

## BASEMENT FINISH INFORMATION SHEET

### Building Permits

Required for the conversion of any non-habitable (unfinished basement) into habitable space. This includes, but is not limited to; playrooms, bedrooms, recreation rooms, home offices, etc...

### Definition

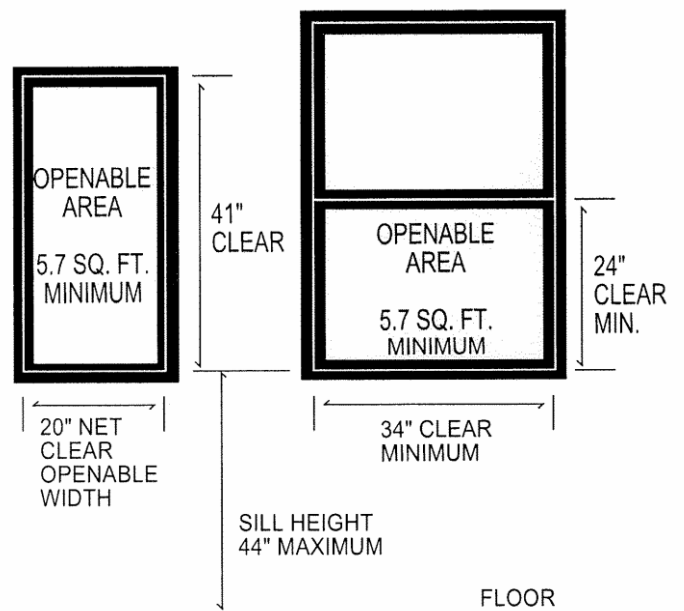
**Grade Floor Opening** - A window or other opening located such that the sill height of the opening is not more than 44 inches above or below the finished ground level adjacent to the opening.

**Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening** - An operable window, door or similar device that provides for a means of escape and access for rescue in the event of an emergency.

### Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

Basements with habitable space and *every* sleeping room shall have at least one open able emergency escape and rescue opening meeting all these requirements:

- Sill height not more than 44 inches above the floor.
- Net clear opening area not less than 5.7 square feet (**exception:** Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet.)
- Minimum opening height not less than 24 inches
- Minimum opening width not less than 20 inches
- Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools



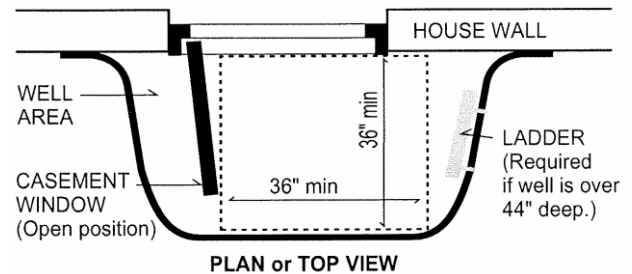
### Emergency Escape Window Wells Below Grade

The clear horizontal dimensions shall allow the window to be fully opened and provide a minimum accessible net clear opening of 9 square feet with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches.

Window wells with a vertical depth of more than 44 inches shall be equipped with an approved permanently affixed ladder or stairs that are accessible with the window in the fully open position. The ladder or stairs shall not encroach into the required dimensions of the window well by more than 6 inches. Ladders or rungs shall have an inside dimension of at least 12 inches. They must project at least 3 inches from the wall and be spaced not more than 18 inches on center vertically for the full height of the window well.

#### Minimum access WITH WINDOW FULLY OPEN:

36 inches measured horizontally from the foundation wall to the well and from the open windows inside surface to the well. *Note: 3 foot by 3 foot wells will not provide the required access for the casement windows.*



**Note:** Centering a window well at the window might not give you the *required* minimum 36 inches. **Measure carefully!**

### Walkout Doors as Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening, the following conditions shall apply:

- Bulkhead enclosures shall provide direct access to the basement and with the doors open shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet

## Bars, Grills, Covers and Screens

Bars, grills, cover, screens or similar devices are permitted to be placed over emergency escape and rescue openings, bulkhead enclosures, or window wells that serve such openings, provided the required minimum net clear opening size is maintained and such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool or force greater than that which is required for normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

## Minimum Room Areas

Habitable rooms shall have a floor area of not less than 70 square feet with a minimum dimension of 7 feet in any horizontal dimension.

## Ceiling Height

Habitable space in basements shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet from the finished floor; and beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions may project to within 6 feet, 8 inches of the finished floor.

Space in basement, other than habitable space (bathrooms, closets, hallways, storage and utility rooms may have a ceiling that projects to within 6 feet, 8 inches of the finished floor; and beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions in such space, may project to within 6 feet, 4 inches of the finished floor.

## Insulation and Moisture Vapor Retarders

- A moisture vapor retarder should be installed on/against the basement exterior foundation walls prior to framing.
- Basement exterior walls shall be insulated a minimum R-11

## Bathrooms

- Bathrooms shall be provided with aggregate glazing area in windows of not less than 3 square feet, one half of which must be able to open or artificial light and a mechanical ventilation system capable of exhausting 50 cfm directly to the outside.
- Toilets and sinks are required to have not less than 21 inches of clearance in front of the fixture and not less than 15 inches of clear space from the centerline of the fixture on each side.
- Shower compartments shall have at least 900 square inches of interior cross-sectional area with not less than 30 inches in minimum dimension measured from the finished interior dimension of the shower compartment.
- Bathtub and shower floors and walls above bathtubs with installed shower heads and in shower compartments shall be finished with a non-absorbent surface. Such wall surfaces shall extend to a height of not less than 6 feet above the floor.
- All plumbing fixtures installed in a basement must be protected by a sanitary backflow preventer.

