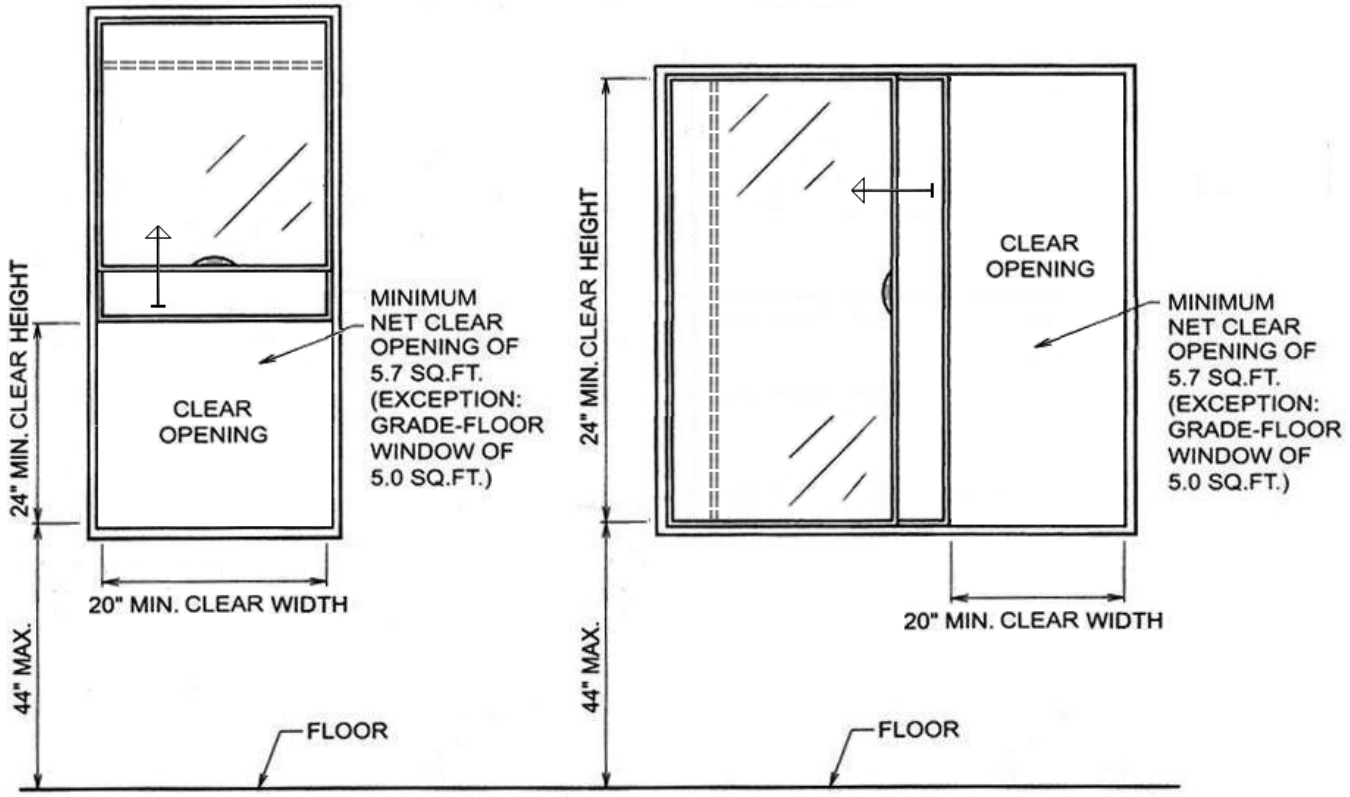
	City of Long Beach Department of Development Services Building and Safety Bureau **Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening in R-3 Occupancies**	Information Bulletin **BU-006** Eff: 01-01-2008 Rev: 04-20-2015

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to assist designers and owners to understand the specific emergency escape and rescue provisions of the 2013 California Residential Code (CRC). The requirement for emergency escape and rescue openings in R-3 occupancies (one- and two-family dwelling and townhouse not more than three stories above grade plane in height) is intended to address the spread of fire in rooms where occupants are typically asleep and unaware of the impeding fire and the normal exit channels may be blocked. This provision requires emergency escape and rescue openings (i.e., windows or doors) on the exterior of buildings where occupants may be sleeping during a potential fire buildup. The dimensional criteria and operational constraints of the openings are intended to permit fire service personnel, usually in full protective clothing and rescue equipment, to enter with minimal delay or obstruction, as well as permit all occupants within the building or facility to escape.

Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with CRC §R310. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency escape and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining areas of the basement. Such openings shall open directly into a public way or to a yard or court that opens to a public way. See below for illustration.

EMERGENCY ESCAPE WINDOW



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Dimensional criteria and operational constraints for emergency escape and rescue openings are provided as follows:

Minimum size. Pursuant to CRC §R310.1.1, emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of **5.7 square feet**, except the minimum net clear opening for emergency escape and rescue grade-floor openings shall be **5.0 square feet**. The definition of grade floor opening is "a window or other opening located such that the sill height of the opening is not more than **44 inches** above or below the finished **ground level** adjacent to the opening."

Minimum dimensions. Pursuant to CRC §R310.1.2 and §R310.1.3, the minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be **24 inches**. The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be **20 inches**. The net clear opening dimensions shall be the result of normal operation of the opening.

Maximum sill height from floor. Pursuant to CRC §R310.1, emergency escape and rescue openings shall have the bottom of the **clear opening*** not greater than **44 inches** measured from the floor. *(Note: This is usually the part of the window frame assembly that may be significantly higher than the window sill.)

Operational constraints. Pursuant to CRC §R310.1.4, emergency escape and rescue openings and any exit doors shall be maintained free of any obstruction other than those allowed by CRC §R310.1.4 and shall be operational from the inside of the room.

Bars, grilles, covers and screens. Bars, grilles, covers and screens or similar devices are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings provided the minimum net clear opening size complies with CRC §R310.1.1 to §R301.1.3 and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, special knowledge or effort or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening. The release mechanism shall be maintained operable at all times. Such bars, grilles, grates or any similar devices shall be equipped with an approved exterior release device for use by the Fire Department only when approved by the Building Official. Where security bars (burglar bars) are installed on emergency escape and rescue windows or doors, such devices shall comply with California Building Standards Code, Part 12, Chapter 12-3 and other applicable provisions of Part 2.

Tables with minimum clear width and height dimensions for emergency escape window. The following tables below are intended to assist designers and owners meet the minimum clear height and clear width dimensions necessary to achieve the required **5.7 square feet** opening per Table 1 or **5.0 square feet** opening per Table 2.

Table 1 (5.7 sq. ft.)

Min. Width	20.0	20.5	21.0	21.5	22.0	22.5	23.0	23.5	24.0	24.5	25.0	25.5	26.0	26.5	27.0
Min. Height	41.1	40.1	39.1	38.2	37.3	36.5	35.7	35.0	34.2	33.5	32.9	32.2	31.6	31.0	30.4
Min. Width	27.5	28.0	28.5	29.0	29.5	30.0	30.5	31.0	31.5	32.0	32.5	33.0	33.5	34.0	34.2
Min. Height	29.9	29.4	28.8	28.3	27.9	27.4	27.0	26.5	26.1	25.7	25.3	24.9	24.5	24.2	24.0

FOOTNOTE: Dimensions are in inches.

Table 2 (5.0 sq. ft.)

Min. Width	20.0	20.5	21.0	21.5	22.0	22.5	23.0	23.5	24.0	24.5	25.0	25.5	26.0	26.5	27.0
Min. Height	36.0	35.2	34.3	33.5	32.8	32.0	31.4	30.7	30.0	29.4	28.8	28.3	27.7	27.2	26.7
Min. Width	27.5	28.0	28.5	29.0	29.5	30.0									
Min. Height	26.2	25.8	25.3	24.9	24.5	24.0									

FOOTNOTE: Dimensions are in inches.