

City of Bellingham Policy

Policy No. 2009-008

Title: Requirements for Replacement Windows in Residential Occupancies.

Code: 2006 International Building Code, 2006 International Residential Code

Chapter: IBC 101.4.4, IBC 3407, IRC R102.7.1

Level of Policy: Departmental

Date Issued: October 13, 2009

Developed by: Jim Tinner, CBO

Date Revised: N/A

Revised by: N/A

Approved by: Jim Tinner

Supersedes: All prior

See Also:

Purpose

To provide a clear and relational set of requirements regarding window replacements in residential buildings.

Scope

All structures regulated by the International Building Code with occupancy classifications of R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4. All structures regulated by the International Residential Code.

Definitions

IBC means the currently adopted edition of the International Building Code.

IRC means the currently adopted edition of the International Residential Code.

Window means one or more pieces of glazing along with the supporting window frame that is typically inserted into a wall opening created to support the window and its frame.

Policy/Conditions

Consult with Planning staff to determine whether window replacement requires Design Review approval before a building permit for the work is issued. When windows are being changed in existing wall openings and there is no increase in the wall opening size, the following items will apply.

- The new window assembly will meet current energy code requirements.
- The new window assembly will meet IRC or IBC safety glazing requirements.
- For buildings legally constructed under the code provisions in effect at the time of original construction, a window may be replaced without invoking fire resistive construction requirements that are more restrictive than those in place at the time of original construction.
- In sleeping rooms, required egress and rescue windows must meet the code required operable area sizes to the greatest extent allowed by the existing wall opening.
- Existing sill height will be allowed to be maintained. A step or platform at the interior side of the window will not be required.
- Plans or plot plans will not be required. A list or plan showing location, size, opening type, glazing type and UA value of each window to be changed must be provided at time of permit application.

When windows are being changed in existing wall openings and the opening size is to be increased, the following items will apply.

- When the wall header above the window is changed, the opening will be increased as needed to install a fully compliant egress and rescue window or door.

- In the event that fire resistive construction is required due to property line locations, walls within the fire resistive distance must be analyzed to determine compliance with current wall protection requirements or the new window will meet the test requirements of ASTM E-119, UL 263 or the requirements of IBC Section 703.3.
- Plans of sufficient detail to show wall locations, location on property and construction details will be required.
- Lateral load analysis will not be required unless at least one window size is increased > 50%. Only those walls where window size is increased > 50% need be analyzed.

References/Sources

IBC 101.4.4, IBC 3407, IBC 2401.2, IBC 703.2, IRC R102.7.1

Appendix/Attachments