



BILCO Egress Window Wells

Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to questions frequently asked about BILCO Egress Window Wells are provided below. Please call our Customer Service Department at 1-800-854-9724 or send them an e-mail if you require further assistance.

Q. What is the purpose of emergency egress in basement areas?

The International Residential Building Code requires a means of secondary egress from basement living areas. The egress allows firefighters to enter a basement in the event of an emergency and allows occupants to escape from the basement if the staircase up to the main level of the home is impeded or blocked in any way.

Q. Can I add an egress window well to an existing home?

Yes, BILCO sells many window wells for basement remodeling projects and has many Independent Installers that can help with your project. Independent Installers

Q. What material are BILCO window wells made of?

BILCO window wells are made from High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), the same durable material that is used on truck bed liners. This corrosion-resistant material is UV stabilized for long life and durability.

Q. What size window well should I install on my home?

Window well sizes are based on your site conditions and the size of the window that you are using for egress. BILCO offers window wells to accommodate virtually any site condition. Use our sizing guide to determine the proper size window well for your home. [ScapeWEL Sizing Guide](#) [StakWEL Sizing Guide](#)

Q. What size window do I need for egress to meet building code requirements?

For emergency egress, the International Building Code requires a minimum 5.7 square foot clear opening with a minimum opening height of 24" and minimum opening width of 20".

Q. Do you have egress windows available that work with your wells?

BILCO does not offer windows. Window well sizes are available to work with any new construction window that is sized to meet building code egress dimension requirements.

Q. What size hole do I need to excavate for a window well?

BILCO window wells are supplied with installation instructions that include excavation and drainage

requirements.

ScapeWEL Installation Instructions StakWEL Installation Instructions

Q. Can ScapeWEL window wells be cut down to accommodate very shallow grade conditions? BILCO window wells are designed to meet emergency egress code requirements. Modifications to the product would void building code compliance and the BILCO warranty.

Q. Should I install a cover on my well?

BILCO recommends the use of a cover always for fall protection on both ScapeWEL and StakWEL models. In addition, a cover will protect your well from snow, leaves, and debris. Optional Dome Covers

Q. How much weight will the cover hold?

The optional dome cover will support up to 300 lbs. of weight and will invert before it will break or crack.

Q. Will the sun harm the window well or the cover?

No, both products are designed with UV protection to withstand the damaging effects of Ultra Violet rays. This protection allows these products to maintain their strength and color when exposed to sunlight over long periods of time.

Q. Can I modify a the StakWEL window well cover to fit around siding or another obstruction?

The window well cover must be installed flush with the back of the StakWEL module using the provided notch to ensure a proper fit. Any modifications or incorrect installation of the cover could compromise the integrity of the cover and void the warranty.

Q. Why does my cover rattle or blow off in the wind?

The window well cover was supplied with six hold down clips. The clips are designed so that they disengage when the cover is pushed on from the inside for emergency egress. The clips can be pinched together as required to create a tighter fit to prevent rattling. Additional clips can also be supplied and installed on the dome to secure it in place.

Q. Will extreme climate conditions affect your wells or covers (extreme cold/thaw)?

No, BILCO window wells have been installed in all climate conditions for many years. Per installation instructions supplied with the product, the well must be backfilled with stone, which allows for settling, drainage and acts as a slip sheet for freezing and thawing.

Q. Why has the top step of my ScapeWEL window well inverted?

Excessive soil pressure from wheeled equipment near the step can create pressure and cause this problem. To fix this problem, dig out the soil behind this step and the step will slowly return to its original curvature. Replace and compact soil as required.

Q. Why does water run in over the top of the top step?

Window wells should be installed so that the top step is above grade level. The top step should never be installed at or below grade or this condition will occur. Re-grading around the well is required to correct this problem.

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