

EGRESS/ESCAPE WINDOWS AND WINDOW WELLS



BUILDING DEPARTMENT
160 LAKE STREET NORTH
BIG LAKE MN 55309
(MAIN) 763-251-2971 / (FAX) 763-263-0133
www.biglakemn.org



This handout is intended only as a guide and is based in part on the 2015 Minnesota Residential Code, Big Lake City ordinances, and good building practice. While every attempt has been made to insure the correctness of this handout, no guarantees are made to its accuracy or completeness. Responsibility for compliance with applicable codes and ordinances falls on the owner or contractor. For specific questions regarding code requirements, refer to the applicable codes or contact your local Building Department.

SCOPE

If you are planning on adding a bedroom, a **permit is required for this work**. You **must have a second means of egress** in either a window or a door. This egress must be on an exterior wall. If a window is provided, it must meet certain standards as follows:

1. Must be 5.7 square feet of net clear opening.
 - Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.0 square feet. Grade floor opening is a window or other opening located such that the sill height of the opening is not more than 44 inches above or below the finished ground level adjacent to the opening.
2. Glass minimum of twenty inches (20") in width of clear opening.
3. Glass minimum of twenty-four inches (24") in height of clear opening.
4. Cannot be over forty-four inches (44") from the finished floor to the top of the sill.

The window well (exterior) must be thirty-six inches (36") wide and go out thirty-six inches (36") from the foundation.

A smoke detector must be installed outside the bedroom door and another smoke detector must be installed in the bedroom. A Carbon Monoxide detector must be installed within 10 feet of every bedroom. (See Smoke Alarms/Carbon Monoxide Alarm Handout for more information.)

If you are considering remodeling your basement or lower level to make it more energy efficient and if you use any kind of Styrofoam insulation, it must be covered with ½ inch drywall (sheetrock). When Styrofoam burns, it creates very hazardous, toxic fumes. All wood plates that come in contact with concrete must be treated. (See Basement Finish handout for more information.)

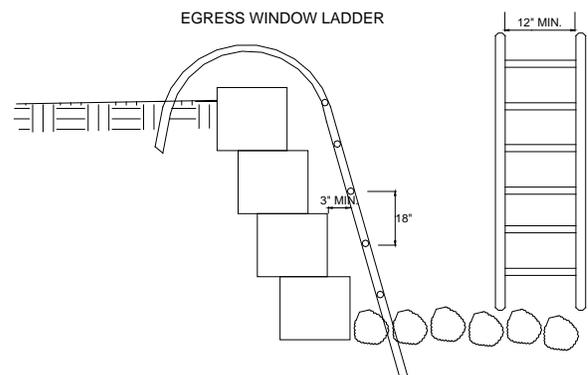
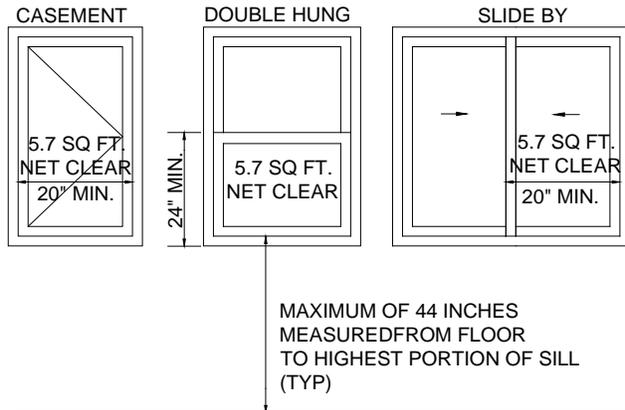
If further information is needed, please contact the Building Inspection Department 763-263-5440.

