



DEPARTMENT OF
NEIGHBORHOOD
SERVICES

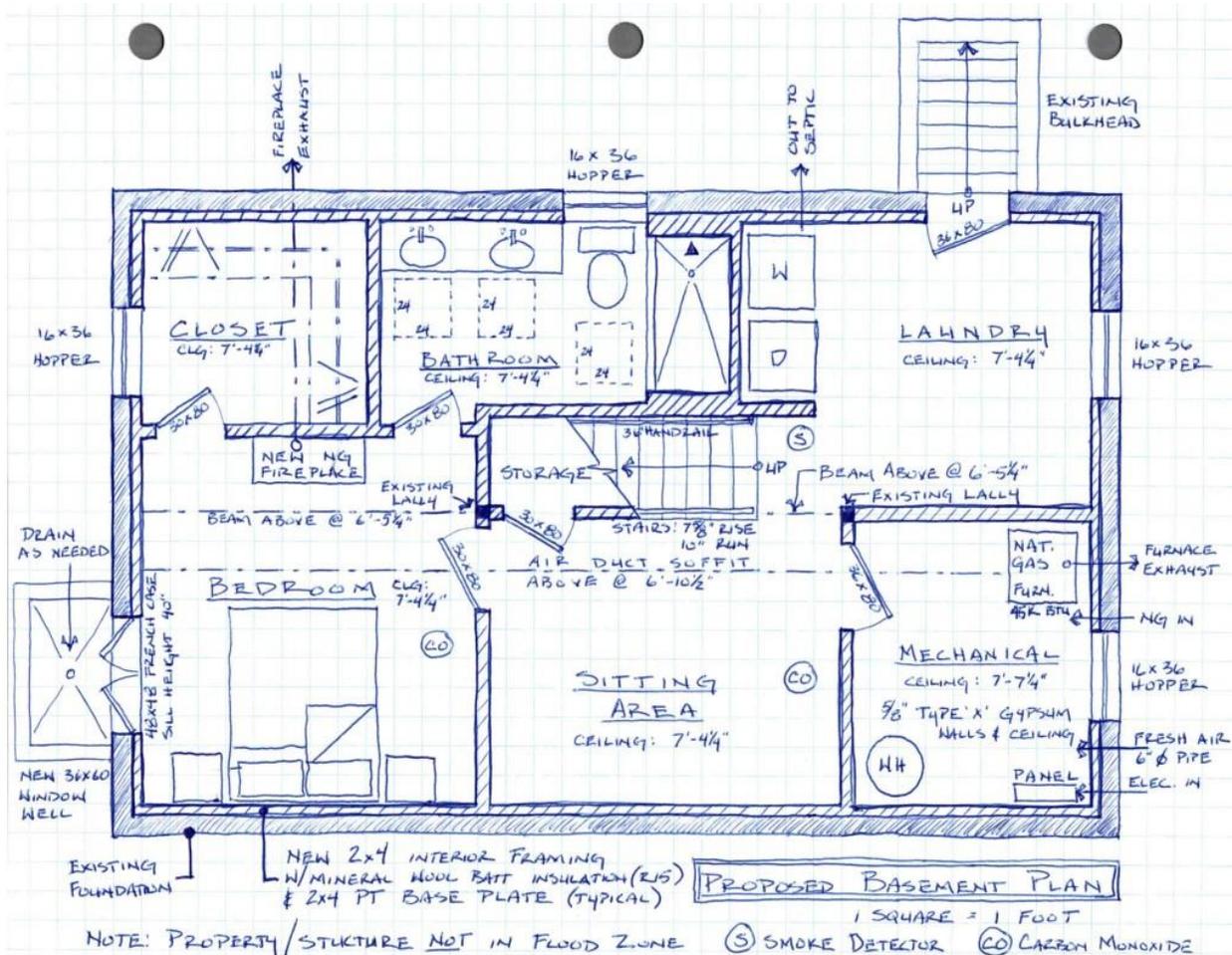
2023

Basement Handout

Acceptable Information for the Successful Renovation of an Unfinished Basement in 1 & 2 Family Residences and Townhouses

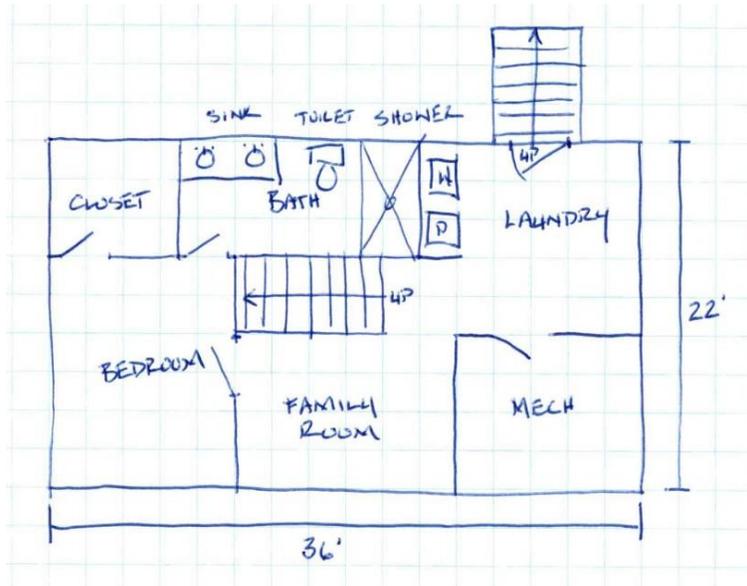
BEFORE YOU START: Please verify the finished height of your basement will be 6'-8" (min) and access stairs to the basement are in conformance with the 2022 CTIRC.

