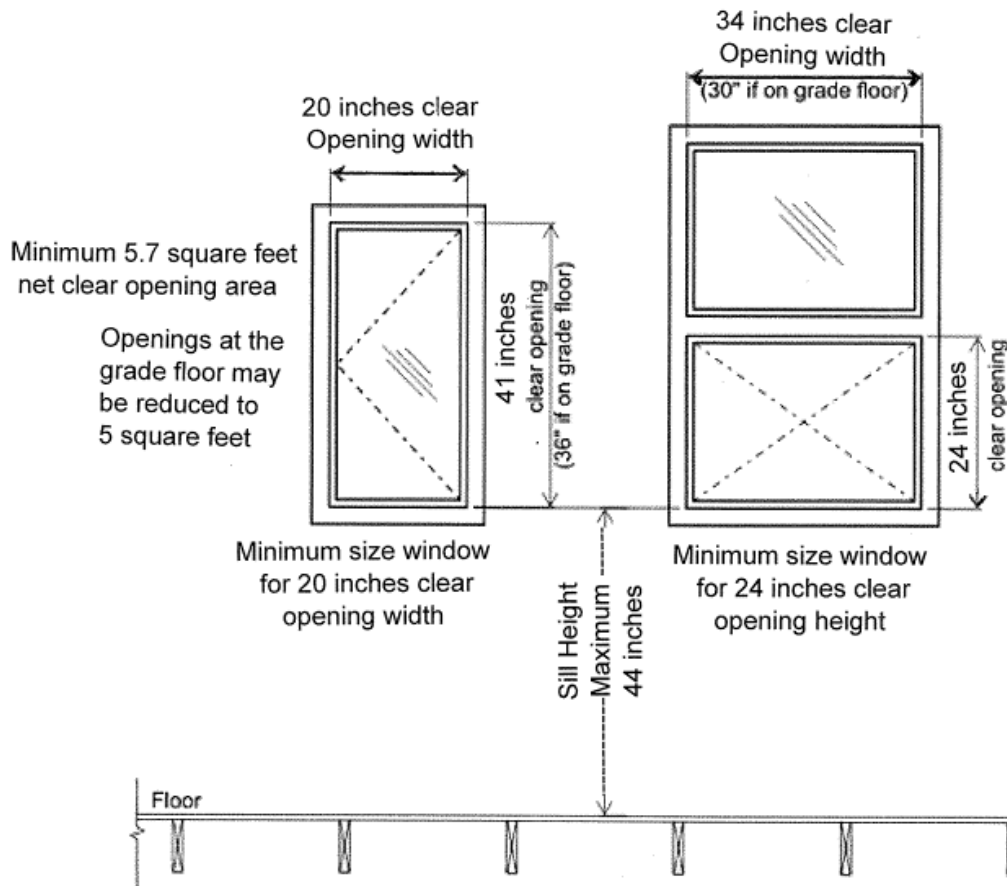


Residential Emergency Egress Openings

This Tip Sheet reflects code requirements of the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) with Washington State Amendments.

Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening

- Basements, habitable attics and every sleeping room shall have not less than one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, an emergency escape and rescue opening shall be required in each sleeping room. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside without the use of keys, tools, or special knowledge, and open directly into a public way, or to a yard or court that opens to a public way. (R310.1)
- Where bars, grilles, covers, screens, or opening control devices are placed on emergency escape and rescue openings, area or window wells, the minimum net clear opening sizes shall comply and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of key, tool, special knowledge, or force greater than that required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening. (R310.4)



Window Wells in Conjunction with Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

- The horizontal area of the window well shall be not less than 9 square feet, with a horizontal projection and width not less than 36 inches. The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened. (R310.3.2)
- Window wells with a vertical depth greater than 44 inches shall be equipped with a permanently affixed ladder or steps useable with the emergency escape and rescue opening in the fully opened position and shall not encroach into the required dimensions of the window well. (R310.3.2.2)
- Ladder rungs or steps shall have an inside width of not less than 12 inches, shall project not less than 3 inches from the wall, and be spaced not more than 18 inches on center vertically for the full height of the window well. (R310.3.2.2)

