



City of Omaha
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Planning Department

Permits & Inspections Division

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Egress Windows

For Single Family Dwellings

City of Omaha
Permits and Inspections Division

The State of Nebraska requires that you call **811**
at least two business days before you dig.

This handout does not address any setbacks, covenants or easements on the property, nor does it relieve you of code compliance with items which may not have been included from the 2006 International Residential Code (IRC) and Chapter 55 of the Omaha Municipal Code.

POLICY ON EGRESS WINDOW REQUIREMENTS PERTINENT TO REMODELING OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

The following statements represent our departmental position on the above subject. If at any time you are unclear as to the application of this policy in a specific situation, please direct your questions to the Planning Department, Permits and Inspections Division at (402) 444-5350. Use these policy statements as your guidelines for installation and field application of the pertinent building code requirements.

1. All new windows must meet the insulation requirements of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). A U-Factor of 0.35 is the maximum allowed for all new and replacement windows. The windows must meet the maximum U-factor shown on the Energy Compliance Certificate located on the electrical panel door.
2. Existing windows are presumed to have met the building code requirements at the time of their installation and do not have to be updated unless they are in serious disrepair.
3. Windows replacements of the same size (operable area) may be accomplished without requiring that the present day egress window requirements be met. This statement is based on 2012 International Building Code (IBC 3404.1), which allows for the repair of existing buildings.
4. Windows replacements with a larger rough opening will be required to be replaced with windows meeting the present day requirements for egress, natural light and ventilation.
5. Windows replacements with a smaller openable area will not be permitted unless the new window opening will meet the egress, lighting and ventilation requirements of the 2006 IRC. **Replacement window units may not reduce the opening width or height of existing windows in any sleeping room.**
6. Basement remodels and new bedrooms must have at least one emergency egress opening. The egress opening must comply with all the requirements of 2006 IRC.
7. In all cases where window installations are anticipated which might be affected by this policy, the owner or owner's representative is advised that egress windows are strongly recommended even though they might not be required in their specific project.

SECTION R310 - EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS

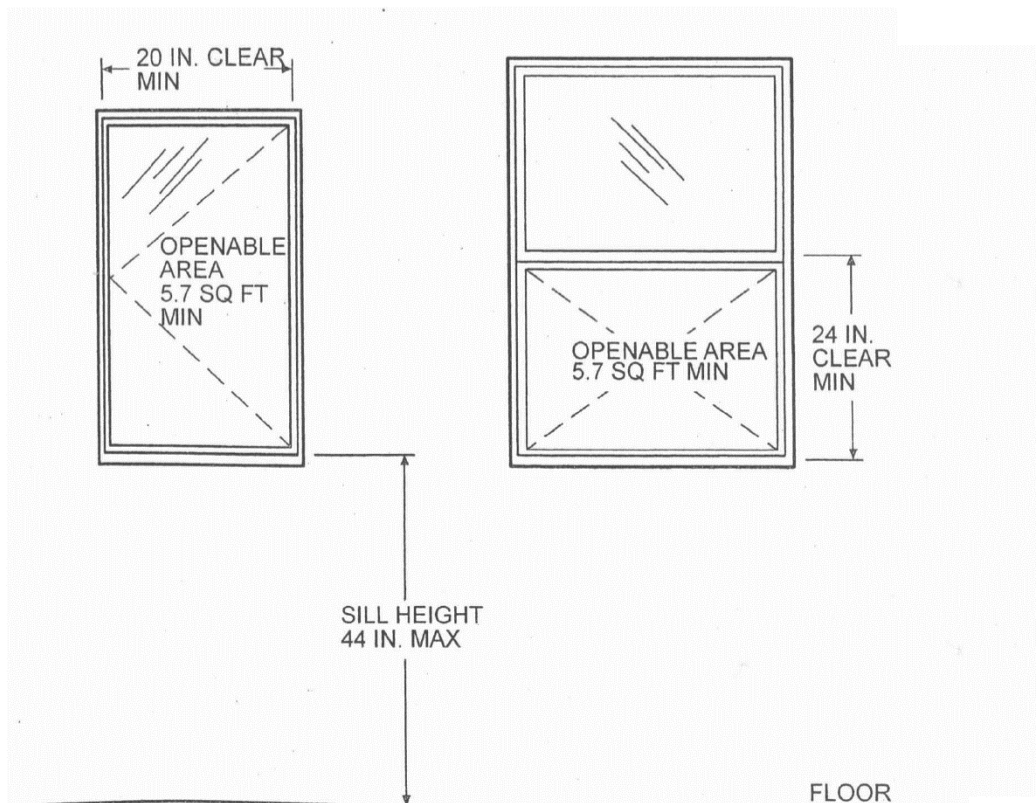
R310.1 Emergency escape and rescue required.

