B EMERGENCY EGRESS WINDOW REQUIREMENTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT – BUILDING & LIFE SAFETY DIVISION
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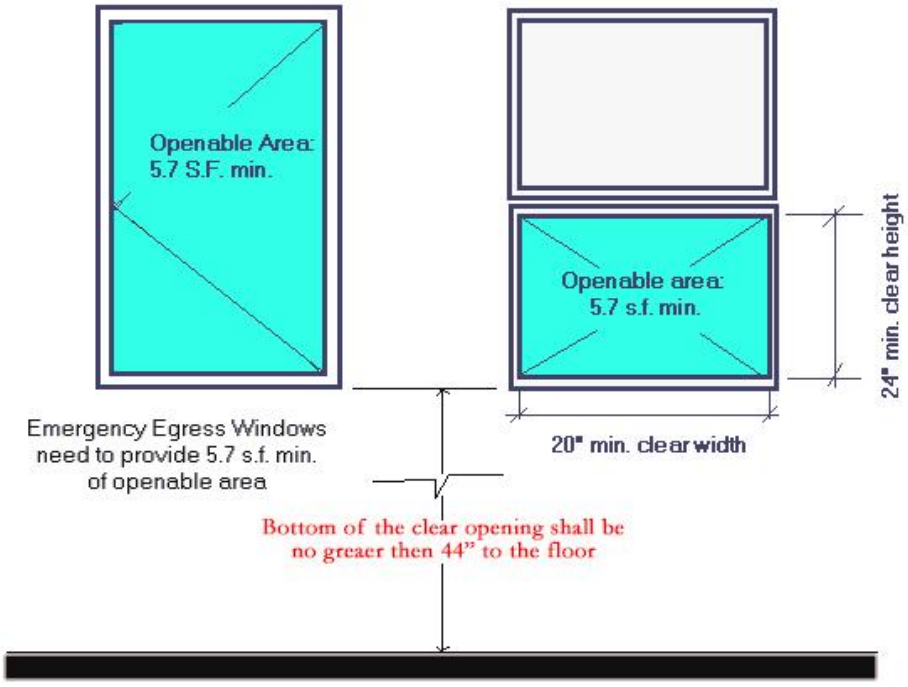
Basements, habitable attics, sleeping lofts, and every bedroom shall have at least one window or door approved for emergency egress. Where basements or attics contain one or more bedrooms, an emergency egress opening shall be provided in each bedroom. The bedroom egress window must meet all of the following criteria:

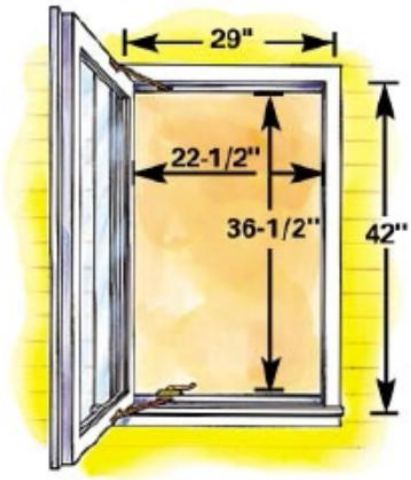
- Escape or rescue windows shall have a minimum net clear openable area of 5.7 sq. ft. except for grade-level openings which shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.0 sq. ft.
- The minimum net clear height of the opening dimension shall be a minimum of 24 inches and the net clear width shall be a minimum of 20 inches.
- The maximum finished sill height shall not be more than 44 inches above the floor.
- If bars, grilles, screens, etc. are placed over the emergency opening the minimum net clear openings shall be maintained and such devices shall be releasable without the use of a key, tool, or special knowledge.

WINDOW REQUIREMENTS EXAMPLE



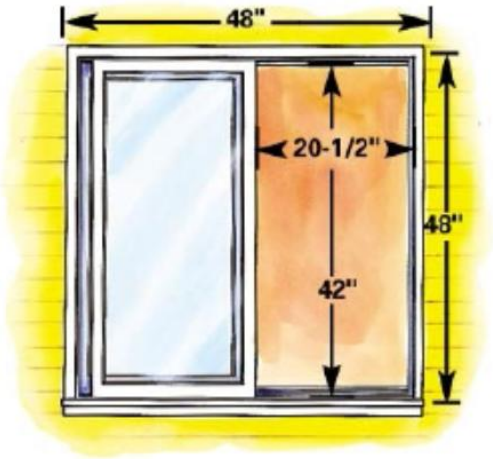
Do the Math: A window that meets the minimum width and height requirement may not meet the minimum clear opening square footage requirement. A window with a 20-in. by 24-in. opening would only yield a net clear opening of 3.3 sq. ft. To achieve the required clear opening of 5.7 sq. ft., a 20-in. wide window would have to be 42-in. high. Likewise, a 24-in. high window would have to be 34-in. wide.

EXAMPLE WINDOW TYPES:



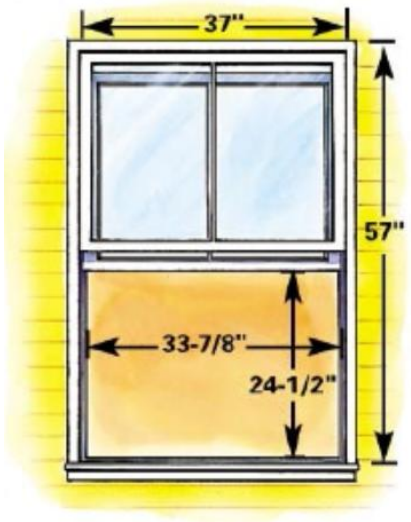
Casement Windows:

Windows with hinged sashes that swing free and clear of the opening. They can be relatively small and still meet code requirements, which makes them ideal where space is limited. Some manufacturers have an operator arm that can be pushed to open the window wider in an emergency.



Slider Windows:

Windows with a portion that slides open horizontally. These windows have sashes that fill nearly half the possible window opening when the window is open. A slider window must be nearly twice the size of a casement window to meet the minimum requirements.



Double-Hung Windows:

Windows with a portion that slides open vertically. Even when fully open, more than half of a double-hung window's overall area is blocked by glass. To meet clear opening height requirements, a window must be nearly 4'-9" in overall height.