

## **Washington State Building Code Council**

Improving the built environment by promoting health, safety and welfare

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## STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 14-18

**CODE:** 2012 Washington State Energy Code, Commercial

**SECTION:** C402.4.5.2 Outdoor air intakes and exhausts

C403.2.4.4 Shutoff damper controls

**QUESTION 1:** Is it the intent of the state energy code to require low leakage return air

dampers, which are typically not considered openings in the building

envelope?

**ANSWER 1:** Yes. The 2012 WSEC amendment requires that return motorized

dampers meet a maximum leakage rating of 4.0 cfm/ft<sup>2</sup> at 1.0"

w.g., except in unitary packaged equipment as stated in Interpretation No. 14-17. (Note: The 2009 WSEC required a

maximum leakage rating of 10.0 cfm/ft<sup>2</sup> at 1.0" w.g.)

**OUESTION 2:** Per the section C403.2.4.4, are shut off damper controls required on

return air ducts?

ANSWER 2: No. Per Section 403.2.4.4 there is no requirement for shutoff

controls on return ducts. The typical configuration of the return

air dampers for airside economizers would be open during

periods of time when the system is shut down or during building

warm up.

**QUESTION 3:** Would a secondary return air damper external to package unitary

HVAC equipment that provides positive low leakage closure when the

system is off meet the intent of Section C402.4.5.2?

ANSWER 3: Yes, As long as the secondary return damper can be closed during

airside economizer operation and still maintain the airflow path

for the relief/exhaust air. See also Interpretation No. 14-17.

**SUPERSEDES:** None

**REQUESTED BY:** Pierce County