

Building Code Amended

On Friday, 1 September 2006, the Planning Department will begin to enforce the required size of at least one window in sleeping rooms, in accordance with the current Cayman Islands Building Code.

The code requires that at least one window in a sleeping room can be used as an emergency exit, explains the department's Chief Building Control Officer Emerson Piercy.

Therefore, section 1005.4 of the code sets the measurements for the minimum amount of space through which a person can climb out of this window. In the code, this is called the minimum net-clear opening.

"For upper-story windows, the revised regulations require a minimum net-clear opening of 20 inches in width, 24 inches in height and 5.7 square feet in total area," Mr. Piercy said. "Meanwhile, at least one window in a ground-floor sleeping room must have a minimum net-clear opening of 5 square feet."

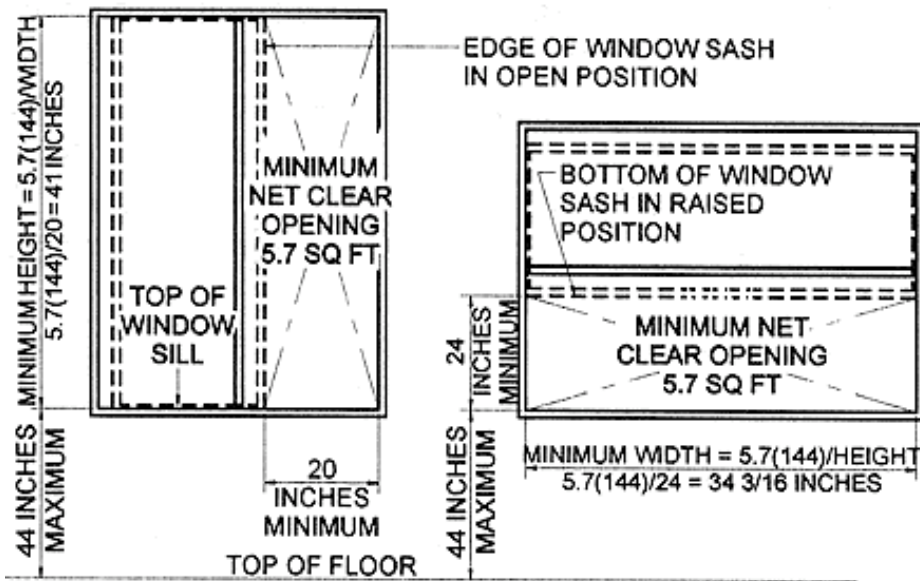
After 1 September 2006, all plans must specify the larger net-clear openings. "To comply with the code, contractors will be expected to meet all of the new requirements," Mr. Piercy said, noting that several commonly used windows no longer meet the requirements.

To ensure that the window is the correct size, a sheet from the window manufacturer's catalogue, showing the actual dimensioned clear opening for each type of exit window, should be provided with building-permit applications submitted after 1 September. Copies of such sheets can be requested from window suppliers.

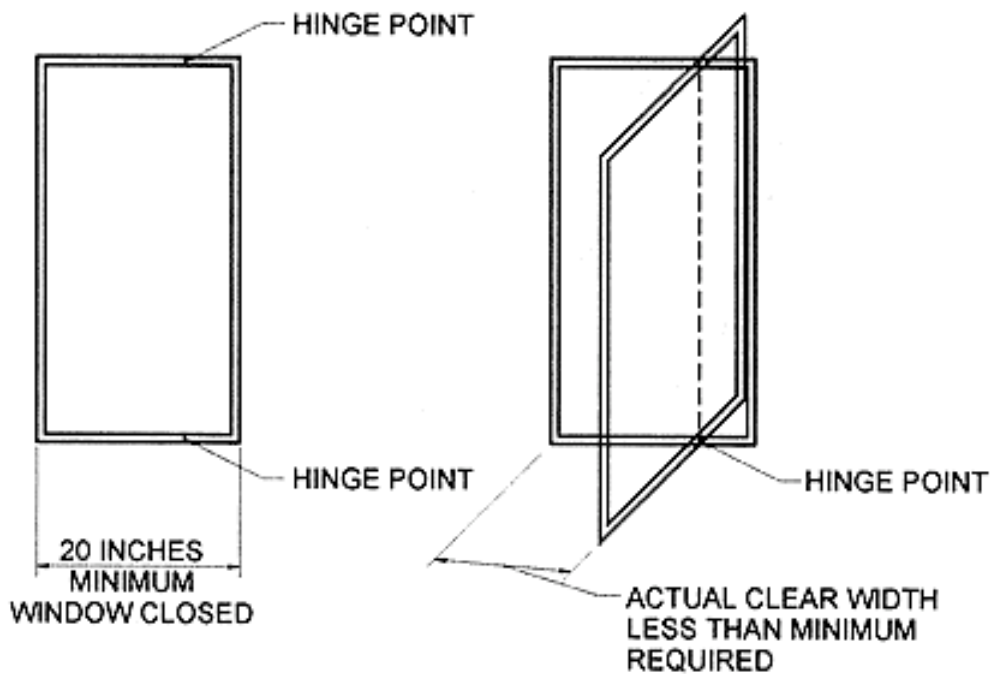
The current Cayman Islands Building Code is a revision of the 1994 version and consequently contains several amendments. To minimize the difficulties and hassle that industry personnel may face in adopting these revisions, the CI Planning Department has been phasing in the new sections, one at a time, over the past few years. Section 1005.4 is therefore, just the most recent of the amendments to be phased in.

On behalf of the department, Mr. Piercy thanked contractors and residents for their continued cooperation, which helps to create safe and structurally sound buildings in the Cayman Islands.

For more information about the code change, call the Planning Department at 769-PLAN (7526).



**FIGURE 1005.4.4A
EMERGENCY EGRESS OPENING DIMENSIONS**



**FIGURE 1005.4.4B
INSUFFICIENT OPENING SIZE EGRESS WINDOW**