Basements and every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Such opening shall open directly into a public street, public alley, yard or court. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining areas of the basement. Where emergency escape and rescue openings are provided they shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) above the floor. Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening and is provided with a bulkhead enclosure, the bulkhead enclosure shall comply with Section R310.3. The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside. Emergency escape and rescue openings with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground elevation shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Section R310.2. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall open directly into a public way, or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.

Exception: Basements used only to house mechanical equipment and not exceeding total floor area of 200 square feet (18.58 m²).

R310.1.1 Minimum opening area. All emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet (0.530 m²).

Exception: Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet (0.465m²).



R310.1.2 Minimum opening height. The minimum net clear opening height shall be 24 inches (610 mm).

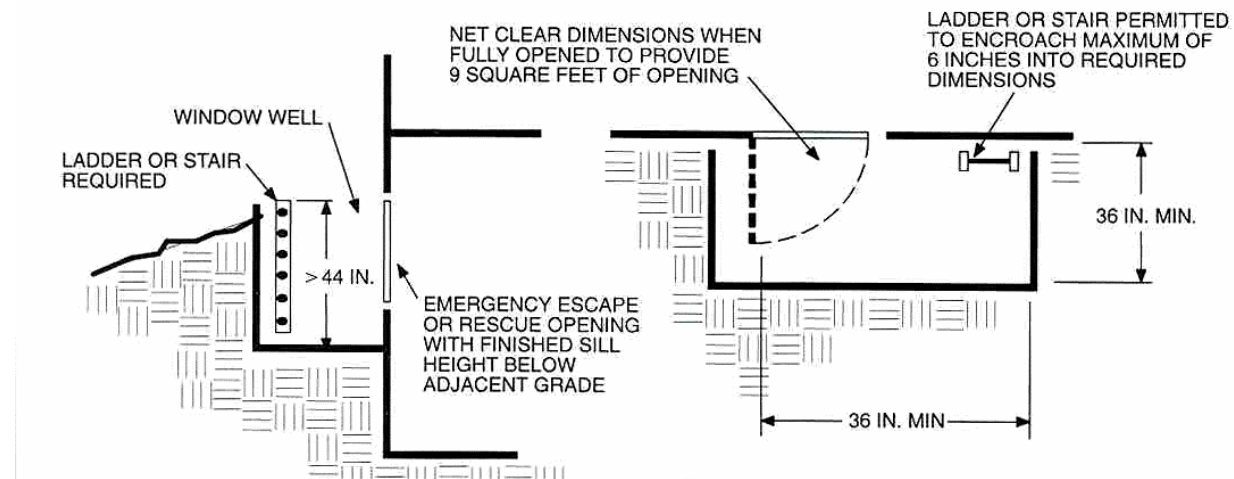
R310.1.3 Minimum opening width. The minimum net clear opening width shall be 20 inches (508 mm).

R310.1.4 Operational constraints. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.

R310.2 - Window Well

The minimum horizontal area of the window well shall be 9 square feet (0.9 m²), with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches (914 mm). The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened.

Exception: The ladder or steps required by Section R310.2.1 shall be permitted to encroach a maximum of 6 inches (152mm) into the required dimensions of the window well.



R310.2.1 Ladder and steps. Window wells with a vertical depth greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) shall be equipped with a permanently affixed ladder or steps usable with the window in the fully open position. Ladders or steps required by this section shall not be required to comply with Sections R311.5 and R311.6. Ladders or rungs shall have an inside width of at least 12 inches (305 mm), shall project at least 3 inches (76 mm) from the wall and shall be spaced not more than 18 inches (457 mm) on center vertically for the full height of the window well.

R310.4 Bars, grills, covers and screens. Bars, grilles, covers, screens or similar devices are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings, bulkhead enclosures, or window wells that serve such openings, provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with Sections R310.1.1 to R310.1.3, and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.