NEW CASTLE COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE
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Egress Window Specifications

EST. 12/18/01, REV. 1/2009

SECTION R310 - EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS of the International Residential Code/2006 as adopted and amended by New Castle County states in part:

R310.1 - Emergency escape and rescue required. Basements and every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Such opening shall open directly into a public street, public alley, yard or court. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining area of the basement. Where emergency escape and rescue openings are provided they shall have a sill height or not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) above the floor. Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening and is provided with a bulkhead enclosure, the bulkhead enclosure shall comply with Section R310.3. The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue openings with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground elevation shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Section R310.2. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall open directly into a public way, or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.

R310.1.1 - Minimum opening area.* All emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet (0.530 m²).

Exception: Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet (0.465 m²).

R310.1.2 – Minimum opening height. The minimum net clear opening height shall be 24 inches (610 mm).

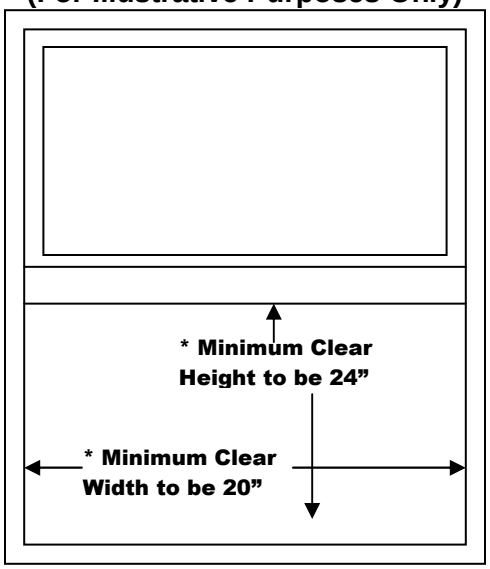
R310.1.3 – Minimum opening width. The minimum net clear opening shall be 20 inches (508 mm).

R310.4 – Operational constraints. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge.

SAMPLE DRAWING
(For Illustrative Purposes Only)

Minimum clear opening to be 5.7 square feet (820 sq. in.)

5 square feet (720 sq. in.) for grade floor openings.



*** NOTE:**

20” W x 24” H DOES NOT EQUAL THE REQUIRED 820 SQ. IN.

- A window having the required minimum width of 20 inches would need to have a measured height of 41 inches to meet the required 820 square inches. (20 “ x 41” = 820 sq. inches)
- A window having the required minimum height of 24 inches would need to have a measured width of 34 ½ inches to meet the required 820 square inches. (24” x 34 ½ “ = 828 sq. inches)
- Some window manufacturers can provide “Egress Hardware” for casement style windows.
- Note: Please see Sections R310.2 – R310.5 for additional requirements on window wells, bulkheads, and rescue openings.