
EMERGENCY ESCAPE QUICK RELEASE SYSTEMS

This Information Bulletin establishes the requirements for existing and new quick release security systems installed in conjunction with bars, grills, grates, security roll down shutters or similar devices that are placed over residential emergency escape windows or doors.

LARC Section R310 and LABC Section 1030 specify that basements in dwelling units and in every sleeping room below the fourth story shall have at least one operable window or door approved for emergency escape or rescue that shall open directly into a public way, or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.

Bars, grills, grates, security roll down shutters or similar devices may be installed on emergency windows or doors, provided such devices comply with Department of Building and Safety requirements. They must be equipped with a quick release system operable from the inside to provide a full, clear opening without the use of a key, special tools or special knowledge.

A building permit is required for the new installation of any of the above mentioned security devices as well as for the retrofit installation of any quick release system.

The following requirements shall apply to new and existing above mentioned security devices:

1. The quick release latch shall be actuated by a readily accessible knob, handle or button which may be grasped in the hand and operated by a single twist, turn, push or pull of the hand, or a pedal which may be pushed by the foot. The use of slide bolts, pull chain bolts and releases requiring both hands for actuation is prohibited. Security devices maybe installed over a night latch, dead bolt or security chain provided such device is operable from the inside without the use of a key, special tools or special knowledge.
2. The quick release latch shall be mounted at a height not to exceed 48 inches above the finish floor and shall not require more than 10 pounds of force to unlatch the security device to the fully opened position. Any such quick release latch must be readily accessible to the occupants of the room.
3. Each security device system shall be installed in conjunction with smoke alarms as specified in LARC Section R314 and Section 907.2.11 of the Los Angeles Building Code.
4. All of the above mentioned security devices must comply with the aforementioned requirements, and shall be properly installed by a licensed contractor, homeowner occupant or a certified installer, as defined in Section 1710 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.
5. Each security device must be tested for proper operation by a Department of Building and Safety Inspector and/or certified installer.