

Window Safety Devices



“Fly screens prevent bugs from coming in, not children from falling out.”

Why do windows need to be secured?

Every year, many children get injured or worse due to windows not being properly secured in NSW. Shockingly, an average of one child per week is taken to the hospital in Australia after falling from a window.

According to figures from the Children’s Hospital Westmead, 80% of children who have fallen from a window have significant injuries, and four out of five children who fall from windows are under five years old. These young children are most at risk as they are curious but lack the ability to recognize danger.

To address this issue, the NSW Government has developed a range of measures to help prevent falls. These measures led to the creation of The Strata Schemes Management Amendment (Child Window Safety Devices) Bill 2013.

The bill requires Strata schemes with residential lots to install safety devices that lock the window opening at less than 12.5 cm on all windows that present a risk to young children by 13 March 2018. It also allows individual strata owners to install window safety devices regardless of their schemes' by-laws.

Will this mean that we can’t open the window?

No, a window lock that allows the window to be fully opened, fully closed and locked at less than 12.5cm, complies with the legislation.

Are there other requirements other than restricting the window opening?

The device that restricts the window from opening more than 12.5 cm must also be able to withstand a force equal to 25 kilograms/250 newtons of outward or horizontal force.

If we have flyscreens, are we exempt from this requirement?

Security screens such as bars or grills are exempt as long as they have gaps less than 12.5 cm.

Flyscreens don’t comply unless they are secured and capable of resisting the very strong outward pressure that would prevent a child from falling through.

Do I need the Owners Corporation approval to install window safety devices?

Tenants are required to obtain written permission from their landlords before installing locks that require drilling. Landlords are not allowed to refuse a tenant’s request unless they have a valid reason. Lot owners have the right to install window safety devices on their own.

However, they must ensure that the locks meet the legal requirements, pay for them, and take responsibility for any damage caused to common property during the installation. Additionally, lot owners must inform the owner’s corporation before undertaking any installation work.

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