REPLACEMENT EGRESS/ESCAPE WINDOWS:

R.310.1.5 Replacement windows. Replacement windows installed in buildings meeting the scope of the International Residential Code shall be exempt from the requirements of Sections R310.1, R310.1.1, R310.1.2, and R310.1.3 if the replacement window meets the following conditions:

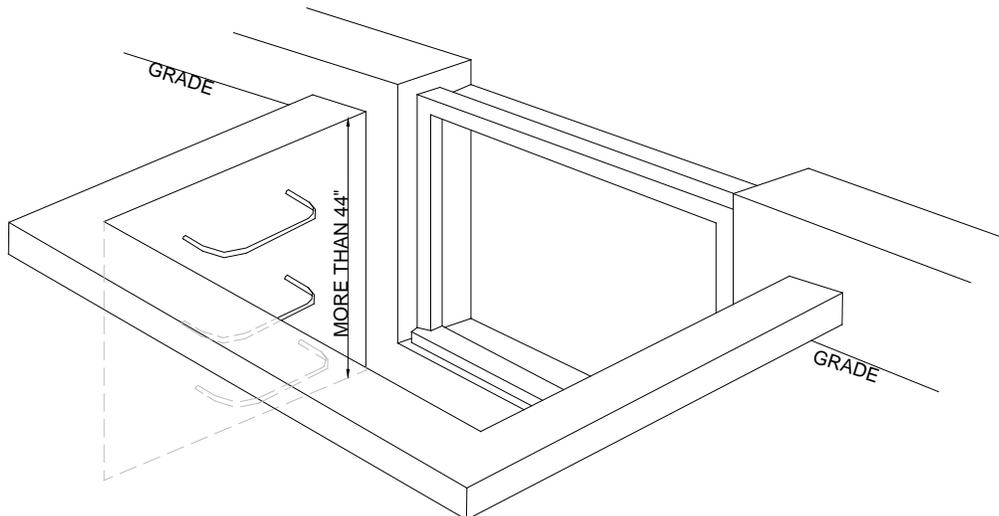
1. The replacement window is the manufacturer's largest standard size window that will fit within the existing frame or existing rough opening. The replacement window shall be permitted to be of the same operating style as the existing window or a style that provides for a greater window opening area than the existing window;
2. The rooms or areas are not used for any Minnesota State Licensed purpose requiring an egress window;
3. The window is not required to be replaced pursuant to a locally adopted rental housing or rental licensing code. ***This exception does not apply to awning or basement (cellar) windows which are considered a hazard.***

ESCAPE AND RESCUE WINDOWS

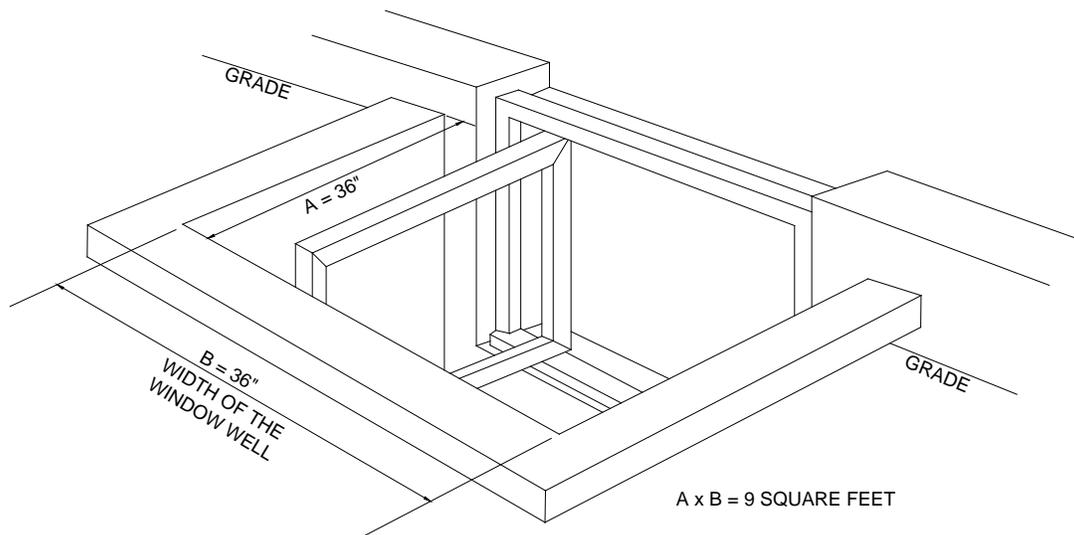


LADDERS OR RUNGS SHALL HAVE AN INSIDE WIDTH OF AT LEAST 12 INCHES, SHALL PROJECT AT LEAST 3 INCHES FROM THE WALL AND SHALL BE SPACED NOT MORE THAN 18 INCHES ON CENTER VERTICALLY FOR THE FULL HEIGHT OF THE WINDOW WELL.

