

CITY OF KENOSHA
ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY ALTERATION AND REMODELING STANDARDS

Purpose

To provide uniform construction standards for interior alteration and remodeling of existing one- and two-family dwellings.

Scope

These provisions shall apply to all existing one- and two-family dwellings constructed prior to June 1, 1980.

The construction or renovation of any area into an additional living unit shall be prohibited until receiving zoning review and approval.

Dwellings classified as existing non-conforming structures are limited to minor repairs and alterations relative to safety, exiting, and sanitation only.

All new installations of structural, electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning shall be installed in conformance with current building, electric, plumbing, and heating codes.

If the total area of renovation or remodeling exceeds 50% of the entire existing floor area (all floors included) the entire dwelling shall be made to conform with the current building, plumbing, electric, and heating codes.

In the event that the structural integrity of an area to be renovated is questionable, the code official may require that a State-licensed structural engineer verify the structural integrity of the area to be renovated.

All work shall be executed and installed in a workmanlike manner. The determining authority shall be the code official.

Appeals

Appeals of standards, except for the State code requirements, shall be made in writing to the Director of the Department of Neighborhood Services and Inspections.

Construction Standards (as required by COMM 21-25, Uniform Dwelling Code)

1. Stairways shall conform to the following:
 - a. Riser height shall be 8" maximum
 - b. Tread depth shall be 9" minimum
 - c. Headroom shall be 76" minimum
 - d. Stair width shall be 36" minimum
 - e. Handrail height shall be 30" minimum and 38" maximum, with 1 1/2" wall clearance

- f. Handrail gripping area shall be a maximum width of 2-7/8" if rectangular, and a maximum width of 2" if round
- g. Guardrail height shall be 36" minimum
- h. Intermediate baluster spacing shall be 4" maximum
- i. Landings shall be 36" x 36" minimum

Exception:

Existing stairways not being altered or replaced may remain in use if they are in good repair and meet the following criteria:

- j. Riser height does not exceed 8 ¼"
 - k. Tread depth is not less than 8 ½"
 - l. Headroom is a minimum of 72"
 - m. Stairway width is at least 34"
 - n. Intermediate baluster spacing is no more than 6"
- 2. All habitable rooms shall be provided with natural light equal to 8% of the floor area of the room.
 - 3. All habitable rooms shall be provided with natural ventilation by means of openable windows. The total openable area of the window shall be equal to 45% of the paned area of the window.
 - 4. All habitable rooms shall have a minimum ceiling height of 7' for a minimum of 50% of the floor area. Beams and ducts shall not encroach more than 8" into the ceiling area below the minimum ceiling height.

Exception:

Existing areas with a minimum ceiling height of 6' 8", with no framing restructuring involved.

- 5. A smoke detector shall be provided in every bedroom. At least one additional smoke detector shall be provided on each floor. Smoke detectors shall be wired to the house current, and shall be provided with battery backup.

Exception:

Where wall and ceiling finishes are not removed, installation of battery operated smoke detectors is acceptable.

- 6. Interior doors shall be a minimum of 32" in width, unless at least 50% of the existing doors in the dwelling are a minimum of 32" in width or have a net clear opening of 30".
- 7. Bathrooms and toilet rooms shall comply with the following:
 - a. Bathrooms and toilet rooms shall provide privacy
 - b. Bathrooms and toilet rooms shall not constitute the only passageway to a hall or other space, or to the exterior

