

# ALABAMA BUILDING CODE



# SUMMARY OF KEY RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CODE REQUIREMENTS

The 2015 IECC was adopted with Alabama specific amendments and went into effect on **October 1, 2016**. This document summarizes changes to the building envelope-related requirements in the updated code for Alabama.



## CODE CHANGE HIGHLIGHTS

- As an alternative to insulating floors over crawlspaces, crawlspace walls are allowed to be insulated when the crawlspace is not vented. The band joists shall be insulated and air sealed in accordance with Table R402.4.1.1.
- The Energy Rating Index (ERI) targets were amended from those in the 2015 IECC model code. The ERI target for both climate zones in Alabama is 70.
- The air leakage requirement in Climate Zone 3 was relaxed to 5 ACH50, matching the requirement in Climate Zone 2.

## BUILDING ENVELOPE REQUIREMENTS

| CODE PATH    | 2015 IECC CODE SECTION       | CHANGE SUMMARY |                               |
|--------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
|              |                              | CLIMATE ZONE 2 | CLIMATE ZONE 3                |
| Prescriptive | R402.1.2 – Wood Frame Wall   | R-13 / U-0.084 | R-20 or R-13 + 5 ci / U-0.060 |
|              | R402.1.2 – Ceilings          | R-38 / U-0.030 | R-38 / U-0.030                |
|              | R402.1.2 – Basement Walls    | N/A / U-0.360  | R-13 or R-5 ci / U-0.091      |
|              | R402.1.2 – Crawl Space Walls | N/A / U-0.477  | R-13 or R-5 ci / U-0.136      |
|              | R402.1.2 – Fenestration      | U-0.40         | U-0.35                        |

### DUCT LEAKAGE

### AIR LEAKAGE

| MEASUREMENT                          | CFM25 / 100 SQ. FT. | CLIMATE ZONE | MEASUREMENT |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Rough-in (installed air handler)     | 4                   | 2            | 5 ACH50     |
| Rough-in (air handler not installed) | 3                   | 3            | 5 ACH50     |
| Post-construction                    | 4                   |              |             |

TABLE R406.4 MAXIMUM ENERGY RATING INDEX (ERI)

| CLIMATE ZONE | MAXIMUM ERI |
|--------------|-------------|
| 2            | 70          |
| 3            | 70          |

*Note: All R-values are minimums and U-factors maximums.*

**MORE INFORMATION ON THE ALABAMA BUILDING CODE CAN BE FOUND HERE:**

<https://adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/energy/energycodes/Energy%20Codes/Alabama%20Energy%20and%20Residential%20Code.pdf>

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*This summary is offered for informational purposes only. It does not purport to be an exhaustive analysis of code changes or provide advice that will ensure guaranteed compliance with any energy code provision. Please consult with local authorities before finalizing your installation plans.*



# ENERGY-EFFICIENT, COST-EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION WITH FIBERGLASS AND MINERAL WOOL INSULATION



As code levels advance, **keep informed about innovative practices** to meet or exceed code requirements using cost-effective fiberglass and mineral wool insulation.

The following resources in the table below are just a subset of the many guides available from the **Insulation Institute** to help you achieve new performance requirements with proven approaches.

## INSULATION INSTITUTE RESOURCES



### Air Leakage

As states adopt more stringent energy codes, some builders may experience challenges meeting new mandatory air leakage requirements. Fiberglass and mineral wool insulation is the low-cost solution for homebuilders to meet or surpass code air leakage rate requirements of 3 or 5 air changes per hour depending on climate zone. For homeowners, an airtight building envelope results in energy savings and increased thermal comfort.

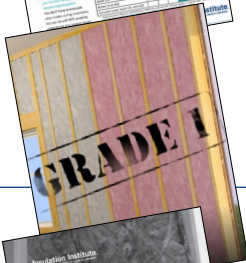
<https://insulationinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/N090-5-Air-Sealing-Locations-for-New-Homes.pdf>



### Ducts Buried Within Ceiling Insulation

Deeply buried ducts in attics is an easy way to lower energy code compliance costs for builders using the simulated energy performance path. Homeowners can benefit from energy savings realized from lower-capacity, lower-cost HVAC systems.

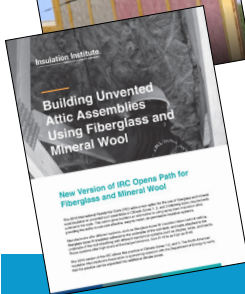
<https://insulationinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/N087-Buried-Ducts-The-newest-way-to-uncover-savings.pdf>



### Proper Installation of Insulation

Grade I installation delivers superior energy efficiency and is increasingly required by state energy codes. Insulation installation jobs that fail to meet Grade I criteria can mean construction delays due to callbacks, HERS rating penalties, and failed code inspections. Grade I installation is readily achievable by following basic guidelines as recommended by manufacturers. NAIMA offers free online training for installers.

[www.grade1insulation.org](http://www.grade1insulation.org)



### Unvented Attics Using Fiberglass and Mineral Wool Insulation

Unvented attics can be constructed by installing fiberglass or mineral wool insulation below the roof deck instead of using more costly materials like spray foam. In addition, fiberglass and mineral wool insulation products are green certified and do not carry recommended occupancy restrictions due to product off-gassing after installation. Starting with the 2018 IRC, this practice is outlined in detail within the code. Homeowners benefit from lower construction costs and the use of a safe product.

<https://insulationinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/BuildingUnventedAtticAssemblies-N089.pdf>

## LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ERI COMPLIANCE PATH HERE:

[www.energycodes.gov/resource-center/training-courses/2015-iecc-%E2%80%93-energy-rating-index-eri-compliance-alternative](http://www.energycodes.gov/resource-center/training-courses/2015-iecc-%E2%80%93-energy-rating-index-eri-compliance-alternative)

## Get the Facts for a Stronger Business

Learn more about fiberglass and mineral wool insulation at [InsulationInstitute.org](http://InsulationInstitute.org)

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