



HARP WINDOWS (WATFORD) LTD

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THE NEW BUILDING REGULATIONS What does it mean for our customers?

On the 15th June 2022, every new window and door installation that we undertake is required to conform to the new building regulations.

There are two main parts of the new regulations that will affect installations that we undertake.

- Document L refers to energy efficiency measures
- Document F refers to ventilation

ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

Document L requires that windows and doors meet new energy efficient measures:

- Windows = 1.4W/m²k or WER B
- Doors (glazed area > 60%) = 1.4W/m²k or DSER C
- Doors (other) = 1.4W/m²k or DSER B

This means that the windows and doors that we install in your home have to meet either these **U-Values** or the **WER** (Window Energy Rating for windows) or the **DSER** (Doorset Energy Rating for doors).

VENTILATION:

Document F requires that homes meet minimum ventilation standards when new windows and doors are installed. In order to meet these new ventilation standards, some form of background ventilation must be enabled in any habitable room. Background ventilation refers to either trickle vents or wall vents (such as airbricks). They must be controllable and sited 1700mm from the ground level of the room.

This means that for most customers, you will need to have trickle vents installed in your new windows.

These new regulations come into effect from the 15th June 2022. There is no transition period. Regardless of when your contract was signed, if your new windows and doors are being installed on or after the 15th June, then they must meet the new regulations.





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Q: I don't want trickle vents fitted into my windows! What can I do?

- Firstly it depends into which room your windows are being installed. **Hallways, landings, stairwells** and **utility rooms** don't have to have trickle vents installed, unless the existing windows that we are replacing already have them.
- Rooms such as **living rooms, bedrooms, studies, dining rooms (all classed as habitable rooms)** will need to have a certain amount of background ventilation. This can be provided by either a controllable wall vent cited at least 1700mm from ground level, or trickle vents fitted into your windows. In most instances, trickle vents will be the easiest and preferred option.
- **Kitchens** will require the same level of background ventilation as habitable rooms.
- Rooms such as **bathrooms** and **toilets** will also require background ventilation, but at a slightly lesser level than habitable rooms.
- If your home has a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system, then you may not require additional trickle vents - please chat with us to clarify this.

It is likely that in most circumstances trickle vents will be required under the new Building Regulations, and as FENSA members we are obligated to meet these requirements.

Q: Can I not sign as disclaimer stating that I don't want trickle vents?

Unfortunately not! For work to comply with the Building Regulations, all requirements must be met in full. A disclaimer signed by the homeowner stating that they do not wish to have background ventilators or that they will be installed in future is not a suitable way of complying with the Building Regulations. Competent person schemes such as FENSA must monitor their registrants and take action against any registrant who is found to have carried out non-compliant work. Purchasing an indemnity policy is also not a suitable alternative to meeting the requirements of the Building Regulations in full.

If your installation is inspected by FENSA and is found not to comply, they will require us to retrospectively add the required trickle vents to your windows in order to bring the installation into compliance with the regulations. Retrospectively fitting trickle vents is challenging and problematic and not a route that we would ever recommend.

It's worth adding that we do sympathise - we don't particularly like trickle vents either, so it's frustrating for us. But in this instance, our hands are tied - there is no legal opt out.





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Q: I live on a busy main road and I don't want trickle vents due to pollution levels. What can I do?

If your house is next to a busy urban road where pollution levels are high, then we can install vents on the side of the building not facing the road. If noise is an issue, "noise attenuating vents" can be installed, but these are large, ugly and expensive.

Q: How do I know that the windows and doors you install meet the new energy ratings or U-Values?

A permanent label will be fixed to your window or door in a position that will allow it to be easily inspected but in an area that will not usually be easily visible to the homeowner. (No-one wants to look at any unsightly label on their windows or doors). This label will document the following information:

- Company registration number
- Licence number of the window or door
- The Window Energy Rating (WER) or Doorset Energy Rating (DSER) for example, A+, A, B

This allows the window or door to be traced directly back to the manufacturer and to clarify the energy rating of the product.

Q: What does the "less than 30%" rule mean? I've heard that if I only have 30% or less of my windows installed at any one time, then I won't need to have trickle vents, is this true?

Some within the industry have suggested that if an installation is carried out in three separate stages or parts (ie three individual jobs) then it is a way to get around the new regulations. It is not that simple though. If you are replacing less than or equal to 30% of the windows in your property then trickle vents may not be required, provided that **no more than one other minor energy efficiency measure has been completed at the property.**

Windows installed post-June 2002 are an energy efficient measure in the same way as cavity wall, draft proofing, loft insulation top up or external wall insulation. It is unlikely that most properties will not have had at least one of these energy efficient measures undertaken at some point. In the unlikely event that your property does meet the requirements, then trickle vents will not be required. However, once you have had 30% or less of your windows installed in the first stage installation, then the second and third stage installations will both require trickle vents.





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Q: I live in an older property and have a wall ventilators already in all my main habitable rooms. Do I still need to have trickle vents?

If the wall ventilators meet the requirements, then you may not need additional trickle vents in your new windows that are being installed to these specific rooms. However, if you have an open flued appliance in a room, regardless of whether you already have wall ventilation you will still require additional trickle vents. Note: an open-flued appliance is one that draws its air for combustion from the room or internal space within which it is installed. Ventilation to ensure that this air can pass from outside to the room containing the appliance is vitally important.

Q: I live in property that has unusual shaped windows. Will I still need to have trickle vents?

Under the new regulations, we have to install the **minimum equivalent vent sizes** where it is **feasible** to do so. With unusual shaped windows, it may not be possible to feasibly install the minimum vent sizes. Depending on your windows, you may not require trickle vents in this instance. However, shaped windows that include an opening casement or sash mean we can feasibly install a trickle vent into the opening sash, even if it is smaller than the minimum requirement.

Q: I live in a Conservation Area, what options do I have?

Listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas may not need to comply fully with the new ventilation standards. We would need clarification from your local council what covenants your Conservation Area includes. Some areas have strict requirements and will not allow trickle vents and only like-for-like installations, ie the windows must fully match the originals in both looks and materials. Other areas may be more flexible.

ANY MORE QUESTIONS?

If we have not answered your specific question here, then please either call us for a chat or email us and we will get back you as soon as we can.

