

## Air leakage tests becoming the trend

Before IDAExpo 2021 was cancelled, I prepared a presentation covering some of the emerging trends that DASMA has been tracking. One trend currently impacting the industry is an increase in whole building air leakage testing on commercial buildings.

Both the 2021 IECC and ASHRAE 90.1-2019 standards currently require a maximum air leakage rate of 0.40 (cfm/ft<sup>2</sup>). Air leakage is a major factor in energy efficiency and monitoring it has become increasingly important for those designing, specifying, and erecting new buildings.

As more states adopt the new codes, passing the whole building air leakage test will be a more common requirement. Some general contractors in the state of Washington have experience with this new requirement because



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the state already requires this test for all new buildings. On November 1, 2020, Washington lowered the pass limit to 0.25 (cfm/ft<sup>2</sup>).

Over the past year, DASMA partnered with the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) and conducted numerous field tests on commercial buildings with sectional doors. The goal was to

understand their impact on successfully passing this test.

The buildings were first tested with all of the doors sealed and then tested again with the doors unsealed. After comparing the two tests, the results revealed that if a door is properly selected and installed, then commercial sectional doors have minimal impact on overall whole building air leakage test results.

Based on these findings, DASMA has started developing some best practice guidelines to help better understand the test and how to pass it. Alongside sectional doors, MBMA has decided that other types of commercial doors, such as rolling steel and sheet doors, will undergo field testing through the remainder of 2021.

Please continue to submit topic ideas or questions to [dasma@dasma.com](mailto:dasma@dasma.com) or call the DASMA office at (216)-241-7333 for any assistance or additional help. ■



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