



PERMITS FOR FINISHED BASEMENTS

(Rec Room, Den, Office, Bedroom, Bath, etc.)

This section is intended to help the homeowner plan the construction and obtain the permit to finish a basement. Construction plans will be required. The plans shall comply with the specifications detailed in the following outline of requirements. Proper dimensions must be noted with the construction detail. A description of each room shall be indicated on the plans.

Permit applications can be dropped off during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. When the permit has been approved, you will be notified of the total fee, payable upon permit issuance. The Inspector can be reached during regular office hours of 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. daily. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Inspection Services at (262) 250-4760.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

(1) ITEMS TO BE SHOWN ON PLAN

- (A) Plans to be drawn to 1/4" = 1' scale.
- (B) Provide building section showing all sizes/materials used. Show fire stopping method used at top of wall.
- (C) Location of new walls:
 - (1) Type of studs. (wood, steel, etc.)
 - (2) Size and spacing of studs.
 - (3) Size of headers in load bearing walls.
- (D) Type of ceiling to be used. (suspended, drywall, etc.)
- (E) The use of each room. Existing rooms and new rooms must be indicated. (rec room, office, utility, furnace, storage, bedroom, bath, den, etc.)
- (F) The location of furnace, water heater and smoke alarm.
- (G) Square footage of the area to be finished.
- (H) Location and size of doors.
- (I) Location and size of windows.
- (J) Ceiling height.

(2) CODE REQUIREMENTS

- (A) Provide access to all dampers in ducts, gas valves, water shutoffs, electric junction boxes, chimney and plumbing cleanouts.
- (B) Provide access to electric service panel. Minimum 30" wide by 36" deep in front of the panel. Provide a light above/near panel for service work.
- (C) Any foam insulation used must be covered with 1/2" drywall. The 1/2" drywall equals a fifteen minute thermal barrier.
- (D) Common use area doors, such as to basement, rec room, family room, utility room, etc., must be at least 2'8" by 6'8" or have a net clear opening of 30".
- (E) Ceiling height minimum requires 50% of square footage to be at least 7'.

- (F) Provide cold air returns equal in area to supply air from heat runs. System must provide a minimum of one air change per hour. A separate exhaust fan/outside air source may be required.
- (G) Provide air grills in walls or louvered doors to supply combustion air to furnace and water heater if needed. If a confined space is created, see SPS 323.06.
- (H) If a room in a basement is intended to be used as a bedroom, the natural light, ventilation and egress requirements must be met.
 - (1) 8% of bedroom square footage in natural light.
 - (2) 3.5% of bedroom square footage in openable window.
 - (3) Egress requirements as established in SPS 321.03 (6) can be found on page 3.
- (I) Bathrooms require exhaust ventilation to the outside.
- (J) Vapor barriers are NOT to be used over insulation in walls below grade. (Moisture problems have occurred causing mold and mildew.)

(3) ADDITIONAL PERMITS REQUIRED

- (A) An electrical permit is required for all new electrical work. Only a licensed electrician may take out the permit and do the work. Minimum permit fee is \$53.00.
- (B) A plumbing permit is required for all new plumbing work. A licensed plumber or the homeowner/occupant may take out the permit and do the work. Minimum permit fee is \$53.00.
- (C) An HVAC permit is required for all changes to the existing system for heating, cooling and ventilation.

(4) INSPECTIONS REQUIRED

SPS 320.10 (3) Inspection Types. The following sequence of inspections shall be performed for the purpose of determining if the work complies with this code.

SPS 320.10 (3) (f) Rough Inspection. A rough inspection shall be performed for each inspection category listed in sub. 2. a. through d. after the rough work is constructed but before it is concealed. All categories of work for rough inspections may be completed before the notice for inspection is provided. The applicant may request one rough inspection or individual rough inspections.

- a. general construction, including framing
- b. rough electrical
- c. rough plumbing
- d. rough heating, ventilating and air conditioning

SPS 320.10 (3) (g) Insulation Inspection. An inspection of the insulation shall be done once installed but before concealment.

SPS 320.10 (3) (h) Final Inspection. Final inspections are required for all of the above mentioned categories of work. Also, as noted above, the applicant may request one final inspection for all categories or individual final inspections. Furnishings shall not be placed in any of the newly constructed rooms until final inspections have been made.

(5) EGRESS REQUIREMENTS

SPS 321.03 (5) Exits From Ground Floors.

(a) Ground floors which are not used for sleeping shall be provided with at least one exit. The exit may be a swing door or a sliding glass door which discharges directly to grade or may be via a stairway which leads to the first floor.

(b) Ground floors which include spaces used for sleeping shall be provided with at least two exits. The two exits shall not be accessed by the same stairway or ramp and shall be located as far apart as practical. One exit shall discharge to grade. The second exit may be via a stairway or ramp which leads to the first floor. Windows which comply with sub. (6) may be provided in each ground floor bedroom in lieu of the second exit from the ground floor.

SPS 321.03 (6) Windows Used For Exiting. Windows which are installed for exit purposes shall comply with the requirements of this subsection.

(a) The window shall be openable from the inside without the use of tools or the removal of a sash. If equipped with a storm or screen, it shall be openable from the inside.

(b) 1. The nominal size of the net clear window opening shall be at least 20 inches in width by 24 inches in height. Nominal dimensions shall be determined by rounding up fractions of inches if they are 1/2 inch or greater or rounding down fractions if they are less than 1/2 inch.

2. Except as provided in sub. 3., no portion of the window, including stops, stools, meeting rails and operator arms of awning windows, shall infringe on the required opening.

3. The movable sash of casement windows may infringe on the required opening width. The net clear opening width of casement windows shall be measured between the stops.

(c) The area and dimension requirements of par. (b) may be infringed on by a storm window.

(d) The sill height shall not be more than 46 inches above the floor or the top of a permanent platform, with or without steps, installed below the window. The platform and steps, if provided, shall be as wide as the actual egress opening and have a minimum tread depth of 9 inches and maximum riser height of 8 inches.

(e) If a window which is provided as an exit is located below grade, then an areaway shall be provided. The width of the areaway shall be at least equal to the width of the exit window. The bottom of the areaway shall not be more than 46 inches below grade. The areaway shall be a minimum of 3 feet measured perpendicular from the wall. The areaway shall be constructed to prevent rainfall flowing into the areaway from entering the dwelling.

When new codes are established by the State of Wisconsin these will be marked on your building plans at permit application/plan review.