Acceptable Proposed Plan



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Plan without Enough Information



**Examples of Egress Windows for Habitable Basements
[Interior]**



Window sill above 44". Adding a non-movable, permanent ledge that is equal to the width of the window.



Window sill at or below 44"

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Examples of Egress Windows for Habitable Basements [Exterior]



Example of a pre-manufactured Egress Window Well with integrated stepped wall 44" deep or greater.



Pre-manufactured window well not deeper than 44".

Applicable Code Sections

R310.2 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

[Emergency escape and rescue openings](#) shall have minimum dimensions in accordance with Sections [R310.2.1](#) through [R310.2.4](#).

R310.2.1 Minimum Size

Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a net clear opening of not less than 5.7 square feet (0.530 m²).

Exceptions:

1. *Grade floor openings* or below grade openings *shall* have a net clear opening of not less than 5 square feet (0.465 m²)
2. Existing *buildings* undergoing *alterations* or installation of replacement windows *shall* be permitted to utilize removable sash to achieve the required minimum net clear openings. Such removable sash *shall* be capable of being removed without the use of a key or tool.

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R310.2.2 Minimum Dimensions

The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be 24 inches (610 mm). The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be 20 inches (508 mm). The net clear opening dimensions shall be the result of normal operation of the opening.

R310.2.3 Maximum Height From Floor

Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have the bottom of the clear opening not greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) above the floor.

Exception: The 44-inch (1118 mm) maximum sill height *shall* be permitted to be measured vertically above a fixed, permanent platform, step or steps whose minimum width *shall* equal or exceed the operable width of the opening and *shall* be centered on such opening and which *shall* comply with Sections R311.7.5.1 and R311.7.5.2. Glazing in windows complying with this exception *shall* not be subject to the provisions of Section R308.4.6 or R308.4.7.

R310.2.4 Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings Under Decks, Porches and Cantilevers

[Emergency escape and rescue openings](#) installed under decks, porches and cantilevers shall be fully openable and provide a path not less than 36 inches (914 mm) in height and 36 inches (914 mm) in width to a [yard](#) or [court](#).

R310.3 Emergency Escape and Rescue Doors

Where a door is provided as the required [emergency escape and rescue opening](#), it shall be a side-hinged door or a sliding door.

R310.4 Area Wells

An [emergency escape and rescue opening](#) where the bottom of the clear opening is below the adjacent [grade](#) shall be provided with an area well in accordance with Sections [R310.4.1](#) through [R310.4.4](#)

R310.4.1 Minimum Size

The horizontal area of the area well shall be not less than 9 square feet (0.9 m²), with a horizontal projection and width of not less than 36 inches (914 mm). The size of the area well shall allow the [emergency escape and rescue opening](#) to be fully opened.

Exception: The ladder or steps required by [Section R310.4.2](#) shall be permitted to encroach not more than 6 inches (152 mm) into the required dimensions of the area well.

R310.4.2 Ladder and Steps

Area wells with a vertical depth greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) shall be equipped with an [approved](#), permanently affixed ladder or steps. The ladder or steps shall not be obstructed by the [emergency escape and rescue opening](#) where the window or door is in the open position. Ladders or steps required by this section shall not be required to comply with [Section](#)

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[R311.7](#).

R310.4.2.1 Ladders

Ladders and rungs shall have an inside width of not less than 12 inches (305 mm), shall project not less than 3 inches (76 mm) from the wall and shall be spaced not more than 18 inches (457 mm) on center vertically for the full height of the area well.

R310.4.2.2 Steps

Steps shall have an inside width of not less than 12 inches (305 mm), a minimum tread depth of 5 inches (127 mm) and a maximum [riser](#) height of 18 inches (457 mm) for the full height of the area well.

R310.4.3 Drainage

Area wells shall be designed for proper drainage by connecting to the building's foundation drainage system required by [Section R405.1](#).

Exception: A drainage system for area wells is not required where the foundation is on well-drained soil or sand-gravel mixture soils in accordance with the United Soil Classification System, Group I Soils, as detailed in Table R405.1.

R310.4.4 Bars, Grilles, Covers and Screens

Where bars, grilles, covers, screens or similar devices are placed over [emergency escape and rescue openings](#), bulkhead enclosures or area wells that serve such openings, the minimum net clear opening size shall comply with Sections [R310.2](#) through [R310.2.2](#) and [R310.4.1](#). Such devices shall be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key or tool or force greater than that required for the normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

General Notes:

- This packet is intended for use to prepare an application for a Building Department plan review. This is only general information and is not intended to address all possible conditions.
- Additional information can be obtained at the Norwich Building Department or at www.norwichct.org
- Based on 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) portion of the 2022 CT State Building Code