

**NC Department of Insurance
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division
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Garage Separation

Code: 2002 Residential Code
Section: R309

Date: July 19, 2005

Question:

A garage is required to be separated from the dwelling and its attic area by ½-inch gypsum board (taped or blocked) applied to the garage side. What types of openings are permitted in the gypsum board membrane and what level of protection is required?

Answer:

Doors, including attic access, are required to be either 1-3/8-inch solid core wood, 1-3/8 honeycomb core steel, or 20-minute fire-resistance rated. A standard frame and hardware (dead bolt, peep hole, etc.) are acceptable. Door glazing must be either wire glass in a metal frame or 20-minute fire-resistance rated. Ducts located in the garage must be 26 gage steel and have no openings into the garage. Other penetrations (electrical, plumbing, etc.) must be fireblocked as required for top plates. Section 309.1 prohibits openings from the garage directly into a sleeping room.

Key Words: bedroom, bonus room, habitable room