

# DRYWALL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF NEVADA

# DCAN-SW

Representing Nevada, Arizona, and California

## Intl. Energy Conservation Code - Use the Right Stuff to Pass!

Currently homes in Nevada are built to meet the 2018 Intl. Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Per Section R402.4.1.2 revision and exception, buildings in our climate zone (Zone 3) can have an air leakage rate not exceeding 4 air changes per hour (ACH) when non-sprinklered, or 4.5 ACH when sprinklered.

Per the two leading testing companies, 3E and Energy Inspectors, units are having difficulty passing the current 2018 IECC, and may have more issues passing when the 2021 IECC is adopted.

Based on meetings with subcontractors and testing companies, along with our research, DCAN is recommending Sill Seal be used in all top of wall and exterior wall openings (windows and doors) as an air sealing material instead of the caulk. **Sill Seal should be installed by your insulation contractor who is licensed to install these products and has the proper tools.** Sill Seal is in widespread use in TX and other parts of the country with excellent results. Sill seal is the most economical of the options we researched and has the following advantages compared to caulking the top plate:



1. It is the correct material for this application. Many of the caulks being used do not have enough adhesion to properly seal the top plate.
2. Caulk products are sensitive to extreme heat and cold, Sill Seal is not.
3. Currently drywall hangers are attempting to caulk the top plates prior to hanging drywall, however it is very difficult to get a consistent bead in the proper location that stays in place, and wet, during the hanging process.
4. **If installed by the insulation contractor, Sill Seal can be inspected prior to hanging drywall.** If caulk is installed by the drywall subcontractor, it is very difficult to inspect to see if the caulk stayed in place and sealed the top plate when hanging is complete. This often requires removing drywall.
5. If the insulation subcontractor installs Sill Seal, builders have one trade responsible for all the major air sealing in the home (except exterior wall outlets/switches and can lights under insulation).

Sill Seal costs about .13 cents per lineal foot for the material. There is about 300 lf in the average 1600 sqft 2 story home, which equates to a material cost of about \$40 (the correct caulk would more than double this cost and not work as well). Sill seal is not difficult to install, so the labor is not cost prohibitive.

**DCAN and the testing companies noted above, recommend builders remove the top plate caulking from the drywall subcontractor scope of work, and instead contract the insulation subcontractor to install Sill Seal.** Making this change is not a substantial cost and will improve the homes ACH providing the best opportunity to pass the IECC standards while providing your homebuyers with better energy efficiency.

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