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POLICIES / PROCEDURES / INTERPRETATIONS

Windows as Out Door Air Supply Inlets

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ISSUE: Can operable windows be utilized to function as the required outdoor air inlets for Section 303.4.1.5 of the Washington State Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality Code (VIAQ)?

ANALYSIS: This section (per the WSEC Builders Field Guide) states that these openings must:

- Have controllable and secure openings.
- Be sleeved when installed through a wall or window frame.
- Have a minimum of 4 square inches

Additionally, this section also requires that these openings be "screened or otherwise protected" to prevent entry of leaves or other material."

This section allows these air inlets to be manually operated and not automatic or interlocked with the whole house exhaust fan.

On the face of it, an open able window, which is secure, controllable and can provide 4 square inches of opening, could qualify as an outdoor air inlet.

However Section 302.3.5.4 of the VIAQ states:

"Doors and operable lites in windows are deemed not to meet the outdoor air supply intake requirements."

While this section prohibits window lites from being used as air inlets, it does not address whether such lites provided with approved screens could be approved as equivalent to other approved air inlets.

Additionally, additionally the building codes do not define the term "lite" but is generally used as meaning the glazing or window pane. Webster's Third New International Dictionary also does not define this term when used in this context. However, it does define the terms "light" and "window light" which are both defined as generally meaning a window pane. A window is generally constructed of the jamb which secures the sashes which supports the window panes (lites). Therefore, the restriction of Section 302.3.5.4 does not in itself prohibit the use of operable window jambs, only operable window panes (lites). The style of window with commonly known with operable lites is a "jalousie window".

POLICY: Consistent with previous interpretations, a window containing operable window sashes, which is located in an approved location, can provide the required minimum 4 square inches of opening, and is provided with an approved screen may be approved for the required outdoor air inlets required by Section 303.4.1.5 of the Washington State Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality Code.