

Window Replacement Requirements

REFERENCE

Municipal Code
24.02.120-1-97

DEFINITIONS

Window Framing - The window frame consists of the header, king stud, cripple stud, sill, and associated supports.

Permits and inspections

- Help keep your property safe
- Help assure the quality of your remodeling investment
- Are required by law

We'll answer your
questions about permits.

Contestaremos sus
preguntas referente a
permisos en Español.

Chúng tôi sẽ trả lời
thắc mắc về giấy phép của
quý vị bằng tiếng Việt.

San José Permit Center

San José City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San José, CA 95113
408-535-3555

www.sanjoseca.gov/building

DO WINDOW REPLACEMENTS REQUIRE A BUILDING PERMIT?

If any of the following conditions apply, a building permit is required to replace a window:

- **Window framing is altered** - See sidebar for a definition of "window frame."
- **Existing flashing is altered** - Such as when removing the nailing fin of an existing window.
- **Exterior wall finish is removed** - For example, when removing stucco to remove a window.

WINDOWS ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Whether or not a building permit is required, a Historic Preservation Permit is always needed to replace a window on a building that is listed on the City's [Historic Resources Inventory](#) or that is located in one of the [City Landmark Districts](#). Contact the Permit Center for information. Furthermore, requirements for energy, light, ventilation and egress must be accommodated as possible within the scope of work.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL WINDOW REPLACEMENTS

Whether or not a building permit is required, **the replacement window must conform to current construction standards**, including:

Window design. Even if the existing framing is not altered, the design of the replacement window must comply with current requirements for new construction as much as possible. When replacing a window that has become, for example, a noncomplying single-hung style, a new style must be chosen that is in compliance.

Window size. The replacement window must meet size regulations that apply to new construction. This includes the egress size required for emergency exit. If installed in an existing frame, then the replacement window must meet the dimension standards as much as possible. Current sizing is summarized below:

- *All habitable rooms* - Must have exterior windows with an area that totals a minimum of 8% of the room's floor area of the room for light and totals a minimum of 4% of the floor area for ventilation.

- *All sleeping rooms and basements* - Must meet these specifications:

- Minimum 5.7 square feet opening*
- Minimum height of 24 inches
- Minimum width of 20 inches
- Maximum height to bottom of clear opening of 44 inches

* In order to meet the required 5.7 square-foot opening, either the width or height or both must exceed the minimum dimensions shown. If bottom of clear opening is less than 44 inches above outdoor adjacent grade, then a minimum 5 square feet is acceptable.

Safety glass. New glazing in existing openings must be safety glass if the opening is in a hazardous location as defined in current standards for new construction.