



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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## **INSTALLATION GUIDELINES FOR GLASS BLOCK CLOSURE OF BASEMENT WINDOWS**

**NEW BASEMENTS:** The 2006 International Residential Code (Section R310) requires basements and every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Such openings shall open directly into a public street, public alley, yard or court.

### **EXISTING BASEMENTS:**

1.) A typical existing basement, with only one exit, may have all but one basement window replaced with glass block. If only one window remains operable, then a “vent block” must be provided in each of the glass block assemblies to maintain adequate venting potential. (It is recommended that the operable window face a neighbor or the street for security purposes.)

**EXCEPTION:** All basement windows may be closed with glass block if vent blocks are provided in each assembly AND, at a minimum, a battery-operated smoke detector is installed in a central area of the basement or in the ceiling adjacent to the bottom of the basement stairs.

2.) If an existing basement has 2 exits (either 2 stairs up to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor or a stair to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and an exit door directly outside from the basement level), then all the windows may be replaced with glass block assemblies provided that the potential for cross-ventilation is retained.

3.) “Cellar” hatch-type exits from basements will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine the ability to unlatch and lift the doors in all weather conditions. A pre-inspection, by the Area Building Inspector, of such a condition is recommended to avoid problems after work has begun.

To contact the Area Building Inspector: call between 7:30-9:00am, Monday-Friday, 651-266-9002.

Permit Inspections: The name and phone number of the Area Building Inspector will be on your permit receipt and the permit card.