

For permit questions and inspections call: 507.388.4224

Residential Basement Finishing

Purpose: This guide is intended to provide common building code related information including relevant figures when performing construction work as listed under the Permit Scope. It is provided for informational purposes and shall not be construed as an all-encompassing list of applicable code provisions for complete code compliance.

Permit Scope: Completing an alteration or finishing an existing basement within a one or two-family dwelling.

- All basement alterations and finish projects will require a plan to be submitted for plan review before a building permit can be issued. The plan for finishing a basement shall include:
 1. The basement layout, including identification of rooms.
 2. Dimensions of each room, including length, width, and height. Please include any deviations in height due to mechanical or plumbing equipment such as so fits and bulkheads.
 3. Dimensions of stairways, including: headroom, stair width, tread depth and riser height including dimension of the tallest and shortest stair risers.
 4. Framing information for non-load and load bearing walls, including: stud size and on-center-spacing, location and size of columns and beams. Engineered beam products should have design specifications submitted at time of application. Lower framing in contact with concrete shall be of treated lumber.
 5. Location and dimensions of egress windows or doors, including height of window from the finished floor below, and the size of the window well if applicable. Window wells must allow the egress window to be fully openable and provide no less than a 3' x 3' size well. If wells are at or deeper than 44" to the grade plane, a ladder will be required.
 6. Location of mechanical equipment including existing or new ducts and registers.
 7. Energy information, including: insulation materials and R-values for each material being proposed by location, type and location of vapor barrier if applicable. Existing home foundation prior to June 2009 are exempt from the Minnesota Energy Code regulations. Applicant may choose the insulation type, if any and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Protection of specific insulation types and vapor barrier location will be enforced by project.
 8. Location of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
 9. A separate electrical permit is required through the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry for electrical work. Verification of electrical inspections will be determined during building inspections.

- Minimum finished ceiling heights in existing basement, unless determined as technically infeasible by the Building Official shall meet the following dimensions:
 1. The finished ceiling height shall be a minimum 6'- 4", including beams, girders, ducts, or other obstructions.
 2. A minimum 6'- 4" headroom is required in all parts of the stairway.
 3. Bathrooms shall have a minimum 6'- 4" headroom at the center of the required clearance areas for tubs, showers, vanities and water closets.

- Sleeping or bedrooms shall meet the following minimum requirements:
 1. Minimum floor area of 70 square feet, with a minimum of 7' length in any horizontal dimension.
 2. Minimum one operable emergency escape and rescue opening.
 3. Smoke detectors are required within each bedroom as well as outside of each bedroom in the immediate vicinity.
 4. Smoke detectors shall be hardwired and interconnected with battery backup.

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5. Carbon Monoxide detectors are required outside and not more than 10 feet from each bedroom.
 6. There must be a permanent heat source capable of safely maintaining a temperature of 68° F in the room.
 7. Fuel burning appliances shall not be located in or obtain combustion air from (have a door directly leading to) a bedroom or bathroom unless: appliances are direct-vent and obtain all combustion air from the outdoors or appliances are located in a dedicated enclosure in which all combustion air is taken directly from the outdoors and access to such enclosure shall be through a solid weather-stripped door equipped with a self-closing device.
- Any door leading from the home directly into a garage must be a minimum 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ " solid wood, solid or honeycomb steel, or a 20-minute fire-rated door. Doors from a garage directly into a room used for sleeping purposes shall not be permitted. (Section R302.5) Approved corrosion-resistant flashing shall be applied shingle-fashion to prevent entry of water into the wall cavity or structural framing components per Section R703.8. The flashing shall extend to the surface of the exterior wall nish. Approved corrosion resistant flashing shall be installed at the following locations:
1. Exterior window and door openings. Flashing shall extend to the surface of the exterior wall finish or to the water resistive barrier for drainage.
 2. Flashing shall be installed under and at the ends of masonry, wood, or metal copings and sills.
 3. Flashing shall be installed continuously above all projecting wood trim.
- Fire-protection requirements:
1. Enclosed accessible space under the stairs shall have walls, under-stair surface, and any soffits protected on the enclosed side with minimum $\frac{1}{2}$ " gypsum board or equivalent.
 2. In combustible construction where there is usable space both above and below the concealed space of a floor-ceiling assembly, draft stops shall be installed so that the area of the concealed space does not exceed 1,000 square feet. Draft stopping shall divide the concealed space into approximately equal areas. Draft stopping materials shall be not less than 1/2 inch gypsum board, 3/8 inch wood structural panels or other approved materials adequately supported.
 3. In concealed vertical and horizontal spaces, fire-blocking may be required.