



Professional Property Inspections

NEWSLETTER



What is an egress window?

An egress window provides a secondary way to get out of a room in the event of a fire. (It also enables a fireman to get into the room from the outside in the event of a fire.) These windows are required in basement bedrooms and basement living areas according to building code.

Here is a case in point: imagine you are in the basement in a bedroom or family room and there is only one set of steps to get out of the basement. A fire breaks out near the stairway on the first floor blocking the ability to get out of the basement. The secondary means of egress enables you to climb out of a window to safety, or conversely, enables a fireman to enter the space and save your life.

There are many specific requirements in terms of size and height and ease of access, one of which requires the window to be at least 5.7 square feet. By the way, sometimes we see egress windows enabling somebody to leave the building, however there is a steel grate on top of the window well outside the house, which is too heavy to lift, making it impossible to get out.

If you have finished living areas in your basement, including bedrooms, we recommend that you or a general contractor check your local code to make sure you are in compliance with this safety requirement.

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