- c. All required fixtures (water closet, lavatory, and tub) shall be contained in the same room
 - d. Every bedroom shall have access to at least one water closet and one lavatory without having to pass through another bedroom
8. Exiting shall conform with the following:
- a. Each exit door shall be a minimum of 36" wide and 6' 8" in height.
 - b. Each floor level shall be provided with two (2) exits as follows:
 - 1) Basement - at least one interior stairway to the first floor plus one approved egress window to exterior grade per bedroom. The minimum clear opening of the egress window shall be no less than 20" x 24."
 - 2) First floor - two (2) standard exits to grade.
 - 3) Second floor - one interior stairway to the first floor plus one approved egress window per bedroom.
 - 4) Third floor - one interior stairway to the second floor plus either a second interior stairway to the second floor, or an exterior stairway to grade, or an exterior stairway to a second-floor jump platform.
 - c. Exits shall be located as far apart as practical
 - d. Exterior stairs installed above the first-floor level, to provide exiting from a dwelling unit shall not be installed on the front of any residential building.
9. Insulation of walls and ceilings shall conform with the following:
- a. Walls shall be insulated to R-13 minimum
 - b. Sloped ceilings shall be insulated to R-19 minimum
 - c. Ceilings shall be insulated to R-30 minimum

Exception:

Where wall or ceiling coverings are not removed, the existing insulation is acceptable.

Electrical Standards (as required by COMM 16 Electrical Code, The National Electric Code (NEC), and Chapter Nine Building Code, City of Kenosha.)

- 1. Every dwelling unit shall be serviced by no less than a three wire 60 amp service, protected with fusetate fuses or circuit breakers; and, the service shall be sufficient to support any load imposed upon it.
- 2. Every habitable room shall have receptacle outlets located a minimum of 6' from any wall opening, but in no case more than 12' apart.

Exception:

Where no wall coverings are removed, the existing receptacle outlet spacing is acceptable, provided there are at least two separate and remote receptacles located in the room.

3. Every habitable room shall contain one wall or ceiling type light fixture which is controlled by a remote switch.

Exception:

In the absence of a wall or ceiling type light fixture, one of the two required receptacle outlets shall be controlled by a remote switch.

4. Every laundry area shall contain at least one 20 amp GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protected receptacle outlet on its own dedicated circuit.
5. Every bathroom shall contain at least one receptacle outlet located adjacent to the lavatory. Replacement receptacles shall be GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protected.
6. Every bathroom shall contain at least one wall or ceiling type light fixture.
7. Every kitchen shall contain at least three receptacle outlets on 2 separate small appliance circuits, plus a switch-controlled ceiling light fixture which is installed on a general lighting circuit. Replacement receptacles shall be GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protected.
8. All stairs shall be lighted by a three-way switch operable from the top and bottom of the stairs.
9. Every exit shall be lighted on the exterior by a switch-controlled light fixture.

Plumbing Standards (as required by COMM 81-87)

1. Every dwelling unit shall contain its own bathtub or shower, water closet, bathroom sink, and kitchen sink.
2. Every sink, bathtub, shower, drinking fountain, laundry facility, or other plumbing fixture, or appliance shall be properly connected to the public water system.
3. Each sink shall be supplied with hot or tempered, and cold water.
4. Every dwelling unit shall be provided with water heating facilities properly installed and in good working order. Gas burning water heaters shall not be installed in any bathroom, toilet room, or any habitable room.

5. All plumbing fixtures shall be properly connected to the public sewer and treatment system.
6. Every plumbing stack, vent waste and sewer line shall be maintained in good working order, with no leaks.

Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning Standards (as required by COMM 21-25 Uniform Dwelling Code)

1. When adding additional living area to a dwelling unit, the heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning system shall be verified to be sized accordingly to handle the additional area. Verification of adequacy shall be by the code official, or at the code official's request, a City-licensed HVAC contractor.
2. Every bathroom or toilet room shall be equipped with a mechanical ventilation system. Air exhausted by the system shall discharge directly to the outdoors and shall not be recirculated.
3. Every habitable room shall have at least one heating supply vent and be provided with adequate cold air returns.
4. Cold air returns shall not be installed in bathrooms or kitchens.
5. All fuel burning appliances shall be properly installed and attached to an approved chimney or vent.
6. No portable solid, liquid, or gaseous fuel burning appliances are allowed.
7. Portable heating appliances shall not be used to meet minimum heating requirements.
8. All manufacturer clearance requirements for fuel burning appliances shall be maintained.