## Fuel Burning Appliances

If new walls are enclosing the existing furnace and hot water heater, adequate combustion air must be provided for these appliances to operate properly. Fuel-fired appliances shall not be located in, or contain combustion air from, any of the following rooms or spaces:

- Sleeping rooms
- Bathrooms
- Toilet rooms
- Storage closets

Fuel burning appliances shall be accessible for inspection, service, repair and replacement without removing permanent construction. 30 inches of working space shall be provided in front of the control side to service an appliance.

The appliance manufacturer's specification manual should be reviewed for further product specific requirements.

## Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors are required in each sleeping room, outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms and on each story of the dwelling, including the basement. Smoke detectors shall be hard-wired with battery backup and interconnected to existing hard-wired smoke detectors.

## Electrical Inspections

All electrical installations must be inspected by one of the following Town of Walworth approved agencies:

- Commonwealth Electrical Inspection Service, Inc.  
Main Office 585-624-2380  
Local inspector-Bill Schell 585-746-7030(cell)
- Middle Department Inspection Agency  
Main Office 585-454-5191  
Local inspector-Steve Haak 800-641-6342
- New York Electrical Inspection Agency  
Main Office 585-436-4460  
Local Inspector-Mike Shumway 585-729-2779 (cell)  
Local Inspector-Fritz Gunther 585-230-4186 (cell)

## Inspections

**Framing** - upon completion of framing of walls, posts, beams, etc. - prior to insulation.

**Under-slab Plumbing** - for new drain/waste/vent lines installed under the concrete floor - backflow preventer.

**Rough Plumbing** - for new drain/waste/vent lines that will be concealed once completed.

**Rough Electric** - see above

**Insulation** - wall insulation, heating ductwork and smoke detector locations.

**Final Electric** - see above

**Final** - Certificate of Compliance

# Sample Basement Finish Plan

Show *electrical outlets, switches & lights* locations.

*Insulate* basement exterior walls a minimum R-11.

*Install vapor retarder* on/against block wall prior to framing.

Construct all walls on *treated plates*.

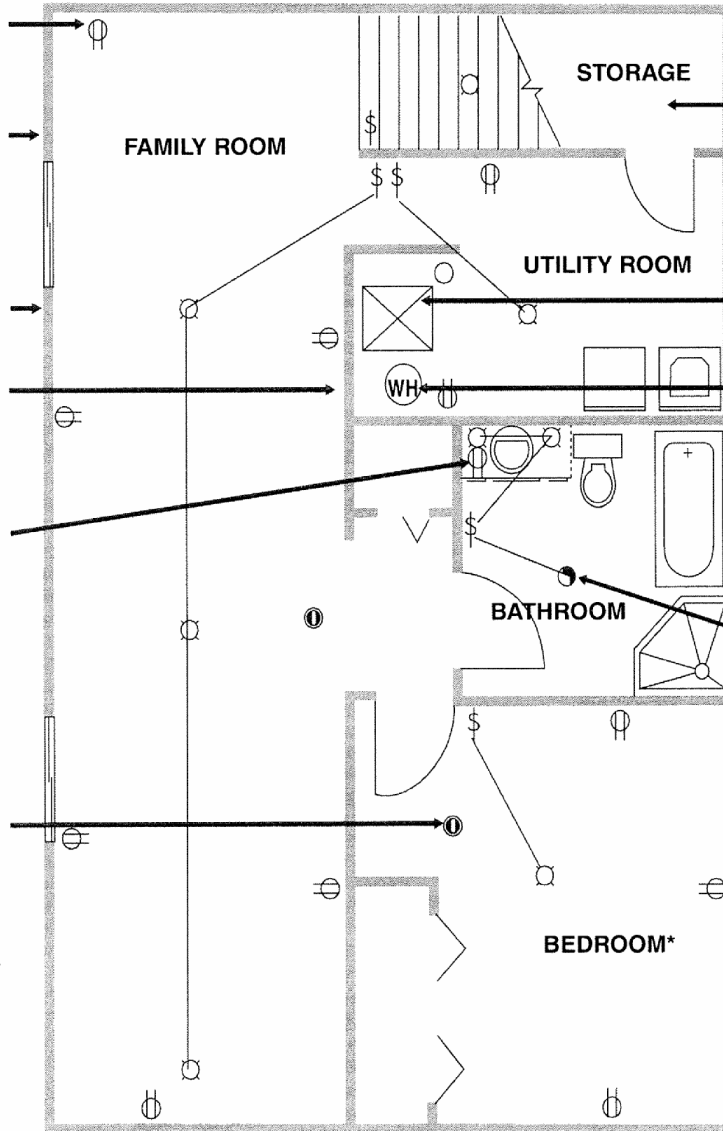
*GFCI outlet* is required in bathroom and mechanical equipment room.

*Smoke detectors* required in each sleeping room, outside of every sleeping area and on every story. Must be interconnected, hardwired and battery backup.

*Label uses* of each room on plan.

Minimum *ceiling height* is 7' with 6'-8" allowed for projections such as beams and ducts.

Gas-fired furnace or water heater cannot be in a bedroom, bathroom or closet.



*Protect enclosed accessible spaces* under stairs on enclosed side with 1/2" gypsum board.

*Provide combustion air* to furnace and 30" clear working space in front of furnace

A *water heater* must be able to be removed with the furnace intact. Keep 30" clear space in front of water heater.

A *bathroom fan* is required unless there is an open-able window. Insulate the fan duct a minimum of 4' from the outside of the house rim.

Show *window sizes*. Egress window required in each bedroom. Egress size: 5.7 sq. ft. of open-able area with 20" min. width and 24" min. height. Sill no more than 44" above floor.

*Supply and return air* is required for all habitable rooms.

This information is a guide to the most common questions. It is not intended, nor shall it be considered, a complete set of requirements.