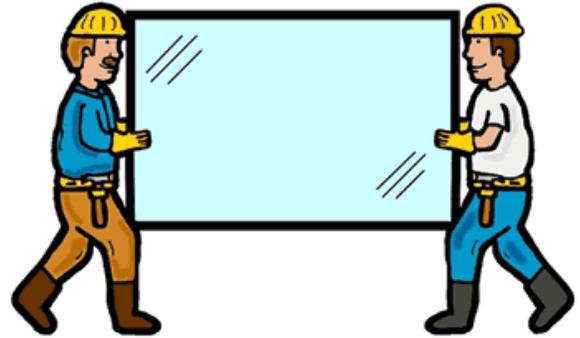


REPLACING WINDOWS

City of Owatonna
BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION
507-444.4370



This handout is intended only as a guide and is based in part on the 2007 Minnesota State Building Code, City of Owatonna ordinances, and good building practice. While every attempt has been made to insure the correctness of this handout, no guarantees are made to its accuracy or completeness. Responsibility for compliance with applicable codes and ordinances falls on the owner or contractor. For specific questions regarding code requirements, refer to the applicable codes or contact your local Building Department.

Permits

Building permits are required whenever glass is to be installed or replaced in window or door units which include:

1. Window sash replacements.
2. Inserts or total window replacement.
3. Glass replacements or repairs.
4. Glass without solid backing.

The State Building Code requires that windows and doors are to be installed in accordance with the manufacture's installation instructions including proper flashing and pan flashing if the window or door unit is totally removed and replaced.

Pre-inspection

A pre-inspection for the installation or replacement of glass windows or door glass is required to ensure compliance with the code. A Building Inspector must have access to the interior of the living unit to evaluate each proposed glass replacement. The two major reasons for this inspection are the life safety requirements related to safety glazing and for emergency escape egress requirements.

Safety Glazing

Specific glass locations require the use of safety glazing to reduce the possible risk of severe injury or death due to laceration from impacting glass. Generally windows adjacent to doors, stairs, landings, bathtub/showers and whirlpools require safety glazing. Other areas where safety glazing is required are glass in doors including patio and storm doors and windows of certain sizes near walking surfaces. All safety glass must have a permanent identifying etching in the corner of the glass noting 16 CFR 1201 category I or II. An informational handout detailing safety glazing is available at the Owatonna Building Inspection Division office.

Emergency Escape Egress Windows

When egress windows are to be replaced (normally located in a sleeping room) the replacement window can be the manufacturer's largest size window that will fit within the existing frame or rough opening provided the new window is of the same operating type, such as double hung, slider or casement, as the existing window. Windows that are of a different operating type are acceptable if the new window provides a larger clear open area than the existing. The clear open area is the unobstructed clear escape area of a fully opened window. Window hardware must provide for easily operable action and provide for the full unobstructed escape clear area. Egress windows are critical for emergency escape and Fire Department rescue access. An informational handout is available at the Owatonna Building Inspection Division office which provides further in depth information about emergency escape/rescue windows.

Energy Efficiency

New windows are required to meet the minimum standards of the State of Minnesota Energy Code. The following u-values can not be exceeded for the specific glass type; U-0.35 maximum for windows and door glazing and U-0.60 maximum for skylights. **Note, that the lower the u-value the better the energy efficiency.** Manufacturers are required to attach labels to their glazing products indicating the u-value of that window. This label must be left on the window for verification by the Building Inspector.

Smoke Detection/Alarm requirements

When certain types of work are performed on a dwelling the State of Minnesota Building and Fire Code requires that smoke detection/alarms must be updated throughout the dwelling including basements. Window replacements will require such updates and the Building Inspector will verify the needed upgrades at the time of the pre-inspection. An informational handout for smoke alarm/detection is available at the Owatonna Building Inspection Division office.

Carbon Monoxide Detector/Alarms

Carbon Monoxide detector/alarms are required by a specific Minnesota state statute (299F.51) which is separate from the Building and Fire Codes. This statute requires that every dwelling unit has properly installed carbon monoxide detector/alarms. An informational handout for these requirements are available at the Owatonna Building Inspection Division office.