



FINISHED BASEMENT HANDOUT

Building Inspections Department | 6000 McColl Drive, Savage, MN 55378
Office: 952-882-2650 | Fax: 952-882-2656 | savageinspections@cityofsavage.com

This information only outlines general code requirements relative to finishing basements. For specific code requirements, please contact a design professional or the Savage Building Department at 952-882-2650. Permit fees for plumbing and fireplace permits (if applicable), will be included with the building permit.

All electrical permits are issued thru the State of Minnesota. For questions regarding electrical work, please contact the State Electrical Inspector, Justin Doebbling at (612) 643-1838. Electrical permit applications are available online at www.dli.mn.gov/workers/homeowners/electrical-permits-homeowners.

REQUIREMENTS

- A signed, completed building permit application form and Data Privacy form.
- Two copies of building plans showing proposed layouts and materials. Plans must be drawn to scale and the floor plan must include the following information:
 - Location of all existing and proposed walls of the basement/lower level.
 - The use of existing and proposed room(s), including the dimensions.
 - Location and sizes of the windows and doors.
 - Location of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
 - Layout of heat distribution system.
 - Location of existing or proposed plumbing fixtures, mechanical equipment, stairways, fireplaces, etc.

GENERAL BUILDING REQUIREMENTS BASED ON THE 2020 MINNESOTA RESIDENTIAL CODE WHICH INCORPORATES THE 2018 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE.

- The minimum finished width of a hallway is 36".
- All interior stairways shall be provided with a means to illuminate the stairs, including the landing and treads.
- Open side(s) of stairways more than 30" above the floor shall be provided with a guard. All openings must be 4 3/8" or less in width. One approved handrail is required the full length of the stairs, with the ends returned to a post or wall. The top of the handrail shall be 34" to 38" above the nose of the treads. For stairways with a total rise of more than 30", open risers may not allow the passage of a sphere with a 4" diameter.
- Enclosed usable space under the stairs must be protected on the underside with not less than 1/2" gypsum, including the interior walls of the enclosed space.
- Smoke detectors are required for the entire house when remodeling or finishing a basement. Smoke detectors must be in each bedroom, in corridors leading to bedrooms and on every level of the home. Smoke detectors must be hard wired and inter-connected with battery backup in the newly remodeled areas. Smoke detectors in existing areas may be solely battery powered.
- Carbon monoxide detectors are required within 10' of all rooms used for sleeping.
- Foam plastic insulation shall be protected on the interior by not less than 1/2" gypsum or other approved material.
- Insulated exterior walls must be covered on the interior with not less than a 4-mil vapor barrier. Fire-retardant poly is required if not covered with gypsum wallboard or other approved material.
- Each toilet must be centered in a clear space of not less than 30" wide, and have a clear space in front of not less than 24".
- Each bathroom must be provided with a powered exhaust fan vented directly to the exterior. Insulate the last

- (3) feet of duct before the exterior wall. See manufacturer's specifications on separation from any other wall penetrations or openings.
- When adding a shower or shower-bath, it must be equipped with an anti-scald type water control valve. When finishing basements, all bathtub traps must be accessible.
 - Plastic plumbing pipe is not allowed to be intermixed, such as using black (ABS) with white (PVC), without using an approved mechanical connection. Transition glue is not an approved connection.
 - When installing ½" hot and cold water supply lines for bathroom fixtures, they must be tied into a ¾" water supply line. Not more than (3) three fixtures located in the same room may be supplied by a ½" pipe size.
 - Gas burning fireplaces must be installed per manufacturer's specifications.
 - Unions and flared fittings in gas piping may not be concealed within the wall or ceiling construction. All new or altered fuel gas piping requires a permit and a 25 lb. air test for 30 minutes before gas may be hooked up.
 - Each bedroom must have at least one escape window with the following dimensions:
 - Width - 20" minimum clear opening.
 - Height - 24" minimum clear opening.
 - Total opening - 5.7 square feet minimum. Exception: Grade floor openings (openings either 44" above or below finished grade) are permitted to be 5.0 sq. ft.
 - Sill height not more than 44" above the floor.
 - Decks, overhangs, etc., over egress windows must have a minimum 36" clearance above grade.
 - Window wells located as part of a basement bedroom escape window must have a permanently affixed ladder when the window well is greater than 44".
 - Habitable rooms, hallways, corridors, bathrooms, toilet rooms, laundry rooms and basements must have a ceiling height of not less than 7'. Alterations to existing basements shall have a ceiling height of not less than 6' 4" including beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions.
 - Fire blocking is required at the following locations:
 - Penetrations in top plates when or where a wall will be covered on both sides.
 - Penetrations in return air plenums.
 - Penetrations in fireplace enclosures.
 - Soffits and dropped ceilings must be fire blocked to separate the vertical stud space from the horizontal soffit space. Fire blocking is needed horizontally every 10' in a soffit area.
 - Hot water piping must be insulated.
 - Lighting must consist of ¾ energy efficient light bulbs.

REQUIRED INSPECTIONS

Inspections can be scheduled online or by calling 952-882-2650 at least 24 hours in advance.

- **Framing, Mechanical, Plumbing, Insulation**

An approved electrical rough-in inspection is required before a framing inspection. All plumbing, mechanical, fireplace rough-ins, air tests, framing and insulation inspections should be scheduled at the same time. Additional inspections may be required dependent on scope of work.

- **Final**

A final building inspection is required once all work is complete and the final electrical inspection has been approved.