**ADA Accessibility for Windows**

**Frequently-Asked Questions**

Is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) a building code?

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a law, not a building code, specification or test method. As such, it is missing many of the necessary technical requirements for compliance testing. Some of the government agencies that have promulgated regulations to help ensure compliance include: the U.S. Department of Justice’s “ADA Standards for Accessible Design,” the U.S. Access Board’s “ADA and Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines,” and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s “U.S. Fair Housing Act.” Other authorities also are requiring or recommending accessibility, including the Chicago Public Schools and Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, university housing offices and the New York City Building Code. While detailed requirements vary, all reference (ICC/ANSI A117.1, “Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities,” in defining window operating forces and motions).

The AAMA 513 “Standard Laboratory Test Method for Determination of Forces and Motions Required to Activate Operable Parts of CW and AW Class Operable Windows, Sliding Glass Doors and Terrace Doors in Accessible Spaces” addresses the necessary window-specific provisions.

Remember, building codes represent only minimum requirements. Even if not required, accessible operating windows may be a very desirable feature of the occupied spaces being designed.

What is considered an accessible window by ADA and ICC/ANSI A117.1?

AAMA 513 defines an “Accessible Window Unit” as operable window assemblies, including frame, infill, hardware, and all other appurtenances, required by project specifications and or applicable codes, to be, “accessible to and usable by people with such physical disabilities as the stability to walk, difficulty walking, reliance on walking aids, blindness and visual impairment, deafness and hearing impairment, in coordination, reaching and manipulation disabilities, lack of stamina, difficulty interpreting and reacting to sensory information, and extremes of physical size.” (Portion in italic from ICC/ANSI A117.1.)

Do window manufacturers represent their products as “ADA windows”?

As noted in AAMA 513, “No test method provides sufficient basis for a manufacturer to represent an individual component, product or product line, as ADA-certified, ADA-approved, or ADA-compliant, as the Americans with Disabilities Act makes no provisions for, nor outlines any requirements for, such certifications, approval, or compliance verification.” Wausau is careful to represent laboratory-tested products as capable of achieving accessible operating forces and motions, when properly installed and adjusted, without making any non-verifiable claims.

Can accessible windows be expected to perform the same as standard operable windows?

Gaining the leverage for easy operation may require special location of stop-operators, which then offer a limited opening for ventilation. Also, as noted in AAMA 513, “For accessible units, certain ‘reductions’ in air infiltration, and water resistance performance requirements shall be permitted, when compared to conventional CW and AW Class testing, given the desirability of minimizing operating forces. Air infiltration 1.5 times the maximum air infiltration specified in AAMA/WDMA/CSA 1010.5.2/4400, for the type and class tested is allowed but (can be) no greater than 1.0 l/s/m² (0.2 cfm/ft²) at 75 Pa (1.57 psf). Water Resistance shall be conducted at ...” 20% of inward acting design pressure for the project for AW Class, but not less than ...” 300 Pa (8 psf). Design Wind Pressure shall be based on project requirements, or a minimum of ...” 1920 Pa (40 psf) for AW products (whichever is greater).” In lab testing of Wausau products, no reductions were necessary.

Is special care required in the installation and adjustment of accessible window units?

Yes. These products will require additional care in installation, final adjustment, and maintenance, to achieve and maintain compliance. Plumb, square, and level installation is critical. Building settlement can affect operating forces, and necessitate post-installation adjustment.

Can standard operable windows be “adapted” to achieve accessibility at a later date?

Not always. The fieldwork necessary will vary widely with application and window type. Adaptation may be as simple as hardware adjustment — or may require complete reconfiguration of window openings and surrounding conditions. If adaptability is desired, Wausau strongly encourages the design team to develop a window accessibility plan early in the design process, then detail and specify products accordingly.

What special disclaimers and qualifications apply to accessible windows?

In addition to standard disclaimers, qualifications, and terms and condition of sale, Wausau Window and Wall Systems makes no claim, and takes no responsibility for, ADA compliance of the total window or door installation on site, including but not limited to, hardware, approach area, reach, force(s), motion, etc., for acceptance by authorities having jurisdiction.

Other questions?

Contact Wausau’s market managers at info@wausauwindow.com.
ADA Accessibility for Windows

Wausau’s accessible projected windows are laboratory-proven capable of operating with one hand using a force of five pounds or less, to unlock, open, close, and lock, without tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.

Laboratory-Tested Wausau Operable Windows

Capable of Accessible Operating Forces and Motions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Series</th>
<th>Vent Mode</th>
<th>Maximum Vent Size</th>
<th>Minimum Vent Size</th>
<th>Hardware Package(s) Tested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INvent Family</td>
<td>Project-Out Awnings</td>
<td>60 36 25 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dual arm-operators with several handle choices (linear operation latches) Concealed four-bar hinges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4250-Z</td>
<td>Zero Sightline Insert Vents</td>
<td>60 36 25 28</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4250-Z</td>
<td>Zero Sightline Insert Vents</td>
<td>60 36 25 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Roto operators can be provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4250-Z</td>
<td>Zero Sightline Insert Vents</td>
<td>60 36 25 28</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</table>

NOTES:
1. Test results can vary. All size limits are such dimension tip-to-tip. “Oversize” vent limits shown in gold font.
2. All testing was based on AAMA 513-12, without air, water and structural allowances or reductions, but including sampling, test equipment and methodology qualifications.
3. Project-out swinging vents cannot be hand-operated due to the requirement for hold-open friction. Out-swing casement vents cannot be hand-operated due to the requirement for one-hand operation. Roto operators can be provided for both of these vent types, with several optional accessible handle and knob choices.
4. Refer to “Frequently Asked Questions” for special disclaimers and qualification notes applying to accessibility.
5. Consult Wausau’s market managers for technical assistance if sizes required are outside of the ranges specified above.
6. The use of insect screens may limit accessibility options for certain vent modes and hardware packages. Controls for between-glass insect screens may not be accessible in certain conditions.
7. All double and triple insulating glass (IG) units were tested with 6 mm glass lites, for flatness and available coating options.
8. Wausau, as well as an ever-increasing breadth of accessible product offering, consult Wausau market managers and www.wausauwindow.com for current information.

Accessible Windows and Hardware

(Illustrative examples)
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Width (in.)</td>
<td>Height (in.)</td>
<td>Width (in.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INvent™ Family</td>
<td>Project-Out Aiming</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out-Swing Casement</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
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<td>27</td>
</tr>
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8. Wausau is committed to continuous improvement, as well as an ever-increasing breadth of accessible product offering.

Make sure operable windows are located and detailed in a way that meets the "reach" limitations of ICC/ANSI A117.1. One typical diagram is shown. Different height requirements apply to "obstructed" and "front" reach. There are also physical limits on clearances and protrusions, as well as approach area and threshold height (for terrace doors and sliding glass doors).

AAMA Guide Specification
"Accessibility: As indicated on architectural drawings, one operable window in each occupied space shall meet the operating force limits and motion restrictions of ICC/ANSI A117.1 Section 309.4, when tested by an AAMA-accredited lab in accordance with AAMA 513-12."

(Specifiers Note: All code-required operable windows in a given occupied space may be required to meet these restrictions.)

Access to doorways and doorways requires installation of accessible operable windows in each occupied space, as well as approach area and threshold height (for terrace doors and sliding glass doors).
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