent, pipe, and duct penetrations.



1. There are caulks on the market for sealing the annular opening around wires, vents, pipes, and ducts. Some caulks are listed as "noncombustible." Others may also be "noncombustible" and "intumescent." Either product is acceptable. They should be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

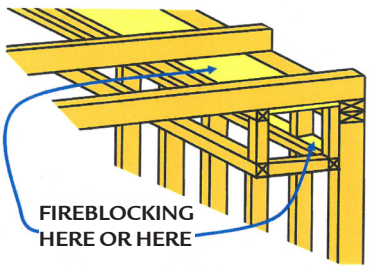


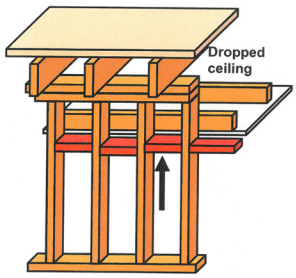
2. Unfaced fiberglass batts may be used as fireblocking provided that the batt is at least 16 inches in height measured vertically and fills the full width of the stud space. Insulation should be packed around the penetrating opening including the opening in the top or bottom plate. If the wire, pipe, vent or duct penetrates both the top and bottom wall plate, a 16-inch bat must be placed at both the top and bottom of the cavity, or the entire cavity may be filled.

Fireblocking at Interconnection Between Wall and Ceiling

Fireblocking the interconnection of wall to ceiling spaces can be more confusing. If there is a pathway for air to move from a stud space to a joist space, the path must be fireblocked. In these cases, the use of ½" gypsum board, 2 inch nominal lumber, ¾ inch plywood or particleboard, or two thicknesses of 1 inch nominal lumber may be used.

Fiberglass batts may also be used and is the most common way to fireblock soffits at exterior walls.





Fireblocking Inspection

Fireblocking is typically inspected at the time of the **insulation inspection** and should be completed at that time.