

CODE SPECIFICATIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL BASEMENT FINISHING

Minimum room sizes and spaces:

- Bedrooms to be a minimum 70 total sq. ft. with a minimum 7' dimension.
- Ceiling height to be 7' minimum.
- 21" clear space in front of toilet and 15" to each side of center.
- 900 sq. inch shower floor area and minimum 30" dimension one side. Minimum 22" door with a minimum 24" in front of the door.
- 36" finished width for hallways.
- NOTE! Any lesser dimensions must be approved at time of application.

Construction Materials

- Sole plate (wood on concrete) must be redwood or treated.
- Beams must be sized for weight carried.-
- Max stud spacing 24" on center non-bearing.

Window Minimums

- Size of existing windows must be at least 8% of room area for natural light and ventilation.
- Each bedroom must have one window for emergency egress - minimum 5.7 sq. ft. actual opening (minimum 20" wide and 24" tall). Height of sill above floor must be 44" or less. (Bedroom door to the outside is an alternate escape.)
- Tempered glass is required when window is located within 24" of edge of doors, or if it is less than 60" measured vertically above any floor or walking surface.
- Egress window wells must measure 36" out from the house. If bottom of window well to top of window well is more than 44" a permanently affixed ladder is required.

Stairway Minimums

- 36" finished width.
- 6'8" head clearance (measured upwards from tread nosing).
- 8" maximum riser height, 4" minimum.
- 9" minimum tread extension measured tread nosing to next tread nosing.
- 34" to 38" height for handrails (required with 4 or more risers). Handrails must return to wall or post.
- 36" high guardrails with less than 4" spacing between intermediate rails (required beside landings & elevated floors of more than 30").
- Walls and ceiling under stairway are to be drywalled with

5/8" drywall.

Electrical

- Tamper-resistant receptacle outlets must be provided so any point along a wall does not exceed 6' distance to an outlet.
- Small wall sections between doors require an outlet when 2 ft or wider.
- GFCI protection device must be provided for a receptacle outlets required at the bathroom basin, above kitchen counters, within 6' of a sink, outlets supplying the dishwasher, and in laundry areas.
- A switch controlled light must be provided at hallways, stairways, exits and in each room.
- A smoke detector must be installed in each sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms, and shall be interconnected with the main dwelling.
- The smoke detector must be installed at least 3 feet away from the door to a bathroom. The smoke detector must clear permanently installed cooking appliances at 20 feet for an ionization-type smoke alarm or 6 feet for a photoelectric-type smoke alarm.
- A carbon monoxide detector shall be installed outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms. A combination smoke detector/carbon monoxide is allowed.
- A receptacle outlet must be provided at each section of kitchen countertop 12" or wider there must be a minimum of two (2) dedicated countertop circuits.

Plumbing

- All fixtures must be properly trapped and vented.
- No lead or acid bearing solders are allowed.
- Clothes washer P-trap must be minimum 6" above the floor.

Insulation

- **Vapor barriers over insulation are not allowed in basements on below-grade foundation walls.**
- If outside cold air is supplied into the mechanical room through an opening to the exterior, insulation is required (R-15 walls; R-30 ceiling) with a barrier (visqueen, building paper, drywall). The door is to be sealed on 4 sides. Water lines and ducts within the room are to be insulated.
- The combustion air duct shall be insulated where is

passes through conditioned space with R-8 minimum. This includes where it is located within the floor joists.

- Clothes washer P-trap must be minimum 6" above the floor.

Gas Furnaces and Water Heaters

- May not be located in bedrooms, bathrooms or similar confined rooms. Furnace rooms may not open into such rooms.
- Each appliance must be removable without moving the other.
- Must have minimum 30" clear work space in front of controls; minimum 6" clearance from firebox to combustibles.
- Show how existing combustion air is being taken (must be adequate for new use and not obstructed in any way).

Wood Stoves and Fireplaces

Must be installed with clearances to combustibles as specified in their listing requirements or as follows:

- Fireplaces must be listed, clearances will be according to the listed appliance manufacturers specifications.
- One-piece non-combustible hearth over a combustible floor with min. 16" extension beyond front and 8" beyond sides of appliance door.
- Combustible chase containing a metal firebox and chimney must be lined with sheetrock, where open to an attic or floor cavity.
- Chimney must extend to 2 feet above combustible roofing located within 10 feet.

Fireblocking

- Must be installed horizontally at ceiling, and vertically every 10 feet. <http://herriman.org/wp-documents/building/basement/Fireblocking.pdf>
- Foam or fiberglass insulation in all top plate penetrations for electrical and plumbing.