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2020-03	Secondary Means of Escape – Egress Windows & Doors			May 1, 2020
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## Informational Bulletin 2020-03 Secondary Means of Escape – Egress Windows & Doors

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide clarification of the egress window size requirements in dwelling units (to include apartments, etc) as required in NFPA 101 Life Safety Code (2015 Edition) Chapter 24.2.2.3, IRC R310, and IBC 1030.

The purpose of the egress window is to provide an occupant with an alternate escape route when fire or smoke blocks the primary means of escape from the dwelling unit. The egress window is required when the building lacks an automatic sprinkler system or a door remote from the primary means of escape for one- and two-family dwellings.

### **New Buildings: Secondary Means of Escape – Egress Windows:**

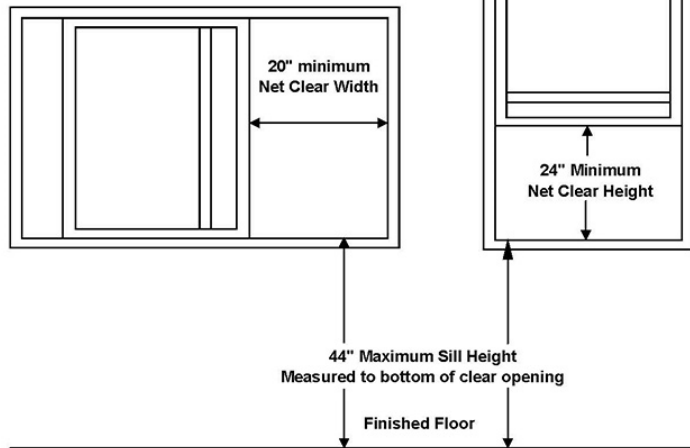
*NFPA 101: 24.2.2.3.3 (2015 Edition)*

An egress window is an outside window operable from the inside without the use of tools, keys, or any special effort. It shall provide a clear opening of **not less than 5.7 square feet** in the natural open position for new windows.

The window width shall be not less than 20 in. and the height shall be not less than 24 in. The bottom of the window opening shall be not more than 44 in. above the floor.

Such means of escape (egress windows) shall be acceptable where one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) The window shall be within 20 ft. of the finished ground level.
- (2) The window shall be directly accessible to fire department rescue apparatus as approved by the authority having jurisdiction.
- (3) The window or door shall open onto an exterior balcony.



A 28 in. by 30 in. opening gives 5.8 sq. ft. of net clear opening.

A 20 in. by 26 in. opening gives 3.6 sq. ft. of net clear opening, which does not meet egress guidelines.

A 20 in. wide casement must be at least 42 in. wide for 5.7 sq. ft. of net clear opening.

A 24 in. tall awning must be at least 35 in. wide for 5.7 sq. ft. of net clear opening.

**Egress Window Dimensions – Minimum 5.7 square feet (820.8 square inches)**

		WIDTH (inches)															
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
HEIGHT	24	480	504	528	552	576	600	624	648	672	696	720	744	768	792	816	840
	25	500	525	550	575	600	625	650	675	700	725	750	775	800	825	850	875
	26	520	546	572	598	624	650	676	702	728	754	780	806	832	858	884	910
	27	540	567	594	621	648	675	702	729	756	783	810	837	864	891	918	945
	28	560	588	616	644	672	700	728	756	784	812	840	868	896	924	952	980
	29	580	609	638	667	696	725	754	783	812	841	870	899	928	957	986	1015
	30	600	630	660	690	720	750	780	810	840	870	900	930	960	990	1020	1050
	31	620	651	682	713	744	775	806	837	868	899	930	961	992	1023	1054	1085
	32	640	672	704	736	768	800	832	864	896	928	960	992	1024	1056	1088	1120
	33	660	693	726	759	792	825	858	891	924	957	990	1023	1056	1089	1122	1155
	34	680	714	748	782	816	850	884	918	952	986	1020	1054	1088	1122	1156	1190
	35	700	735	770	805	840	875	910	945	980	1015	1050	1085	1120	1155	1190	1225
	36	720	756	792	828	864	900	936	972	1008	1044	1080	1116	1152	1188	1224	1260
	37	740	777	814	851	888	925	962	999	1036	1073	1110	1147	1184	1221	1258	1295
	38	760	798	836	874	912	950	988	1026	1064	1102	1140	1178	1216	1254	1292	1330
39	780	819	858	897	936	975	1014	1053	1092	1131	1170	1209	1248	1287	1326	1365	
40	800	840	880	920	960	1000	1040	1080	1120	1160	1200	1240	1280	1320	1360	1400	
41	820	861	902	943	984	1025	1066	1107	1148	1189	1230	1271	1312	1353	1394	1435	
42	840	882	924	966	1008	1050	1092	1134	1176	1218	1260	1302	1344	1386	1428	1470	

NOTE: Numbers in the grayed areas are too small. Choose any combination in the white areas.

**Existing Buildings: Means of Escape – Egress Windows:**

NFPA 101 A.24.2.2.3.3 (2015 Edition)

The clear opening of an existing secondary means of escape (escape window) under 24.2.2.3.3 shall be:

1. The opening (natural open position) for a wood, vinyl, aluminum or fiberglass framed window shall be a minimum of 20" X 24" (3.3 sq. ft.). - *For the occupant(s) to escape.*
  - a) The total window/wall opening area shall **not be less than 5.0 square feet.** - *For firefighters to enter for search & rescue.*
2. The opening (natural open position) of a steel framed window shall be a minimum of 20" X 24" with at least one dimension exceeded to provide **not less than 5.0 square feet** of net free opening. - *For occupants to escape and firefighters to enter.*

**Guidance:**

The minimum clear opening became a requirement of this Code in 1976, and was based on tests conducted to determine the minimum size of the wall opening required to allow a firefighter wearing turnout gear and SCBA entry into the room from the exterior to affect search and rescue.

*For window openings within 1" or less of the minimum requirements, reasonable consideration should be given for sashes that do not require tools or special effort to remove.*

**Egress Window Dimensions – Minimum of 5.0 square feet (720 square inches)**

		WIDTH										
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
HEIGHT	24	480	504	528	552	576	600	624	648	672	696	720
	25	500	525	550	575	600	625	650	675	700	725	750
	26	520	546	572	598	624	650	676	702	728	754	780
	27	540	567	594	621	648	675	702	729	756	783	810
	28	560	588	616	644	672	700	728	756	784	812	840
	29	580	609	638	667	696	725	754	783	812	841	870
	30	600	630	660	690	720	750	780	810	840	870	900
	31	620	651	682	713	744	775	806	837	868	899	930
	32	640	672	704	736	768	800	832	864	896	928	960
	33	660	693	726	759	792	825	858	891	924	957	990
	34	680	714	748	782	816	850	884	918	952	986	1020
35	700	735	770	805	840	875	910	945	980	1015	1050	
36	720	756	792	828	864	900	936	972	1008	1044	1080	

NOTE: Numbers in the grayed areas are too small. Choose any combination in the white areas.

*A limited but reasonable time, commensurate with the magnitude of expenditure, disruption of services, and degree of hazard, shall be allowed for compliance with any part of this Code for existing buildings.*