

## INFORMAL CODE INTERPRETATION

NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
1202 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1202  
919-661-5880

### Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening Minimum Size

**Code:** 2012 Residential Code

**Date:** July 2, 2012

**Section:** R310.1.1

**Question:**

What is the difference in the 4.0 square feet minimum net clear opening requirement and the minimum glass area requirement for emergency escape and rescue openings?

**Answer:**

The 4.0 square feet minimum net clear opening refers to the opening required when the sash is in the fully open position. This opening is expected to be used by the occupant for emergency escape.

The 5.0 and 5.7 minimum glass area requirement is the size of the window opening when all the sashes are removed. This opening size is based on the minimum required opening for a rescue worker to enter and remove an occupant. Also it expected that the rescue worker has the equipment required to knock the sash(s) out for access. The 5.7 square feet opening size for the second and third floors is to account for the additional area needed to dismount a ladder and enter the opening.

**Keywords:**

firemen, glazing