Ventilation

Where ceiling insulation is installed next to eave or soffit vents, a rigid baffle should be installed at the top plate to direct ventilation air up and over the ceiling insulation. See Figure 3-9. The baffle should extend beyond the height of the ceiling insulation and should have sufficient clearance between the baffle and roof deck at the top. There are a number of acceptable methods for maintaining ventilation air, including pre-formed baffles made of either paper or plastic. In some cases, plywood baffles are used.

The CBC requires a minimum vent area of 1 ft² for each 150 ft² of attic floor area. This ratio may be reduced to 1 to 300 if a ceiling vapor retarder is present or if high (for example, ridge or gable vents) and low (soffit vents) attic ventilation is used.

When part of the vent area is blocked by meshes or louvers, the net free area of the vent must be considered when meeting ventilation requirements.

Wood Rafter Constructions

Ventilating solid rafter spaces is more difficult than ventilating attics because each framing cavity requires its own vent openings. However, the requirement for ventilation is at the discretion of the local building official. It is common practice with cellulose insulation, for instance, to completely fill the cavity so that there is no ventilation at all. Also, if spray polyurethane foam is used, it is applied to the underside of the roof deck leaving no ventilation space. With batt insulation, it is possible to ventilate above the insulation using eave baffles, ridge vents, and careful installation.
Light Fixtures and Recessed Equipment

Luminaires recessed in insulated ceilings can create thermal bridging through the insulation. Not only does this degrade the performance of the ceiling assembly, but it can also permit condensation on a cold surface of the luminaire if exposed to moist air, as in a bathroom.

For these reasons, luminaires recessed in insulated ceilings must meet three requirements:

1. They must be approved for zero clearance insulation cover (IC) by Underwriters Laboratories or other testing/rating laboratories recognized by the International Conference of Building Officials. This enables insulation to be packed in direct contact with the luminaire. (See Figure 3-10).

2. The luminaire must have a label certifying air tight (AT) construction. Air tight construction means that leakage through the luminaire will not exceed 2.0 cfm when exposed to a 75 Pa pressure difference, when tested in accordance with ASTM E283.

3. The luminaire must be sealed with a gasket or caulk between the housing and ceiling. For more information see Section 6.10 of this manual.

![Figure 3-10 – IC-Rated Light Fixture](image-url)