

# **BASEMENT FINISHING**



## **Bremer County**

**Building & Zoning Department**  
**415 East Bremer Avenue**  
**Waverly, Iowa 50677**  
**319-352-0332**  
**[www.co.bremer.ia.us](http://www.co.bremer.ia.us)**

**This Brochure is intended to explain some of the requirements for basement finishing. If you have further questions, please call the Building & Zoning Department at:**

**319-352-0332**

**7:00 A.M.—4:30 P.M.**

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### Building Permits

A Building Permit is required for basement finishes or alterations. Items required to obtain a permit include:

1. A drawing showing location of the walls, designated rooms, egress provisions and materials to be used.
2. The Building Permit fee is based on the total valuation of the project. It includes the general work and the electrical, heating, and plumbing/mechanical. If a general contractor is hired to perform the work, the total contract price will be used. If you obtain the permit as a homeowner you must supply material costs for the total project. **Payment must be received in full before work may commence.**
3. A permit is required for each type of work performed, i.e. Building, Electrical, Plumbing and/or Mechanical. The permit shall be applied for by the party performing the work, whether that be the owner or the contractor. Contractors must provide this office with a current Certificate of Liability Insurance and state licensing information prior to beginning work.

### Egress from Basement

If a portion of the basement is finished off or if a full bath is installed in the basement, a separate means of exit is required if it is not already existing. Each bedroom in the dwelling unit is required to have an approved means of egress from that bedroom. Means of egress requirements may be met by a walk-out door or an egress window. An egress window, also called an emergency or rescue window, is a window that meets certain size requirements.

For a more detailed explanation refer to the Egress Window Pamphlet

### Bathroom Ventilation

A bathroom is required to have natural or mechanical ventilation. Bathrooms, water closet compartments and other similar rooms shall be provided with total glazing area in windows of not less than 3 square feet, one-half of which must be openable.

Exception: The glazed areas shall not be required where artificial light and mechanical ventilation systems are provided. The minimum ventilation rate shall be 50 cubic feet per minute for intermittent ventilation or 20 cubic feet per minute for continuous ventilation. Ventilation from the space shall be exhausted directly to the outside.

### Smoke Alarms

Whenever work is done to the interior of a dwelling, interconnected smoke alarms are required to be installed throughout the dwelling.

### Carbon Monoxide Alarms

An approved Carbon Monoxide detector shall be installed outside of each sleeping room area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.

For a more detailed explanation refer to the Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Pamphlet

### Furnace Rooms

If walls are built around furnaces the following requirements shall be met:

1. There shall be 30 inches clear space in front of the furnace.
2. There shall be provisions for combustion air. This may be obtained by a louver in the door.
3. The duct work within 6' of the furnace shall have 1 inch clearance from combustible materials.

### Bottom Plates

Bottom plates are required to be of treated lumber. Vertical furring strips are not required to be treated. The lower horizontal member in contact with the floor shall be treated.

### Fire Blocking

When walls are placed adjacent to the outside walls, and there is a gap between this wall and the foundation wall a fire stop is required every 10 feet horizontally and at the top of the wall.

### Paneling

An interior wall or ceiling finish that is not more than 1/4 inch thick shall be applied directly against a noncombustible backing.

### Inspections

A typical basement finish or remodel project will require three inspections. 24 hour notice is required for all inspections. Inspections may be scheduled by calling 319-352-0332. The first inspection would include the "rough in" for framing, plumbing and electrical. The second inspection would be a drywall and drywall screw inspection. The third or "Final" inspection is done after the project has been completed. Any corrections issued would require additional inspections before the next phase of the project could proceed. Work may be covered upon approval.

You will receive an orange "Inspection Card" along with your permit. Please post this in a door or window visible from the street.