

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal – Engineering Division  
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**Replacement Windows - Windborne Debris Protection**

**Code:** 2012 NC Residential Code  
**Section:** R612.9

**Date:** October 9, 2015

**Code:** 2012 NC Building Code  
**Section:** 1609.1.2

**Code:** 2015 NC Existing Building Code  
**Section:** 602.4

**Question:**

Is windborne debris protection required for replacement windows in exterior walls of structures located in the windborne debris region as defined in NC Building Code, Section 1609.1.2 and NC Residential Code, Section R612.9?

**Answer:**

- a) When replacing only a glazing panel and not an entire window in a double hung or casement type unit:  
No, unless the existing window is designed for windborne debris protection in which case the replacement panel is required to provide windborne debris protection. The glazing panel is considered repair and can be repaired with a like material.
- b) When replacing only a window sash and not an entire window:  
No, unless the existing window is designed for windborne debris protection in which case the replacement sash is required to provide windborne debris protection. The sash is considered repair and can be repaired with a like material.
- c) When replacing a window unit but not removing the existing window frame:  
No, unless the existing window is designed for windborne debris protection in which case the replacement unit is required to provide windborne debris protection. The replacement window unit is considered a repair if the replacement unit is not designed to provide a complete finished unit in a rough opening; and the original window frame is not removed from the rough opening; and the replacement unit is made to fit into the original frame.
- d) When replacing a window and the existing window frame:  
Yes. The window unit is considered new construction and must meet the requirements for new construction.

- e) When replacing a store front glazing panel in an existing window frame:  
Yes. The glazing panel is considered new construction and must meet the requirements for new construction.

**Keywords:**

Glazing, hurricane, high wind