



# CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

## Planning & Development Services

Revised April 15, 2005

### **EGRESS WINDOWS**

If you are remodeling a basement, adding new bedrooms, changing the style of existing bedroom windows or building a new home, you will need to include egress windows in your plans.

Basements with habitable space and every sleeping room below the fourth story shall have at least one operable window or door approved for emergency escape or rescue which shall open directly out to a public street, public alley, yard or court. The windows must be operable from the inside to provide a full clear opening without the use of keys or separate tools.

Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress windows shall be required in each sleeping room but not in adjoining areas of the basement, provided a lock is not installed on the doors into the bedroom(s).

#### **Replacement Windows**

When replacing windows in current bedrooms or windows in basements with habitable spaces, which do not meet egress, the homeowner/contractor is required to meet egress requirements if changing the style of the windows.

If the window styles do not change, the homeowner/contractor is encouraged to make the opening as large as possible by enlarging the opening to the existing framing members. However, the Building Code does allow minor reductions in the clear openings of replacement windows. If the existing frames are left in place and new windows installed, this reduction in clear opening space must be no less than ten percent (10%).

In any case, it is best to contact the Building Staff in the Planning and Development Services Unit for clarification on individual issues.

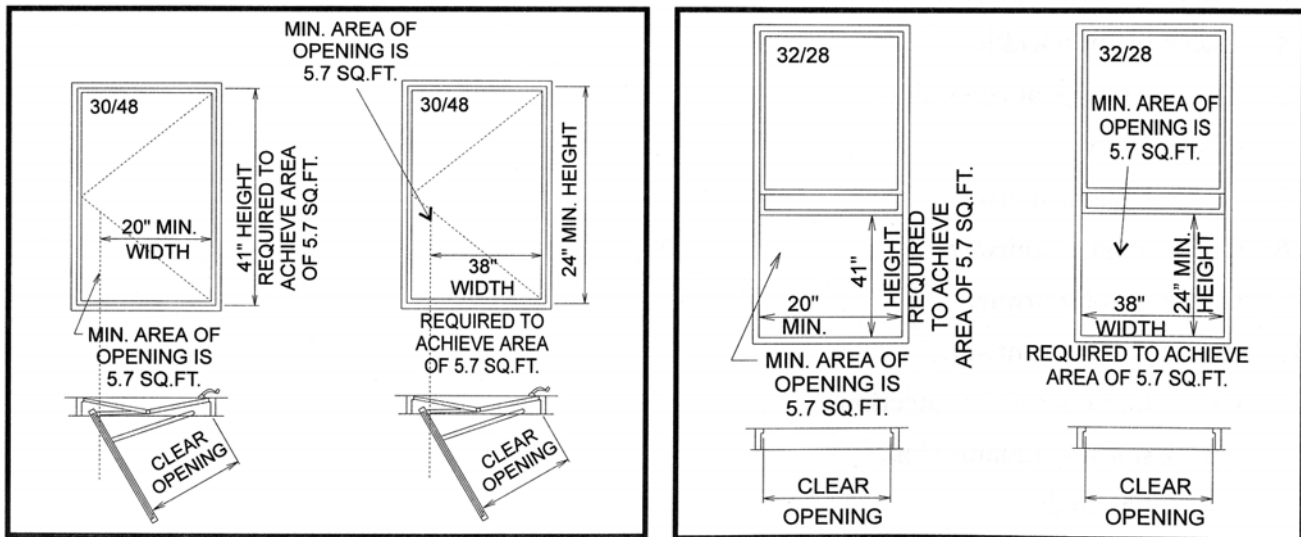
#### **Window Specifications**

All escape and rescue windows shall have a minimum net clear opening area of 5.7 square feet. The only exception to this rule is that grade (first) floor openings must have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet. The minimum net clear opening height dimension must be 24 inches. The minimum net clear opening width must be 20 inches.

Emergency escape and rescue openings must have a sill height of not more than 44 inches above the finished floor.

Bars, grills, covers, screens are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings, or window wells that serve such openings provided the minimum net clear openings comply with the above dimensions and that such devices shall be removable without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

Here are some examples of typical egress windows:



Casement

Double Hung

### Window Wells

Window wells are required for escape or rescue windows below grade. Wells must have a minimum horizontal area of 9 square feet, with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches.

The area of the window well must allow the emergency escape and rescue window to be fully opened.

No window well shall be deeper than 48 inches, unless ready access is made available by permanently affixed steps or a ladder. The ladder or steps shall be permitted to encroach a minimum of six inches into the dimensions of the window well. Ladders or rungs shall have a 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.