

REPLACEMENT WINDOWS **WINDOW AND DOOR REPLACEMENT**

With effect from 1st April 2002 replacement windows and doors in all buildings must comply with the Building Regulations. In the case of dwellings this applies to doors only where the door together with its frame has more than 50% of its internal face area glazed. The requirement applies where complete frames are to be replaced but not to the replacement of individual panes within a frame. The new units must meet the specification referred to in Approved Document Part L1b for thermal insulation standards and also in terms of safety, as covered by Part N. Also, the openings areas providing ventilation and means of escape from fire should not be worse than with the existing installation.

Energy Conservation

One of the main reasons for the change is the need to reduce energy loss. The Building Regulations have controlled glazing in new buildings for many years but they represent only a very small percentage of our total building stock. It is also essential to improve the performance of the much larger numbers of existing buildings if we are to meet increasingly stringent national and global energy saving targets.

When the time comes to sell your property, your purchaser's surveyors will ask for evidence that any replacement glazing installed after April 2002 complies with the new Building Regulations. There are two ways to prove compliance:

a certificate showing that the work has been done by an installer who is registered under the FENSA scheme or

a certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the Building Regulations.

The FENSA Scheme (Dwellings Only)

It is estimated that around 2 million installations of replacement glazing happen every year. That makes it essential to have a way to ensure that the work is done properly without unreasonable increase in the administrative and financial burden on installers and property owners. The answer is the FENSA scheme, which allows installation companies that meet certain criteria to self-certify that their work complies with the Building Regulations. It was set up by the Glass and Glazing Federation, in association with all key stakeholders, and meets with central Government approval. A sample of the work of every installer is inspected by FENSA appointed inspectors to ensure standards are maintained and installers who fail to perform can be suspended or even excluded from the scheme. FENSA also inform local authorities of all completed FENSA installations and issue certificates to householders confirming compliance. Currently the scheme is only applicable to domestic installations.

Any installation done by a firm which is not registered to self-certify, including work done as a DIY project by a householder, needs approval under the Building Regulations. You should note that you, as the house owner, are ultimately responsible for ensuring the work complies with the Building Regulations.

NOTE

There have been several reports of installers who are neither members of FENSA nor bothering to make applications to the council. Remember, it may delay or even stop the sale of your home if you cannot prove the replacement glazing was done legally. Before you sign a contract to buy replacement glazing, be sure to ask whether the installer is able to self-certify. If not, an application will have to be made to your local authority for approval under the Building Regulations.



For details of the scheme and registered installers please visit the FENSA website at www.fensa.org.uk.