



PULLMAN BUILDING DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2006

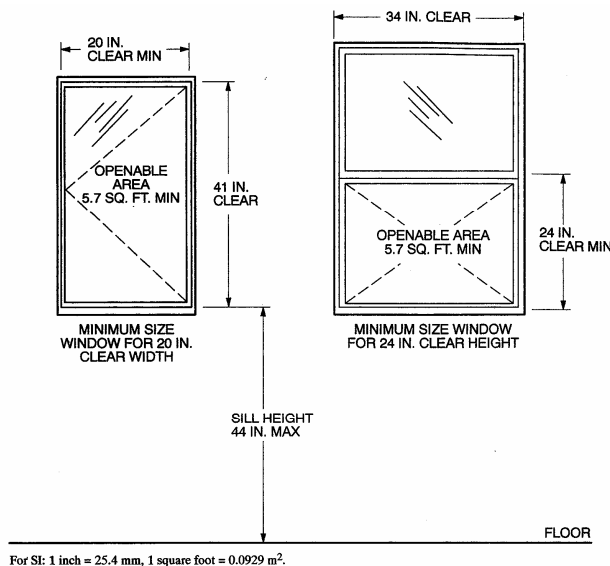
EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS (EGRESS WINDOWS)

To clarify the code requirements for egress windows, following is an excerpt from the 2003 International Residential Code, Section R310.

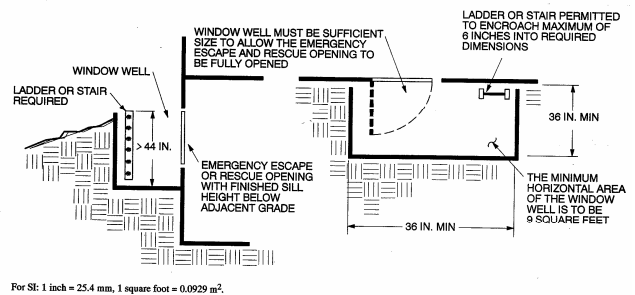
Basements with habitable space and every sleeping room in residential buildings are required to have at least one openable emergency escape and rescue window. The bottom of emergency escape and rescue openings must be located no higher than 44 inches above the finished floor. A minimum net clear opening area of 5.7 square feet is required with the exception; openings located on the ground

floor or in basements where the sill height does not exceed 44 inches above or below adjacent grade may have the openable area reduced to not less than 5 square feet. Emergency escape and rescue openings must have a minimum openable width of 20 inches and a minimum height of 24 inches. Openings must be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools.

Window wells when provided must provide at least 9 square feet of horizontal area with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches. Window well shall allow for the window to be opened fully. A ladder or step is required when a window well for emergency escape and rescue opening is more than 44 inches deep. Ladders must be at least 12 inches wide, shall project at least 3 inches from the wall and spacing of rungs shall not exceed 18 inches.



For S/I: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 square foot = 0.0929 m².
Figure R310.1
EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE WINDOW



For S/I: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 square foot = 0.0929 m².
Figure R310.2
WINDOW WELLS

You will note that combining the minimum width and height requirements WILL NOT meet the minimum area requirement.



PRE-COMPACTING SOIL FOR FOOTINGS

Pre-compacting soil prior to constructing footings is an inexpensive precaution against future building settlement. It shouldn't take more than one man-hour for even the most complex structure commonly built in Pullman, and the expense is minimal, particularly if compaction equipment is going to be on-site anyway for other uses, such as compacting gravel for slabs.

When excavating for footings, the soil that is uncovered is generally not highly compacted because nature deposited it with a high percentage of air voids. The soil which was removed was supported not only by the remaining soil underneath, but also by interlocking with the other soil around it, so its full weight didn't bear on the soil beneath. The structure resting on the footing will most likely load the supporting soil more than it has ever been loaded. If this is the case, compaction and therefore settlement will result.

In most cases, the settlement described above can be virtually eliminated by pre-compacting the soil before constructing the footing. The preferred method of compaction is HOE-PAC. However, a whacker is probably the most practical piece of equipment to use. A vibratory pad will also work if that is what is available at the site. Although pre-compaction is not required at this time, we recommend it as an easy, low-cost strategy to reduce building settlement.

FEBRUARY PERMITS

Below are building permit and valuation totals for February 2006, February 2005, year-to-date 2006 and comparable 2005.

February 2006: 33 permits valued at \$2,448,334
February 2005: 27 permits valued at \$894,118
YTD 2006: 67 permits valued at \$3,653,858
YTD 2005: 61 permits valued at \$2,239,830

RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

Restrictive covenants are private limitations imposed on property in a particular subdivision. These can address such items as floor area, parking, setbacks and building height, exterior finish materials, etc. Restrictive covenants are administered by the property owners in the affected subdivision; the City plays no part in their enforcement. Since the covenants may be more restrictive than city regulations, it is wise to check both when planning a building project.

The Public Works Department has copies of restrictive covenants as they existed at the time each subdivision's plat was filed with the City. A current record of all covenants can be found at the Whitman County Auditor's office.

FLOOR INSULATION TIPS

The 2003 Washington State Energy Code requires insulation to be **installed in substantial contact with the surface to be insulated**. Section 502.1.4.7 states, "Floor insulation shall be installed in a permanent manner in substantial contact with the surface being insulated. Insulation supports shall be installed so spacing is no more than 24 inches on center."



If insulation is not in substantial contact, air convection loops form between the insulation and the floor. Air begins to move between the insulation and the floor and/or the rim joist. The air movement causes convective heat loss from the floor, decreasing the effectiveness of the insulation.

When placing insulation between floor joists, be sure the top surface is in contact with the bottom of the flooring to reduce air spaces as much as possible. Also remember to avoid compressing insulation, since compression also reduces the effectiveness of insulation.