



REPLACING WINDOWS?

Since April 2002, all replacement glazing has come within the scope of the Building Regulations. That means anyone who installs replacement windows or doors has to comply with strict new thermal performance standards. (Just replacing glass is exempt)

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:-

1. a certificate showing that the work has been done by an installer who is registered under the FENSA Scheme *or*
2. a certificate from the local authority saying that the installation has approval under the Building Regulations.

The FENSA Scheme

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 an 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 & 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. Any installation done by a firm which is not registered to self-certify, including work done as a DIY project by a householder, needs full local authority 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.

WARNING: There have been several disturbing reports of installers who are neither members of FENSA nor bothering to make applications to the council. Remember, it will 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.

Further information is available from your local Building Control office at County Hall, Cardiff, CF10 4UW or you can ring them on (029) 223 30381 / 30382 / 30383

There is also information on the GGF web site www.ggf.org.uk