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AIRVENT UNIVERSITY LESSON PLAN

AIRVENT UNIVERSITY LESSON PLAN Winter 2025

Winter 2025 Lesson Plan

Do Not Mix Attic Exhaust Vents

One of the most challenged and disagreed with tips that we offer the roofing industry is this: **Do Not Mix Different Types of Attic Exhaust Vents above a common or shared attic.** Agree with it or not, mixing exhaust vents is bad news.

There are five types or categories of attic exhaust vents on the market. They are:

1. Box Vents or Off-Ridge Vents (also called roof louvers or static vents).
2. Wind Turbines
3. Ridge Vents
4. Gable Vents
5. Power Fans (roof-mount & gable mount; traditional electric or solar powered).

What the Vent Makers Say: The guidance from attic ventilation manufacturers is pretty direct and clear: *Do not mix any two of those five types on the same roof above a shared, common attic.* This guidance is written inside the installation instructions.

What Building Code Says: Building Code clearly states, *"Ventilators shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions."* It's inside Chapter R806 of the International Residential Code (IRC).

What Shingle Manufacturers Say: ARMA, the professional organization representing shingle manufacturers (Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association), published a Technical Bulletin titled *Considerations in Attic Ventilation System Selection*. The Bulletin says the following: *"Combining different types of exhaust vents on the same roof above a common attic space may cause short-circuiting of the attic ventilation system and* ***adversely affect performance****. Using different vent types together often is inconsistent with the vent manufacturer's installation instructions."*

Why mix attic exhaust vent types if it could adversely affect performance? We interviewed roofing contractors who shared what they eye witnessed after stepping into an attic that had pre-existing mixed types of attic exhaust. Here are a few of the problems they reported.

- A running power fan pulled air in through the ridge vent from the outdoors causing it to become clogged with debris and allowing weather into the attic through the ridge vent along the way.

- Uneven aging of the shingles and the roof decking because the majority of the airflow was concentrated between the two types of attic exhaust vents leaving other areas of the attic and roof with inadequate airflow.

- Snow, rain, and Mother Nature in general entered the attic through the second type of exhaust vent that was suddenly turned into an intake vent for the primary types of exhaust.

Listen to the science and rationale behind avoid mixing attic exhaust vents in our podcast episode: AirVent Podcast: Do Not Mix Attic Exhaust Vents

NOTE: *Photo is courtesy of Jake Jacobson, SF5 Construction, Little Elm, TX.*

To test your knowledge about what you learned in the Winter 2025 Lesson Plan please take our short 5-question Pop Quiz.