
Basement Finish

If you have any questions, please feel free to call any of our staff at 465-5204.

To obtain a permit to finish a basement or part thereof, the applicant agrees to the following:

- ◆ Abide by applicable code and City Ordinance requirements
- ◆ Have all work inspected and approved prior to being covered
- ◆ No garage or carport to be converted to habitable rooms unless parking space requirements of the Zoning division are met
- ◆ No new floor area is being created (attic, addition, or crawl space excavation)
- ◆ No bearing walls, beams, etc. will be affected
- ◆ Basement may not be used as a second dwelling unit
- ◆ Assume responsibility for all damage to existing improvements
- ◆ Call 465-5214 the day before you will need the inspections.

Some of the applicable code specifications for residential basement finishing are as follows:

Minimum room sizes and spaces:

- Bedrooms min. 70 sq. ft. with a min. 7' dimension
- 7' ceiling height in all rooms.
- 21" clear space in front of a toilet and 15" on each side of the center.
- 900 sq. inches of shower floor area with no dimension less than 30". A min. 22" door.
- 36" min. finished width for halls.

Stairway Minimums:

- 36" finished width
- 6'8" head clearance measured from the tread nosing
- 8" maximum riser height.
- 9" minimum tread depth measured from the tread nose to the next tread nose along the tread.
- One continuous handrail between 34"- 38" above the tread toe. The handrail must return to the wall.
- 36" high guardrails on all elevation changes of more than 30" with balusters less than 4" apart.
- Walls and ceilings under stairs are to be covered with 1/2" drywall.

Construction Materials:

- Sole plate must be redwood or treated wood.
- Beams must be sized for the weight carried.
- Insulation to be at least R-13 in walls.
- The maximum stud spacing is 24" on center.

Window Minimums:

- Windows must be at least 8% of the floor areas for bedrooms, family rooms, and similar rooms.

- Each bedroom must have one window for emergency egress with a minimum 5.7 sq. ft. actual opening but not less than 20" wide OR 24" tall. The height of the sill above floor or anchored furniture must be 44" or less. A bedroom door to the outside will meet this requirement.
- Tempered glass is required when a window is located within 18" of floor level, within 24" of doors, in doors, or when located less than 60" above a tub.

Plumbing:

- All fixtures must be properly trapped and vented
- No lead or acid bearing solders are allowed.
- Clothes washer P-trap must be min 6" above the floor

Gas Furnaces and Water Heaters:

- May not be located in bedrooms, laundry rooms, bathrooms or similar confined rooms. Furnace rooms may not open into such rooms.
- Each appliance must be removable without moving another one to get to it.
- Must have a minimum 30" clear work space in front of controls and a minimum 6" clearance from firebox to combustibles.
- Must have combustion air supplied to the appliance through 1 opening or duct into the furnace room with the opening within 12" of the ceiling. Consult building inspector for requirements of sizing, location and termination before installation.

Wood Stoves and Fireplaces: Must be installed with clearances to combustibles as specified in their listing requirements or as follows:

- Minimum 36" to combustible walls (for closer spacing consult building inspector or UMC 5-A allowances)
- Minimum 18" from chimney connector to combustibles.
- One-piece non-combustible hearth over a combustible floor with min. 16" extension beyond front and 8" beyond sides.
- Combustible chase containing a metal firebox and chimney must be lined with drywall, where open to an attic or floor cavity.
- Chimney must extend to 2 ft. above any part of the roof located within 10 ft.

Electrical:

- Receptacle outlets must be provided so any point along a wall does not exceed 6' distance to an outlet.
- Small wall sections require an outlet when 2 ft. or wider.
- GFCI protection must be provided for receptacle outlet required at the bathroom basin, and kitchen counter tops. AFCI protection for all bedroom outlets, including switches, lights, and detectors.
- A switch controlled light must be provided at hallways, stairways, exits, and in each room.
- A smoke detector must be installed at the entry-ways to bedrooms, in all bedrooms, and in unfinished areas of a basement. This requirement is retroactive and includes the existing portions of the home.
- A carbonmonoxide alarm must be installed on each level.
- A receptacle outlet must be provided at each section of kitchen countertop 12" or wider. There must be a minimum of two (2) dedicated 20 amp countertop circuits in the kitchen.