

## Construction Tip Sheet 5

### Window Fall Prevention Device

The following sections are from the 2009 IRC code applicable to one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses within the scope of R101.2. For commercial projects containing group R-2 and R-3, see 2009 IBC section 1405.13.2

**R612.2 Window sills.** In *dwelling* units, where the opening of an operable window is located more than 72 inches (1829 mm) above the finished *grade* or surface below, the lowest part of the clear opening of the window shall be a minimum of 24 inches (610 mm) above the finished floor of the room in which the window is located. Operable sections of windows shall not permit openings that allow passage of a 4 inch (102 mm) diameter sphere where such openings are located within 24 inches (610 mm) of the finished floor.

**Exceptions:**

1. Windows whose openings will not allow a 4-inch diameter (102 mm) sphere to pass through the opening when the opening is in its largest opened position.
2. Openings that are provided with window fall prevention devices that comply with [Section R612.3](#).
3. Openings that are provided with fall prevention devices that comply with ASTM F 2090.
4. Windows that are provided with opening limiting devices that comply with [Section R612.4](#).

**R612.3 Window fall prevention devices.** Window fall prevention devices and window guards, where provided, shall comply with the requirements of ASTM F 2090.

**R612.4 Window opening limiting devices.** When required elsewhere in this code, window opening limiting devices shall comply with the provisions of this section.

**R612.4.1 General requirements.** Window opening limiting devices shall be self acting and shall be positioned to prohibit the free passage of a 4-in. (102-mm) diameter rigid sphere through the window opening when the window opening limiting device is installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

**R612.4.2 Operation for emergency escape.** Window opening limiting devices shall be designed with release mechanisms to allow for emergency escape through the window opening without the need for keys, tools or special knowledge. Window opening limiting devices shall comply with all of the following:

1. Release of the window opening-limiting device shall require no more than 15 pounds (66 N) of force.
2. The window opening limiting device release mechanism shall operate properly in all types of weather.
3. Window opening limiting devices shall have their release mechanisms clearly identified for proper use in an emergency.
4. The window opening limiting device shall not reduce the minimum net clear opening area of the window unit below what is required by Section R310.1.1 of the code.

**R612.5 Performance.** Exterior windows and doors shall be designed to resist the design wind loads specified in Table R301.2(2) adjusted for height and exposure per Table R301.2(3).

