

Replacement of Existing Glazing

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Code reference: 2023 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC)—Sections R102.7.1 and R102.7.2

Date: Issued—July 31, 1992
Last updated—Oct. 1, 2023

Subject: Replacement of existing glazing

Question/Answer:

When replacing glazing in existing buildings does the framed opening have to be altered to meet current code requirements for emergency egress or fall prevention?

No

Analysis:

Section R102.7.1 of the ORSC states in part that “additions or alterations shall not cause an existing structure to become less compliant with the provisions of this code than the existing building or structure was prior to the addition or alteration.”

Section R102.7.2 addresses repairs, and permits a legally existing structure, without unsafe conditions, that has been damaged by an event such as fire, wind, flood, earthquake, or similar to be reconstructed exactly as it existed prior to the damage. The path also specifies that certain reconstructed elements must adhere to current code requirements, where applicable in the damage correction, including, but not limited to; fall protection, hazardous glazing locations, and emergency escape and rescue openings.

Removing an existing window and replacing it with a new window that is the same size, provides an equal or greater net clear opening, and where no structural framing member is changed, does not trigger current escape and rescue requirements of Section R310.1 (also see Section R310.2.6 Replacement Windows) or fall prevention requirements of Section R312.2, nor does it create an “unsafe or adverse” condition. However, if the size of the opening is voluntarily altered, the window must meet the requirements in Section R310.1 and Section R312.2.

Whether or not the window’s structural opening size is altered, the new window is required to meet the current code provisions for safety glazing and energy efficiency found in the ORSC. Section R308.4 lists locations where safety glazing is required. There are also various exceptions for products, materials, and uses that may apply. Section N1104.4.4 requires, without application of the listed exceptions, that new windows in an existing building have a maximum thermal performance U-factor of 0.27.

Contact: Visit the division website to [contact a building code specialist](#).