

Window Replacements

Updated to 2015 I-Codes 10/14/16

Is a building permit required for replacing windows of the same size or smaller?

No building permit is required to replace windows that are the same size as the existing windows. Replacement windows – whether or not a permit is required – must meet building code requirements.

Is a building permit required for replacing windows wider than the existing window or for installing new windows?

Yes, a building permit is required if the header is changing. Floor plans and elevations must be submitted with the permit application to show floor joist and truss or rafter layouts in order to check the window header size.

If you need to cut into a concrete wall to install a new window (such as for a basement bedroom egress window), you must submit a plan stamped by a Colorado registered engineer specifying structural enhancements (if any) to maintain the wall's structural integrity.

Code Requirements for all New and Replacement Windows

Egress Windows: All sleeping rooms and basements must have at least one emergency escape/rescue window, with a minimum net clear openable area of 5.7 square feet, minimum net clear height dimension of 24 inches and minimum net clear openable width of 20 inches. Egress window maximum finished sill height shall not exceed 44 inches above the finished floor.

Windows that do not meet egress requirements may be replaced by similar windows so long as they do not make the egress openable area smaller.

Exception: Window openings within four feet of finished grade shall have a minimum net clear opening of five square feet.

Energy Conservation: Replacement windows shall have a heat transmission rate that does not exceed 0.32 fenestration U-factor.

Safety Glazing: Replacement windows in hazardous locations need tempered or safety glazing. Hazardous locations include glass in doors or within two feet of doors and less than five feet above the floor, within tub/shower/spa enclosures within five feet of standing surface, at stair enclosures, and within five feet of the bottom of stairs. Any individual window pane over nine square feet, with the bottom edge within 18 inches of the floor and the top more than 36" above the floor, also requires safety glazing.