ACCESS AND EXIT FACILITIES AND EMERGENCY ESCAPES

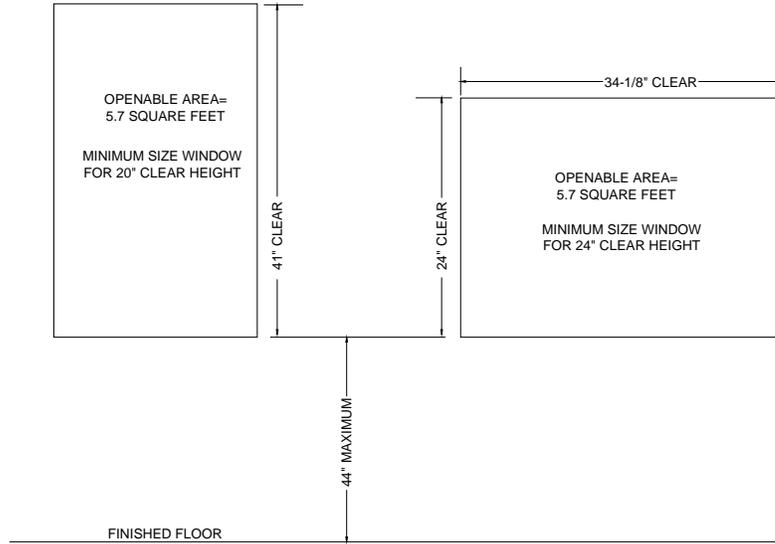


WINDOW WELLS WITH A VERTICAL DEPTH OF MORE THAN 44 INCHES SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH AN APPROVED PERMANENTLY AFFIXED LADDER OR STAIRS THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE WITH THE WINDOW IN THE FULLY OPEN POSITION. THE LADDER OR STAIRS SHALL NOT ENCROACH INTO THE REQUIRE DIMENSIONS OF THE WINDOW WELL BY MORE THAN 6 INCHES.



THE CLEAR HORIZONTAL DIMENSIONS SHALL ALLOW THE WINDOW TO BE FULLY OPENED AND PROVIDE A MINIMUM ACCESSIBLE NET CLEAR OPENING OF 9 SQUARE FEET, WITH A MINIMUM DIMENSION OF 36 INCHES.

EMERGENCY ESCAPE
AND RESCUE WINDOWS



Because so many fire-related casualties occur when occupants of residential buildings are asleep at the time of a fire, Section 310.1 of the 2006 International Residential Code (IRC) that:

1. Basements of dwelling units; and
2. Every bedroom below the fourth story shall have at least one (1) operable window or door approved for emergency escape and rescue. This exit shall open directly into a public street, public alley, yard, or exit court. The units shall be operable to provide a full clear opening without the use of separate tools.

Extensive testing by the San Diego Building and Fire Departments established the minimum window size requirements found in Section 310.1.1:

1. The new Clear Opening area shall be no less than 5.7 square feet (0.53 m²).
2. In addition to the above requirement, the net clear openable height dimension shall be a minimum of 24 inches (610 mm). The net clear openable width dimension shall be a minimum of 20 inches (508 mm). Note that using both minimum figures will not obtain the required area.
3. The finished sill height shall be not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) above the floor.

Minimum Width/Height Requirements for Emergency Escape and Rescue Windows (inches*)
(1inch=25.4 mm)

Width	20	20.5	21	21.5	22	22.5	23	23.5	24	24.5	25	25.5	26	26.5	27
Height	41	40	39.1	38.2	37.3	36.5	35.7	34.9	34.2	33.5	32.8	32.2	31.6	31	30.4
Width	27.5	28	28.5	29	29.5	30	30.5	31	31.5	32	32.5	33	33.5	34	34.2
Height	29.8	29.3	28.8	28.3	27.8	27.4	26.9	26.5	26.1	25.7	25.3	24.9	24.5	24.1	24