**Background**

In 2007, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law requiring that the State Building Code be amended to require that window fall prevention devices be installed in certain buildings (MS 326B.106 Subd.7). As a result, on July 1, 2009, the code was amended to require window fall prevention devices to be installed on certain windows in new one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses.

**Legislative changes**

During the 2021 Legislative special session, a law was passed amending Minnesota Statutes section 326B.106 subdivision 7, that establishes when window fall prevention devices are not required to be installed in one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses. This law went into effect on July 1, 2021.

**The effect of the new 2021 law on the 2020 Minnesota Residential Code**

The new law supersedes the 2020 Minnesota Residential Code requirements for window fall prevention devices. All references to sill heights of 36 inches are effectively replaced with 24 inches as shown below. The actual Minnesota Residential Code will be updated when the 2024 International Residential Code is adopted.

R312.2.1 Window sills.

In dwelling units, where the lowest part of the opening of an operable window is located more than 72 inches above the finished grade or surface below, the lowest part of the window opening shall be a minimum of 24 inches 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-diameter sphere where such openings are located within 24 inches of the finished floor.

**Exceptions:**

1. Windows with openings that will not allow a 4-inch-diameter sphere to pass through the opening when the window is in its largest opened position.
2. Openings that are provided with window fall prevention devices that comply with ASTM F2090.
3. Windows that are provided with window opening control devices that comply with Section R312.2.2.
4. Replacement windows.
**Illustrated explanation**

Below are examples of casement, double-hung and glider window types that comply with minimum-size emergency escape and rescue openings required by code. These examples show when window fall prevention devices are not required for either type of window when the lowest part of the window opening is 72 inches or more above the grade or surface below and the lowest part of the window opening is 24 inches or more above the finished floor.

Other window sizes where the lowest part of the window opening is 72 inches or more above the grade or surface below and lower than 24 inches above the finished floor, require code complying window fall prevention devices. Window fall prevention devices must automatically reset after opening the window to the extent that a 4-inch-diameter sphere may pass through.

**Window Fall Prevention**

This drawing is not drawn to scale

*From window manufactures product guide*