

Temporary Sealing Guidance

This Technical Information Leaflet has been created to advise testers, contractors and building authorities about what temporary sealing is, and is not, acceptable when carrying out testing in accordance with ATTMA TSL1 & Approved Document L1A. This leaflet cannot possibly cover all areas but will assist you in correctly interpreting the test standard.

There are only three times *additional* temporary sealing (sealing over and above what is described in the test standard) may be carried out.

- To seal a building component that is either missing or broken
- To prove/disprove the overall impact on air leakage of a single component
- Research when testing a building at an early stage.

Temporary sealing a broken or missing component should be done only as an exception only where it is not possible to fix or install in the broken or missing component.

The latter two points will instantly mean the test is invalid and shall not be accepted as evidence of a compliant test.

Excessive additional temporary sealing, such as taping more than 1 broken or missing component or consistently taping the same items throughout a testing day could result in all the tests being rejected and re-tests being required.

Section 3.4 of ATTMA TSL1 states that background trickle ventilators, passive ventilation systems and permanently uncontrolled natural ventilation openings should be temporarily sealed. Mechanical ventilation and air conditioning systems should be turned off and temporarily sealed.

All Internal doors to conditioned areas must always remain open for the duration of the test. Closing of doors to create false pressures and declaring the test as a final compliant test will result in the test being rejected and the testers being removed from the scheme.

About ATTMA

ATTMA are the Air Tightness Testing & Measurement Association who run an authorised Competence Persons Scheme for air tightness testing.

All members of ATTMA are authorised to carry out testing to ATTMA TSL1 for Approved Document L1A. All ATTMA members are audited, insured and have calibrated testing equipment.

ATTMA work alongside, and are governed by, leading industry stakeholders, including:

- English, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish Governments
- **UKAS** – United Kingdom Accreditation Service
- **BINDT** – British Institute of Non Destructive Testing
- **CIBSE** – Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers
- **HBF** – the Home Builders Federation
- **NHBC**
- **LABC** – Local Authority Building Control
- **BCA** – the Building Control Alliance
- **BFG** – The Building Futures Group
- **ANC** – the Association of Noise Consultants

All ATTMA members are required to lodge their data with ATTMA in order to receive an authorised test certificate. ATTMA will not issue a test certificate if the authenticity of the test itself is in any doubt.

All ATTMA Members hold ID cards and have unique tester numbers. The status and level of a testers authorisation can be seen on the testers ID cards or by visiting www.attma.org/members

Contact us:

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Air Tightness Testing & Measurement Association

Temporary Sealing Guidance for Dwellings

Acceptable to Temporary Seal

All temporary sealing should be carried out internally in line with guidance below

Mechanical Ventilation

(Extractors, MVHR, Air Handling)

Mechanical ventilation systems such as bathroom, kitchen and cooker hood extracts must be switched off before being temporarily sealed for the test.

Trickle Vents

Trickle vents shall be closed and can be temporarily sealed. It is common practice for temporary sealing not to take place with trickle vents closed. Closed trickle vents have minimal impact on the overall air permeability. Should the building fail to meet its intended Design Air Permeability (DAP), Trickle vents shall be sealed.

Air Conditioning

Air conditioning grills can be sealed internally. It is important to check and confirm that the air conditioning is switched off during the test.

Passive Ventilation

Passive Ventilation, such as air bricks to outside, passive stacks and sub floor ventilation systems should be temporarily sealed for the test. Ventilation grills (leading into boiler cupboards, for example) should not be sealed.

Chimney Flues

Chimney flues can be temporarily sealed for the test as these items are accounted for in the SAP calculation

Door Template

There may be occasions where the door template does not fit cleanly into the doorframe. It is acceptable to temporarily seal around the doorframe to ensure there is no leakage through the set up area.

Consequences

Testers

All temporary sealing must be declared as part of the report and lodged on ATTMA Lodgement, declaring all sealing so that it appears on the test certificate

Not declaring temporary sealing, effectively 'cheating' a test, will result in the **immediate suspension of the tester, or entire company, pending an investigation.**

Temporarily sealing items on the NO list without giving a justified reason as to why, will also result in **immediate suspension of the tester or entire company from the scheme.**

Builders / Contractors

Temporary sealing items that are not approved will be declared on ATTMA Lodgement and will therefore result in the test certificate being rejected, requiring the tested plot and an extra test for each failed plot in line with Approved Document L1A 2013 Section 3.20. It is important that the building to be tested is ready (see ATTMA Technical Information Leaflet 002—Are you ready to test?) otherwise the tester is not authorised to carry out the test.

Building Control / Approved Inspectors

If a test certificate contains any temporary sealing that falls outside the ATTMA guidance, the certificate shall not be accepted as evidence of compliance and a re-test shall be undertaken without the additional sealing. If you are in any doubt, please contact the scheme manager.

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NOT Acceptable to Temporary Seal

Sockets (Electrical, Switches)

Electrical sockets should never be temporarily sealed. Any test that has temporary sealing on sockets will be immediately rejected.

Downlights

Downlights may be designed to draw in air and must never be temporarily sealed for an air test. Selection of downlights should be considered as part of the overall design of the building.

Bath Panels & Shower Trays

Bath panels and shower trays are not the air barrier line of a property and must never be temporarily sealed. Areas behind bath panels and shower trays should be permanently sealed before, or during fitting.

Loft Hatches & Access Panels

Loft hatches and access panels should be fitted before the test is conducted. It is never acceptable to temporarily seal a mal-fitting loft hatch or access panel

Doors (cupboard / storage areas)

Doors to unconditioned storage areas should be closed and not temporarily sealed. This includes doors to garages.

It is never acceptable to temporarily seal a cupboard door, including boiler cupboard or kitchen cupboard doors. Doing so and declaring the result as final will result in immediate suspension from the scheme.

External Doors & Windows

External doors and windows should have seals fitted before the test is conducted. It is never acceptable to temporarily seal a mal-fitting door or window, even if the seal has not yet been fitted, as temporary sealing will likely be better than the seal itself.