



City of Raymore

Building Inspection Division
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Code Interpretation: 2012 IRC Interpretation 03

Date: Updated 1/8/2014

Code/ Edition: 2012 International Residential Code
2012 International Building Code

Section(s): IRC 310.1.2 & 310.1.3
IBC 1029.2.1

Subject: Emergency Escape and Rescue Windows

Question: Will a window opening comply with the requirements for emergency escape if its minimum net clear opening width dimension is 20 inches and its minimum net clear opening height dimension is 24 inches?

Answer: No

Commentary: To comply with the opening requirement (IRC 310.1), the window must also have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet, unless the window is a grade floor window in which case the minimum net clear opening is 5.0 square feet. The window opening size indicated in the question above only has a minimum net clear opening of 3.3 square feet. If the minimum allowable width of 20 inches is used then the height of the window opening shall be at least 41 inches. If the minimum allowable window height of 24 inches is used, then the width of the window opening shall be at least 34 inches.

There have been studies made that indicate that the minimum opening sizes listed in the code text are necessary in order for a fireman to maneuver through the window opening with full dress firefighting gear including breathing apparatus and possibly a victim

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