
**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
OFFICE OF THE BUILDING LAW COMPLIANCE OFFICER**

Title: Ventilation of Under-floor Space

Identification Number: BLCO-07-02

Effective Date: October 1, 2007

Brief Description of Subject Matter: Location of Ventilation Openings

Indiana Building Laws Affected: Indiana Residential Code, 2005 Edition ([675 IAC 14-4.3](#)) Section R408.1

The building law compliance officer, pursuant to the authority granted under [IC 22-15-2-6\(b\)](#) and [IC 22-13-5](#), has developed this written interpretation of a building law. Pursuant to [IC 22-13-5-4](#), this written interpretation of a building law is binding upon all counties and municipalities.

This written interpretation will continue to bind all counties and municipalities until the earlier of the following:

- (1) The General Assembly enacts a statute that substantively changes the building law interpreted or voids the written interpretation.
- (2) The Fire Prevention and Building Safety Commission adopts a rule under [IC 4-22-2](#) to state a different interpretation of the building law.
- (3) The written interpretation is found to be an erroneous interpretation of the building law in a judicial proceeding.
- (4) The office of the building law compliance officer publishes a different written interpretation of the building law.

Background

Indiana Residential Code ([675 IAC 14-4.3](#)) Section R408.1 requires that, where ventilation openings through the foundation wall or exterior wall are required, the openings be located so an opening is provided within three feet of each corner of the building. The same section also requires the ventilation openings to be provided in the under-floor space between the bottom of the floor joists and the earth under any building.

Interpretation

The vertical location of the ventilation openings is prescribed by the phrase "the under-floor space between the bottom of the floor joists and the earth under any building". Since a discontinuity in the sill plate may not be practical, the top of the ventilation openings must be at or below the bottom of the sill plate and the bottom of the ventilation openings must be at or above the earth under the building and, of course, above the earth outside of the building. Locating the ventilation openings above the bottom of the floor joists will prevent the proper insulation of the rim joist and rim joist cavities in accordance with Table 11-5, Footnote e, and is unacceptable.

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