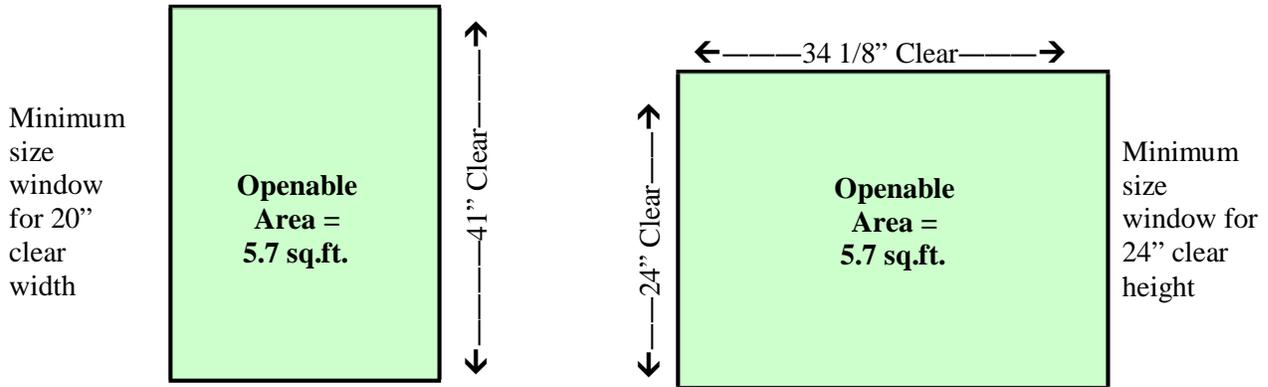


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# Emergency Egress Windows

## Residential Construction

←—20” Clear—→



**Wildfire Exposure requirements:** All new or replacement windows, window walls, skylights, glass blocks and glazed openings shall have a minimum of one tempered pane, or having a fire resistance rating of not less than 20-minutes, and conform to SFM 12-7A-2 and CBC Chapter 34.

Because so many fire deaths occur when occupants of residential buildings are asleep at the time of a fire, the California Building Code (CBC) requires that:

- basements with habitable space; and
- every sleeping room below the fourth story

shall have at least one operable window or exterior door opening approved for emergency escape and rescue. CBC Section 1026.4 requires rescue openings to be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys, tools, special knowledge or effort and requires that they open directly onto a street or public alley, or a yard or court located on the same lot as the building.

The net clear openable area (not “call out” size) shall be no less than 5.7 square feet with exceptions for below grade window openings and window wells. The net clear openable area may be reduced to 5 SF IF the windowsill is within 44” of grade.

In addition to the above requirement, the net clear openable height dimension shall be a minimum of 24 inches. The net clear openable width dimension shall be a minimum of 20 inches. (Note: using both minimum figures will not obtain the required 5.7 square feet.)

The finished sill height shall not be more than 44 inches above the floor.

Bars, grilles, grates or similar devices may be installed on emergency escape or rescue windows, doors or window wells, provided:

1. The devices are equipped with approved release mechanisms that are openable from the inside without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort; **and**
2. The building is equipped with smoke detectors installed in accordance with Section 907.2.10.1.

Note: if windowsill is more than 72” above grade **and** 24” or less above the floor, a guardrail may be required. CBC 1405.12.2.

The chart below summarizes the minimum window opening dimensions that will achieve a 5.7 square-foot opening.

**Examples of Minimum Width/Height Requirements for Emergency Escape and Rescue Windows (inches)**

Width	20	20.5	21	21.5	22	22.5	23	23.5	24	24.5	25	25.5	26	26.5	27
Height	41	40	39.1	38.2	37.3	36.5	35.7	34.9	34.2	33.5	32.8	32.2	31.6	31	30.4

Width	27.5	28	28.5	29	29.5	30	30.5	31	31.5	32	32.5	33	33.5	34	34.2
Height	29.8	29.3	28.8	28.3	27.8	27.4	26.9	26.5	26.1	25.7	25.3	24.9	24.5	24.1	24